

Comparing Two Movements for Gender Parity

France and Spain

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In August 1998 the press declared that the Spanish Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español, PSOE), the main opposition party, would submit a bill to reform the electoral law. The hypothetical bill, for that is what it was, would have required all electoral lists to limit their candidates of the same sex to no more than 60%. In effect, this was a proposal for a quota of 40% for women. The second largest opposition party, the United Left (Izquierda Unida, IU, ideologically to the left of the PSOE) supported the idea, but the governing conservative party, the People's Party (Partido Popular, PP) strongly opposed it. Such a bill did not pass. Indeed it was never presented to parliament, being considered too risky by leading socialists (*El País*, August 31, 1998; December 27, 1998).

Yet, as the lists prepared for the local, regional, and European elections of June 1999 showed, despite the lack of any legally enforced quotas, the number of women on the lists of the major parties was higher than ever before. Indeed both the conservative PP and the Socialist Party placed a woman in the number one position on the list for the European elections. In addition, in the national elections of 2000, 29% of those elected to the lower house were women as were 24% of those elected to the Senate, while the speakers of both houses are women. Therefore, according to one French observer, parity is "lived in reality," and the debates which have shaken France for a decade about increasing the number of women in elected office, as well as its legislation, has "provoked smiles" if not criticisms (*Le Monde*, March 8, 2001).

France does provide a contrasting story to this one of relatively steady increase in the number of women holding elected office and senior positions in government. In 1998, nine of every ten deputies in the National Assembly were still male. Dominated by the political right, in early 1999 the Senate rejected a bill to enable affirmative action in politics that had already been overwhelmingly approved by the National Assembly. It finally accepted it only under heavy political pressure and threat. On June 6, 2000, France reformed the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, enshrining a legal protection of actions

to achieve equal access of women and men to elected office (Article 3). Since then, two sets of elections have been held. In March 2001 local elections increased the percentage of women holding municipal office dramatically from 22% to 48%. However, only 7% took the mayor's office. Moreover, in the elections for governments of cantons (held at the same time and with single-member constituencies), the number of female candidates rose to 20% (from 15% in 1998), but the number elected increased only by 1.5 percentage points, to reach 10% (*Le Monde*, April 22–23, 2001: 6). In September 2001 a first wave of elections to the Senate was held according to the new electoral law. Opposition from senators and machinations by them meant that the number of female senators rose only from twenty to twenty eight in the upper chamber which has 321 members (*Le Monde*, September 21, 2001).

Both these patterns of change were, at least in part, the result of the types of claims made by mobilized networks seeking to change the status of women within their respective countries. In the case of France, these activists proudly bear the name of parity movement (*mouvement pour la parité*) and describe it as a grass-roots movement (Bataille and Gaspard 1999: 32ff). In contrast, for the Spanish case it is we who are naming the loose grouping of feminist activists in left-wing political parties and women's groups mobilized in favor of higher representation of women in state structures the "democratic-parity movement" or "parity movement." Nonetheless, both fit the analytic definition of a women's movement used in this book (see Chapter 1), that is, their definition, content, development, or issues are specific to women and their gender identity. As such, they revive claims advanced by the suffragists of the first-wave women's movement and the actions of the second-wave to feminize political institutions.

The decision to pursue a strategy of reform of the French Constitution was not available to Spanish feminists. In 1996, after fourteen years of socialist government, the conservative People's Party (PP) took over the national government. This successful alternation in power demonstrated (just as it had in France in 1981 when the first left-wing president took office in the Fifth Republic) that constitutional issues of the transition were settled.¹ However, issues of institutional, especially constitutional, change remain difficult in Spain because of the conflicts with Basque nationalists. At this point in time, institutions remain hostage to that issue. No change in the constitution is politically feasible until the issue is settled and therefore most parity activists in Spain do not dare to call for constitutional reform.

But this is only one reason for the differences between the two movements; others are important too. Therefore, this chapter examines and compares

¹ There were, for example, serious discussions in the press throughout the 1970s about whether there would be a hand over of power from right to left, if the candidate of the United Left were to win an election. As late as 1981 a certain sigh of relief occurred as Valéry Giscard d'Estaing moved out of the Elysée leaving it to François Mitterrand; republican institutions had held.

these movements in the following ways. First, it describes the reconfiguration of the French and Spanish states and asks what effects these changes might have for social movement politics. Second, it examines in more detail the actions of these two parity movements, seeking to account for the different strategies and outcomes in the two cases.

RECONFIGURED STATES AND MOVEMENT ACTION

Despite what might appear at first glance to be large differences between the two cases, France and Spain share experiences on several dimensions of reconfiguration of their state institutions, with respect to structural changes within the state, discourses about the role of the state, and changing relationships between the state and civil society (see Chapter 1). We can expect each aspect of reconfiguration to have consequences for the type of mobilization that the two women's movements undertake, although as the next section makes clear, there are also factors in civil society that help to account for differences between French and Spanish women's claims.

With respect to structural changes, both states are committed to the project of building Europe, although for slightly different reasons. In the case of Spain, with its history of Francoism and its more fragile democratic institutions, as well as its economic problems, the European Community (and then Union) was perceived, both from Madrid and in Brussels, as a buttress for the democratization process. After the death of Franco in 1975 all political forces, with much popular support, promoted closer ties with European institutions. Therefore, the governments of socialist Felipe González (elected in 1982) actively participated in the development of a European dimension to their actions and politics, with Spain joining the European Community in 1986. In France, by 1983 the choice of accepting the European monetary regime over any more autarkic solution was made, and in subsequent years, first under the presidency of François Mitterrand and then that of Jacques Chirac, the state was deliberately opened to the influence of European institutions.

These commitments provoked a shift in the institutions of political representation. It became legitimate for citizens, including those who were active in social movements, to seek representation in European institutions and recognition from them. Politics had become multilevel (Liebfried and Pierson 1995).² These commitments also brought a change in the very definition of what it meant to be French or Spanish. National identities became more pluralist, more varied, while social rights were realigned.

In addition, in both countries there has been a change in the political discourse about the role of the state, one which blurs distinctions between left

² This chapter does not address the other way in which politics was becoming multilevel, with the moves toward federal-style arrangements in Spain and stronger regional governments in France.

and right and that has consequences for public policy and service delivery. Both Spain and France have moved away, on the left as well as the right, from the social traditions of the Keynesian welfare state. In part the shift results from the convergence criteria imposed by the European Monetary System, but there have also been, within the domestic politics of each country, forces for neoliberalism, including of a left-wing variety, which would reduce state spending, redirect activities from direct provision to public financing of privately provided services, and seek partnerships with the associations of civil society (Letablier 1996).

In France, François Mitterrand made an historic choice in 1983 to move the economic policy of the socialist governments toward a broad center republican tradition and away from the more left-wing vision of republicanism that placed the goal of reducing inequalities – both social and sexual – front and center (Jenson and Sineau 1995: ch. 5). The goal according to the president and his supporters within the Socialist Party and elsewhere was to “modernize” France by reconfiguring the role of the state and its relationship with civil society. The change in ideological discourses and policy preferences as well as the institutions of the Fifth Republic have led to a weakening of party ties, as the party system itself dissolves in the face of institutional reinforcement of presidentialism and the notion that little separates the social policies of the right from those of the left.

Bringing about such a shift required altering the principles of the political discourses which had underpinned state actions. In the first three post-1945 decades in France, for example, the distinction between social classes and between left and right provided the basis for social and political difference.³ In the 1980s this link began to disintegrate. While France did not commit itself to the hardy neoliberalism of Reaganism or Thatcherism, equality of opportunity began to replace equality of results as a central goal (Gélédan 1993). France had succumbed to neoliberalism’s enthusiasm for competitive individualism.⁴

Child-care services, care for the dependent elderly, and policies for the economically marginal still capture a relatively high level of public funding,

³ Electoral politics of the Fifth Republic became bifurcated. After 1958 the Communists were readmitted to the status of legitimate party and the centrist Christian Democracy folded its tent. Most other forms of politics beyond elections also turned on class distinctions. For example, throughout the postwar period, associations representing any category of the population were aligned with a political family and often with a political party. The latter was the case of the *Union des Femmes Françaises*, a flanking organization of the Communist Party. But there were also parent-teacher associations divided by political family, teachers and professors unions, hunting and fishing associations, and so on. French citizens’ political identity depended on their position on the left-right spectrum. Such alignment continues in Spain and is described below.

⁴ The goal of achieving equality gave way in these years to struggle against *exclusion*. Rather than seeking to equalize, the idea was simply to make sure no one fell out of society.

but services are being provided outside of public institutions, in the voluntary sector or the social economy. This makes the third sector, nonprofits, and voluntary associations important actors (Jenson 1998; Joël and Martin 1998).

Broad differences in political discourse still separate right and left in Spain. Nonetheless, differences between the major Spanish political families on economic and social policy have also narrowed. Both support monetary rigor and controlling the deficit. The Socialist Party continues to present itself to the electorate as the party most concerned with the maintenance and expansion of the welfare state, rather than abandoning its commitment to social rights. Generally speaking, however, the Conservative Party also tries to look like a center rather than a right-wing party, and so the PP promises not to destroy the welfare state. It has signed social pacts with unions regarding this issue.

Nonetheless, downloading is also occurring in Spain. The conservative government is proposing that people are better cared for by the family and community than by the state. Indeed, the state’s financing of services via subsidies for delivery by groups in civil society has resulted in one of the major areas of growth in the women’s movement in the 1990s, that is direct provision of services. Whereas in the 1970s such actions were often a form of civil disobedience, with the redesign of social services in the 1990s, women’s groups are now involved in front line delivery of state-funded services (see Valiente this book).

Discourses of left and right on class and gender power still distinguish Spain’s two political families, then. Parties in the left speak about economic inequalities more often than the Conservative Party, with the latter particularly stressing opportunities for people to participate in the labor market, make a living, take care of themselves, and be able not to depend on the welfare state. Indeed, the notion of “opportunities” is crucial to the PP, which entitled one of the main documents presented to its 1999 Congress, “In favour of a Spain full of opportunities” (*Por la España de las Oportunidades*).

There are two potential consequences of such reconfiguration of the state for social movement mobilizations. One is that as the relationship between state and civil society is altered by governments, the social rights of citizenship lose legitimacy and responsibility is assigned to the family or the community as civil and political rights gain importance. The definition of citizenship may even be narrowed such that it comes to mean only the right to civil and political rights. In such a universe of political discourse, movements still committed to a social agenda and to achieving the social rights of citizenship may find the going heavy, while those whose focus is primarily on civil and political rights may find that their way is smoother. Second, as public services are hollowed out, and provision of services becomes less transparent, social movements may have to adjust their mobilization strategies. The state and its agencies have a less direct – or at least seemingly less

direct – involvement in creating solidarity and social equality. The private sector, whether commercial or nonprofit, appears to have a larger role. The result is a challenge to the repertoire of social movements that have traditionally mobilized to face the state and make claim to the state. Finally, as multilevel politics become the norm, patterns of mobilization and interest intermediation will alter.

These observations of the patterns of reconfiguration in states, their institutions, and their practices lead to three alterations in patterns of mobilization of women's movements, and more particularly, the parity movements.

1. The structural change to upload responsibilities to the EU will make mobilization increasingly multilevel, involving the quasi-state institutions of the Union.
2. The greater the shift in political discourse away from its grounding in class analysis, the greater likelihood of crosspartisan or nonpartisan mobilization.
3. The more the principles of postwar, and in the case of Spain post-1975, politics are altered, the greater will be the downplaying of claims in the name of social rights and a rising emphasis on civil and political rights. Those wings of the women's movements that still include a social rights agenda will find themselves in greater difficulty than those that make claims primarily in the name of civil and political rights.

The next two sections of the chapter demonstrate the extent to which the two movements analyzed here follow these patterns. To anticipate the conclusion, we will find that the French movement conforms more to these patterns than does the Spanish one.

LE MOUVEMENT POUR LA PARITÉ IN FRANCE – A STAR ASCENDING

Despite the fact that we now associate the notion of the movement for parity with the widespread mobilization which has marked French electoral and social movement politics and to a lesser extent those of Spain, the first calls for parity were actually organized by the European Community. As early as 1990, the idea of gender parity in decision-making institutions was being advanced in Brussels, and in November 1992 the first European Summit of Women and Decision-Making was held in Athens. A number of French women, from both the right and the left, were actively involved in the summit. For example Simone Veil (a member of a center-right party and former president of the European Parliament) and Edith Cresson (former Socialist Prime Minister of France) were the official French representatives, while Yvette Roudy, Françoise Gaspard, and Elisabeth Guigou (all socialists) were active participants.

The statement of principle signed and named the Athens Declaration asserted: "a democratic system must assure equal participation by its citizens

in public and political life. . . . Women represent half the population. Equality requires parity in the representation and administration of countries."

The summit that produced the declaration was organized by the European Network of Women in Decision-Making, which was created and funded by the Equal Opportunities Unit of the European Commission. The latter had, in its Third Action Plan in 1990, identified the absence of women in decision-making positions as a major blockage to the achievement of the equal opportunities guaranteed by Article 119 of the 1957 Treaty of Rome.

At its creation in 1990 the European Network was charged with studying the social and political mechanisms which generate inequality and to collect precise statistical data about women's participation in all domains of decision making. In other words, the task was to provide detailed analysis and to propose concrete actions so that equality could be achieved. While the attention given to gender equality was not new, either for the European Union or for second-wave feminism, there was a slightly different twist. The call was for absolute equality and for mechanisms guaranteed to achieve it.

By the time of the Athens Summit, mobilization was increasing in France. From the beginning, the claim was framed in terms of citizenship. For example, in 1992 Françoise Gaspard, Claude Servan-Schreiber, and Anne Le Gall published *Au pouvoir citoyennes: Liberté, Egalité, Parité*.⁵ In 1993, fourteen existing women's associations representing elected women, Catholic women, and the center-right, among others, formed Elles-aussi. Described as dedicated to achieving parity, it would conduct a national campaign to mobilize, support, and prepare women to become candidates in upcoming elections (*Le Monde*, January 16, 1993). Simultaneously, Yvette Roudy created the Assemblée des femmes, as a group within the Socialist Party (Parti socialiste, PS). Despite being an internal body, the group was open from the beginning to interested women who were not members of the party. Academics were included in this category. Among the members of the support committee was Elisabeth Guigou, *ministre déléguée* for European issues. Throughout 1993, colloquia were held, including at the National Assembly and the Senate on March 8, and one at UNESCO organized by Gisèle Halimi's group, Choisir la cause des femmes. The first public demonstration, in front of the National Assembly, also took place in April of that year. Another public event was the publication in the national newspaper, *Le Monde*, of the *Manifesto of 577 persons for parity*. The group was composed of 289 women and 288 men, drawn widely from the political spectrum. Gender parity in electoral institutions was described as being as basic to democracy as the separation of powers and universal suffrage (*Le Monde*, November 10, 1993).

⁵ A number of press articles also appeared in 1992 explaining the electoral successes – such as they were – of the French Greens (*Verts*) by their commitment to running lists with equal numbers of women and men.

The basic claim advanced in all these events was the same: There must be an *equal number* of women and men in electoral institutions.⁶ The reasons for calling for parity were not always the same, however. As early as 1993 there were a variety of arguments in circulation. One is a republican one, which is perhaps the best known because of being promoted by Françoise Gaspard, one of the most visible activists for parity. It inscribes gender parity in the tradition of the movement for suffrage and identifies the absence of women in politics as a national humiliation. A second part of this argument is that the justification for gender parity is simple: There would be no humanity if there were not two different sexes. Women and men together define and perpetuate the species. Therefore, they must together, and equally, organize social life, not because of any sexual essentialism but because they jointly form the human race. This formulation called for a reformulation of the republican tripartite. A true democracy should be based on the real, not false, political equality of all its children, translated into a revised and corrected republican symbolism: liberty, equality, and parity (*Le Monde*, February 19, 1993).

While they sought the same reform, and therefore also mobilized for gender parity in the institutions, other women, especially those coming from the right of the political spectrum, tended to justify it differently. For example, at the UNESCO meeting in June 1993, Simone Veil said, "I believe that men and women are rich in their differences and that they are complementary. It is, moreover, in the name of these differences and of all that women can offer that it is necessary to demand equality in politics."⁷

Many proponents of parity explicitly reject the notion of quotas, preferring instead to promote simple equality, offering several reasons for being wary of them. Probably the most important was the rejection of an earlier quota by the Constitutional Council. In 1982, the socialist government, with the unanimous support of the National Assembly, had proposed a quota of 25% for the lists in municipal elections. In effect, the law would have limited all lists to a maximum of 75% of candidates of the same sex.⁸ This timid effort to impose a quota was immediately found unconstitutional by the Constitutional Council, which declared on November 18, 1982 that the law contravened both Section 3 of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic and Article 6 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. In essence, the argument was that a 25% quota, in the name of affirmative action, interfered with the equality of all citizens before the law, guaranteed

⁶ For a summary of the arguments, in English, see Gaspard (1998b).

⁷ As the journalist Christiane Chombeau remarked, "a few years ago, Madame Veil's views would have provoked protests in a meeting of women. Instead, thunderous applause greeted this claim to a right to equality in difference" (*Le Monde*, June 6-7, 1993).

⁸ Do not be fooled by the unanimous vote. Most legislators were confident the Conseil constitutionnel would overturn the law.

by these two sections of the constitution.⁹ In order to get around the judgment against quotas and affirmative action, activists promoted simple equality, that is parity in the number of women and men (Mossuz-Lavau 1998: ch. 2).

A second reason for preferring parity to quotas was that the word was familiar from existing discourse about representation. While parity itself was a very familiar concept, being used as a basic principle for a variety of employer-employee institutions, use of the term by the European Network and French activists was novel in two ways. It had never before been applied to the composition of electoral institutions and it had not been used to describe the distribution in terms of sex.

The call for a reform of electoral institutions to institute gender parity was quickly linked to broader debates and discursive shifts about the role of the state, one of the elements of reconfiguration of the French state. As the goal of equality of outcome for income distribution gave way to the more liberal search for equality of opportunity, issues of access and fairness came to the fore. Everyone should have her or his chance, but the market (including the political market) would decide the result. Thus, the parity movement with its focus on access and gender equality but its indifference to whether the women elected were right wing or left wing, rich or poor, and so on, fit well with this notion of equality.

Secondly, structural changes within the state, especially those associated with the move to Europeanization, economic reforms, cutbacks, and so on, generated dissent. One of the political spaces in which this dissent was first expressed was in a public debate about the so-called crisis of representation that provoked a good deal of controversy in the winter of 1992-3. By December 1992, the notion was gaining ground that the political world was closed, elites had lost touch and were making decisions that did not reflect their constituents' views, that many were corrupt, and that they clung to outmoded distinctions such as left and right. The time had come, according to the interveners in this debate, to move away from old practices. In this controversy, the Greens, whose positions blurred the usual left-right distinctions, were frequently presented as examples of all that might be good.¹⁰

The consensus that ultimately emerged from the debate was that it was necessary to replace the old and tired party hacks with a new generation and that the political institutions should be reformed to make them more open

⁹ Some constitutional experts now wonder whether the Conseil constitutionnel would have been able to come to the same conclusion after 1984, when France signed the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Discrimination. It permits affirmative action as a temporary step to promote gender equality (Sineau 1997a: 124, n6).

¹⁰ This description is derived from an analysis of the texts published in *Le Monde* in December 1992 and January 1993. The Verts' proclaimed position was that they were "ni, ni" (neither right nor left).

and less likely to be taken over by a small and isolated elite. For example, the holding of multiple offices, which permitted a single person to hold several elected positions simultaneously (for instance, mayor, deputy, regional councillor, Euro-parliamentarian) came in for criticism.

The groups and associations promoting parity that were created in 1992 and 1993 picked up and elaborated precisely such themes. The crisis of representation, in which elected officials were too distant from citizens and there was a need for a new kind of politics, was frequently the point of departure for their claims. Instituting parity would automatically bring a significant renewal of political personnel; the National Assembly in 1993 still was 94% male. The old and tired could be replaced and new politics could begin. For example, prominent socialist and feminist Yvette Roudy justified founding the *Assemblée des femmes* by the fact that political parties' misogyny – reflected in their failure to nominate women – cut them off from their political base.

As early as 1993, the parity movement exhibited the pattern we have identified as a response to the reconfiguration of the French state. It was heavily influenced by its ties to the European-level Network. The Summit of Athens provided a catalyst to organizing activities in France. The constant back and forth of activists who were active in the European Network meant that funds flowed to French groups, and French political women were among the leaders of the network. Secondly, actions crossed party lines. Initially, it is true that the official groupings tended to reflect the left-right split. The *Assemblée des femmes* arose in the PS while *Elles-aussi* was linked to the center-right. Nonetheless, the boundaries were always blurry. The *Assemblée des femmes* welcomed individual feminists who were not socialists. Moreover, both Simone Veil and Edith Cresson represented France in Athens. Even more telling was the ease with which the earliest demonstrations were organized and crossed party lines. March 8, 1993 was marked by a meeting at the Senate, organized by Yvette Roudy, but including twenty-five women's groups from both left and right, and by a round table at the National Assembly organized by the grouping *Reseau femmes pour la parité*, again a transpartisan group.¹¹ In contrast, the feminists active in the popular sector (*le mouvement social*) marshalled only a dozen associations to protest the issue of abortion (*Le Monde*, March 7–8, 1993). Parity was not on their agenda.

These characteristics of the movement intensified over the next years. Actions at the European level continued, French women were involved, and these mobilizations helped legitimate the actions of French groups. For example, on May 18, 1996, thirteen women ministers from the fifteen member states of the European Union signed what has come to be known as the

¹¹ This network included several women's groups, including the *Assemblée des femmes*, the women's committee of the Verts, the *Conseil national des femmes françaises* (itself composed of 120 associations), *Elles-aussi*, and so on (*Le Monde*, April 6, 1993).

Charter of Rome. They had been invited by the president of the European Council to a summit on Women and the Renewal of Politics and Society. While their signature on the Charter did not officially commit their governments, it nonetheless did address a strong statement to the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) which was about to embark on preparing modifications of the Maastricht Treaty. The Charter identified the principal responsibility of the IGC to be the reinforcement of democracy. In that context, these ministers claimed that democracy requires giving priority to actions with the potential to generate equal participation and a partnership between women and men. Moreover, only with such equal participation will citizens have confidence in their political institutions. In other words, for those who signed the Charter, the next step in the building of European institutions – via the elimination of the democratic deficit – required a radically increased presence of women in all decision-making institutions.

Increasingly, the name CLEF (*Coordination pour le lobby européen des femmes*) appeared at the head of actions for parity. This grouping of sixty associations was funded (as were similar groups in the other member states) by the EU. CLEF joined, for example, in signing the Open Letter to President Chirac in March 1996 that called on him to live up to his electoral promises on parity (*Le Monde*, March 8, 1996). Another example: CLEF was also in the Network Woman, Man, Parity (*Réseau Femme et Homme, la parité*) that was formed in November 1998 to assure legislative passage and implementation of a reform.

The fiftieth anniversary of female suffrage (April 21, 1944) provided an excellent occasion for mobilization and several actions were launched. By 1995, however, the best known of the parity activists were seeking to broaden their popular base. They began to name themselves the parity movement. They undertook signature campaigns. They promoted common strategies and joint actions. New networks formed. For example, *Demain la parité* [Tomorrow Parity] was established in 1995 at the instigation of Françoise Gaspard, who suggested that the largest associations and federations of French women's associations coalesce around a common strategy (Servan-Schreiber 1997: 37). The eight affiliated associations or federations of this network are *Action catholique générale féminine* (ACGF), *Association française des femmes diplômées des universités* (AFFDU), *Coordination française pour le lobby européen des femmes* (CLEF), *Elles-aussi*, *Organisation internationale des femmes sionistes* (WIZO), *Parité-Infos*, *Union féminine civique et sociale* (UFCS), and *Union professionnelle féminine* (UPF) (Massé 1996: 4). By 1997, an inventory identified seventy-two associations of all kinds working for parity, forty of which worked almost exclusively on it (*Assises nationales* 1998: 196). Again, the mobilization and affiliations crossed partisan lines and political families. Indeed, in June 1996, ten female ex-ministers from governments of the right and the left published a Manifesto for Parity in *L'Express* (Sineau 1997a: 120, 3). Again the notion that women

and men brought different qualities to politics and that their skills should be respected appeared in this manifesto.

Politicians responded and elections became important moments for debating and clarifying positions, as well as mobilizing. The legislative elections in the spring of 1993 had been a major disappointment; indeed some attributed the surge of mobilization, including the creation of the *Assemblée des femmes*, to the frustration of that experience.¹² From the beginning of the movement, the overwhelming maleness of the National Assembly and Senate had been described as a French – shameful – exception, a red lantern in the world. Comparisons with other countries (sometimes somewhat dismissive of them) were common. For example, in her overview for the 1993 elections, journalist Christine Leclerc wrote: “[Although a] macho country and an emerging democracy, Spain has three times more elected women” (*Le Monde*, February 19, 1993).

Change did occur, however. In the 1994 Europarliamentary elections, the socialist Michel Rocard ran a list which was – almost – half female and half male.¹³ Indeed fully six lists looked as if they were following a parity model. In the 1995 presidential elections, under pressure from the parity movement, the candidates were compelled to reveal their positions.¹⁴ The communist candidate called for a referendum, the Green for constitutional reform, Lionel Jospin (PS) proposed an Estates-General of women to discuss the matter, while Jacques Chirac called on the parties to encourage female candidates. Édouard Balladur, who had forgotten to put the matter in his platform, announced on the 8th of March that he supported minimal quotas for municipal and regional elections.

Following the election of Jacques Chirac in May, the Prime Minister Alain Juppé appointed the most feminized cabinet in French history, at 29%. By November of the same year, he had dismissed eight of the thirteen, provoking an outcry throughout the ranks of women politicians and many parity activists. Such unanimity arose directly from the stance of the movement. While there might be differences in the philosophical grounding of various tendencies, as described previously, there was very little talk of the *policy* content that might follow from electing more women. Moreover, because of the nonpartisanship clearly implanted in the movement, women from the left as well as the right found it logical to defend the *Juppettes*, as the women fired from the cabinet were sometimes termed.

¹² The rate of election of women in 1993 was: 17% Communist; 15% ecologists; 8% PS; and 7% UPF (*Le Monde*, February 18, 1993).

¹³ There was a notorious break of the order exactly at the point where the cut-off was expected to be, thereby favoring male candidates. Such alternation was a novelty only for the Socialists; the Verts always had such a list.

¹⁴ An all-candidate meeting was organized by the Conseil national des femmes françaises on April 7.

Consideration of policy content could not be completely avoided, however. The parity activists and the movement itself stumbled for a moment in the fall of 1995. At that time, in response to a call from the CADAC (Coordination pour le Droit à l'avortement et à la contraception), 40,000 women and men, many in family groupings, joined the demonstration in Paris on November 25 in defense of the right to abortion and contraception. While access to abortion had been deteriorating over the years, due in part to the violent actions of the pro-life forces, the precipitating factor creating this large turnout and the support of unions, parties, and women's groups was the legislation produced by an RPR deputy, Christine Boutin. It was hard, in this case, to defend the principle that policy content was not the issue when discussing representation. The problem intensified as the Front National took to nominating women. Nonetheless, activists continued to refuse to enter what they saw as a trap. For example, they used the following argument to explain their principles to those scandalized by the National Front's substitution of Cathérine Mégret, self-acknowledged as having no qualifications for the position, as mayor when her husband was relieved of his duties by the courts:

But in mixing together everything, and using the argument that a “good” male candidate is preferable to a “bad” female candidate, one is quite simply undermining the basic idea of parity. The claim of parity, we should remember, is based on the self-evident assumption that there must be as many women as men in public life, from all the political parties that participate in elections. (Servan-Schreiber 1997: 5)

It was finally in 1997 that the situation began to change, on two fronts. Two years earlier the PS had announced that 30% of its candidates in the next election would be female and it would reserve winnable seats for promising candidates (Praud 1998). Its closest competitors took note and when nominations closed, 27% of communist candidates were women, while 28% of those of the Greens and the PS were female. The Right did not follow, although 12% of the National Front candidates were women (*Le Monde*, May 23, 1997). The final results were not as high, of course. Only 17% of socialist deputies were female, but women's presence rose from four to forty-two. The overall average doubled, reaching 11%. Despite this multiplication, only Greece in the EU had a lower percentage.

The second change came with respect to the main demand of the parity movement – that is, for legal action. The government of Lionel Jospin, with the grudging acceptance of President Chirac, decided to propose a constitutional amendment. This had been the recommendation of, *inter alia*, the *Observatoire de la parité*, named by Prime Minister Juppé after the Right won the 1995 elections and reporting in January 1996. The consultative body was headed by Gisèle Halimi, who had in earlier elections stood for the PS, and Roselyne Bachelot, a supporter of the RPR (Rassemblement pour la République, Jacques Chirac's political formation). The original proposal

would have located the constitutional legitimacy of actions to achieve parity in Article 34 of the constitution. This would have meant it applied to a wide range of circumstances and might have become a constitutional pillar for affirmative action. After long debates, the cabinet decided to change Article 3, thereby limiting the constitutional permission to elections (*Le Monde*, December 19, 1998). This more limited law was voted by the National Assembly, rejected by the Senate and then finally passed in June 2000.

The debate leading up to the various votes provoked conflict, to be sure. From opponents came calls for everything from instituting quotas rather than changing the constitution, to reforming the electoral law to doing nothing at all. This is not the place to review that debate (among others, for a summary, see Sineau 1997a and Mossuz-Lavau 1998: chs. 3–4). More interesting for our purposes is the conflict *within* the movement for parity about how to achieve it. Immediately after the report of the *Observatoire*, for example, Évelyne Pisier called for a process of nominations which would introduce parity into other political positions than simply elected ones (*Le Monde*, March 11, 1997). For her part, Françoise Gaspard came out *against* the idea of a constitutional amendment, preferring a regular law. She saw the idea of constitutional change as an easy way for male politicians to gain time, as well as to do “damage control” (Gaspard 1998a).

An even more interesting conflict was that about a feminist agenda. After 1995 and the mobilization to defend the abortion law (*loi Veil*) and the eruption of protest throughout France in December, which eventually came to be termed *le mouvement social*, a coalition began to prepare for the National Assizes on Women’s Rights, held in 1996 and 1997. Organized in a series of meetings around the country, they involved mobilization of 106 associations, the five main union federations, and seven left-wing political parties, all of whom participated in the preparation of these meetings in the provinces and Paris. Given this composition, it is obvious that the Assizes did not reach very far into the center of the political spectrum; it remained anchored on the left.

Discussion focused on five issues – abortion, violence against women, family policy, work, and politics. However, as the press coverage and the final report both testify, it was only the last two that really received sustained attention.¹⁵ In other words, the issues on the feminist agenda were reduced to these two. The focus on work is hardly surprising, given both the composition of the organizing collectives and the job situation in France, with its unemployment rates hovering around 12% and that of young women substantially higher.

¹⁵ For example, the final report of the National Assizes published none of the preliminary studies collected from experts in the fields of family, reproductive rights, or violence, while including several in the domains of work and politics. The section of the report dealing with politics began, as well, with a statement about divergences within the movement about the advisability of legislative change (*Assises nationales* 1998: 175, 183ff)

What is somewhat more surprising is the extent to which the parity movement had come to be seen as the visible face of the women’s movement. Overshadowed were issues that had given rise to the women’s movement, in the case of abortion, or sustained it through the thin years of the 1980s, in the case of violence against women.¹⁶ It is, of course, not the case that all such issues have been ignored. A campaign in favor of contraception and protection of the supplies of the abortion pill (RU-486) was announced on March 8, 1998, and Prime Minister Jospin eventually got around to appointing an official responsible for women’s rights. Fully six months after the election, Geneviève Fraisse, a researcher in philosophy, was named interdepartmental delegate (*déléguée interministérielle*), one of the most minor posts in French public administration. Women’s difficulties in the job market have been discussed in the press (*Le Monde*, November 5, 1997) and the 1997 March for Women’s Work received some attention.

Nevertheless, none of this competes either in public attention or policy action with the more favored parity movement. It is the social movement that promises to address the institutional crisis by relegitimizing political institutions, that gladly accepts the Europeanization of politics, and that attaches no policy conditions, and certainly no social policy conditions, to its claims. It fits well within the neoliberalism of the reconfigured French state.

MOBILIZATION FOR BETTER REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN SPAIN

The actions we are calling the parity-democracy movement are not self-named as such, as we have already said. This is one crucial variation among several that distinguishes these two cases. Despite these differences, however, it is helpful to examine the Spanish story for what it tells us about the questions at hand and particularly our expectations about state reconfiguration on social movements. Our argument is that the ways that state reconfiguration has occurred in Spain, while similar in many ways to what happened in France, were tempered by continuing differences between the two political families of left and right. One result is that the movements have not followed the same patterns.

Before moving to that analysis, we will dispose of one hypothesis. This is that the existence and political activity of the groups pressing for the election of more women is due to “need.” While France remained at the bottom of the pack in Europe throughout the 1990s, Spain’s location was better. The presence of women in political decision making has been increasing in Spain in the twenty years of democracy and has reached the middle of the EU list. In 1995, one in four (24%) representatives in the lower chamber were

¹⁶ Family policy, as many other public policies, had never been an important concern of the French women’s movement.

women and the increase continued even when the conservatives were elected in 1996 and 2000.¹⁷ Such a continuous increase of women in high-ranked political positions might have, then, weakened the argument that new strategies (especially mandatory quotas for all electoral lists) would have to be tried in order to increase the proportion of female politicians. Opponents can always argue that in some years or decades the number of women politicians will be equal to those of men, if things continue to work in the usual way. The parity-democracy movement, however, seeks faster change.

In part, however, the increase in numbers is due to the quotas established by parties of the left in the 1980s. These, in turn, were the result of mobilizing within parties of the left and the unions even before 1975. Women in the Communist Party (Partido Comunista de España, PCE, later included in the electoral coalition of Izquierda Unida, IU) and in the trade union formerly close to it, the Workers' Commissions (Comisiones Obreras, CCOO), managed to form women's committees at the highest possible organizational level since the beginning. In contrast, women in the Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español, PSOE) and the union formerly close to it, the General Workers' Union (Unión General de Trabajadores, UGT) initially formed women's units with a lower profile (Threlfall 1996: 119, 138). Feminists were active within the PSOE at least since the beginning of the transition to democracy and sought organizational status within the party. In 1976, a women's caucus (a kind of study group) called Women and Socialism (Mujer y Socialismo) was formed. In 1981, one of its members was elected to the PSOE executive committee, and others followed. In December 1984 the women's caucus was raised to the status of a women's secretariat at the federal executive level (Threlfall 1985).

The left-wing parties established internal quotas. The IU was consistently the third largest party in elections (except in two national elections). It was created by the merger of the Communist Party and other parties to the left of the Socialists, and since 1986 has had a commitment to gender equity and a quota for women in its statutes (*El País*, August 31, 1998). The PSOE, which governed Spain from 1982 until 1996, also established a 25% quota for women in 1988.

Without taking a stand on the claim that change will happen automatically, it seems reasonable to assume that more than "need" was in play. Moreover, several French parties, including the Socialists, have had quotas for many years, without much effect (Praud 1988). Quotas are not sufficient, then, to account for French-Spanish differences. Moreover, Spanish feminists themselves are mobilizing for new strategies and it is their expressed interest which convinces us that more is going on and more attention is needed.

¹⁷ This proportion is above those of Belgium, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, and the United Kingdom, and is very close to those of Germany and Austria, although below the Nordic countries and the Netherlands (Uriarte and Elizondo 1997: 338).

As indicated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, in August 1998 it appeared that the socialists would present a bill to reform the electoral law, thereby instituting a compulsory quota for all parties. This expectation was the product of the on-going efforts of the parity-democracy movement, a very loose set of feminist activists in left-wing political parties and in women's groups mobilized in favor of better representation of women in state structures. Although the announcement was premature, and the bill was not forthcoming, the history leading up to it does reveal the story of the democratic-parity movement.

Issues of representation have preoccupied Spanish feminists for many years. The first democratic elections in four decades, in June 1977, raised expectations among many advocates of women's rights (Durán and Gallego 1986: 208-209). Therefore, on July 13, 1977, at the first meeting of the Congress of Deputies, women's rights activists presented their manifesto in support of the twenty-five women elected to parliament, denounced the fact that there were so few elected, and asked the three feminist MPs to push the feminist agenda in Congress (Escario et al., 1996: 270-272). Through these years, however, the women's movement, albeit weaker than in some countries, pursued an ambitious agenda that went far beyond issues of women's presence in politics. In the 1970s and through the 1980s, among the goals pursued were equality before the law, reproductive rights such as decriminalization of the selling and advertising of contraceptives (achieved in 1978), a divorce law (obtained in 1981), legalization of abortion,¹⁸ criminalization of sexual violence, and equal employment policies. Because in the 1970s the expansion of the welfare state was still seen as a feasible goal by many social and political actors, feminists also concentrated on pressing for social rights which would benefit women.

Since then, as many of the most pressing legal changes (divorce, contraception, violence) had been achieved and as the goals for and spending on social policy have been scaled back, the issue of representation has taken up more of the agenda. Moreover, because the Spanish women's movement in general has involved women within parties, it is not surprising that they have come to focus on matters of access to elected office, both within their parties and more generally.

The current Spanish democratic-parity movement consists of feminist leaders and activists in political parties and in women's organizations,

¹⁸ Abortion was illegal in Spain until passage of the 1985 "organic law." Abortion is now permitted under three circumstances: when the woman has been raped, when the pregnancy seriously endangers the woman's life, and when the fetus has malformations. An organic law (*Ley orgánica*) regulates, among other matters, fundamental rights and public liberties. An absolute majority of the Lower Chamber, in a final vote of the whole project, is necessary for approval, modification, or derogation of an organic law. For an ordinary law only a simple majority is required.

primarily from the left.¹⁹ It includes feminists from the Socialist Party and left-wing political parties to the left of the PSOE, such as the United Left (Izquierda Unida, IU) and the New Left (Nueva Izquierda, NI).²⁰ As for women's associations, the parity movement rose out of well-known women's groups mainly linked to political parties, including (among others): the Federation of Progressive Women (Federación de Mujeres Progresistas), close to the Socialist Party, and the Dolores Ibárruri Foundation (Fundación Dolores Ibárruri), close to the United Left. Other much less known feminist groups, that rarely receive mass media attention, such as the Forum of Feminist Politics (Forum de Política Feminista), are also mobilized in favor of parity democracy.

The conservative PP and women's associations close to it are not mobilized around the issue of political representation, even if their numbers in elected office have also been increasing since the PP won the elections of 1996 and 2000. As with many other conservative parties (although not, as we have seen, those in France), women from these parties think that it is wrong to intervene in the recruitment process in order to elect more women. For instance, Amalia Gómez, General Secretariat of Social Affairs in the first PP government, dismissed such efforts as "the wonderbra quota" (*la cuota del wonderbra*) (*El País* May 18, 1997). Her more restrained colleagues term quotas a form of discrimination (see Isabel Tocino, PP Minister of the Environment in *Mujeres* 1994, (13) 22–23). Others claim that only their party gives women real opportunities to gain the centers of power, in contrast to the artificial quotas of the PSOE (*El País* February 19, 1999).

Conservative women argue instead that the process must be "fair" and "neutral," so that the "best people" (including women) can be elected. Some may accept "soft" measures (such as encouraging women to stand for office) but oppose "hard" ones (such as quotas). Therefore, the story of the

¹⁹ The sources for this case study mainly consist of: 1) in-depth semistructured interviews with women leaders and activists of political parties and of women's organizations conducted by Celia Valiente in April and May 1999; 2) press articles from *El País* (the main national newspaper) and *Mujeres* (the publication of the Women's Institute, the main institution at the central state level in charge of improving women's status); and 3) published and unpublished documents of political parties and women's organizations. Personal interviews and press files are more important sources for the Spanish case than for the French for three reasons. First, there are hardly any academic sources on the topic. Second, press articles are the only published material. Third, local, regional, and European elections will be held in Spain in June 1999. At the time of interviewing (April 1999), political parties were elaborating electoral lists (in Spain there are closed lists). It was especially important to trace the fight for parity democracy at the moment of making the lists. This could only be done with the help of press articles and personal interviews.

²⁰ This movement is feminist, in the sense that its members claim to be so. This is especially important in Spain, where the term *feminist* is usually employed in a derogatory way. Therefore, many people who believe in the goals of feminism refuse to use the word *feminism* to describe their beliefs and practices. Yet in this case, the term is used.

democratic-parity movement in Spain is one that tilts to the left, and this is a difference between it and the French movement, characterized by cross-partisanship from the beginning.

Important in Spain, just as in France, is a group formerly called the Spanish Association to Support the European Women's Lobby (Asociación Española de Apoyo al Lobby Europeo), and now named the Spanish Coordination for the European Women's Lobby (Coordinadora Española para el Lobby Europeo de Mujeres). This umbrella organization active in national and EU politics has close ties with the Socialist Party and is the sister organization to France's CLEF.

As the presence of this latter group suggests, multilevel politics has been important to the Spanish story for a decade. International arenas, especially the EU and the UN World Conference of Beijing (1995), were used by Spanish feminists to promote their agenda of equal gender representation in politics. Supranational organizations served as public forums where activists could express demands as well as act as a source of ideas and material resources supporting development of parity demands in domestic politics. Indeed, informants report that even Spanish women from the PP, the conservative party, have become more favorable to the idea of increasing the number of women in political decision-making positions after having attended European-level meetings, where they observed conservative colleagues from other member states promoting that goal (Paloma Saavedra, interview).

The first Spanish moves in favor of parity in the 1990s had a clear European and international dimension. On September 22, 1990, the European Women's Lobby was created, with CLEF from France and a Spanish group soon joining. The European lobby includes Europe-wide women's organizations as well as women's umbrella organizations from each EU member-state. The purpose of this lobby is to promote women's interests at the level of the EU (Hoskyns 1996: 185–186). The Spanish Association to Support the European Women's Lobby was founded in March 1993. It is an umbrella body of women's groups funded mainly with European money. It quickly began to promote parity; in 1994, the Spanish association presented a motion to the General Assembly of the European Women's Lobby in favor of it (*Mujeres* 1994: (13) 23–24).

Spaniards have also been active within the institutions of the EU and through them the UN. In 1994 and 1995, preparation of the Beijing Conference included many events, all of which usually had at least one session related to the topic of equal representation of women and men in politics. These activities were organized, among others, by the Spanish state, the European Union, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and Spanish women's associations from civil society. The Spanish state, through its Ministry of Social Affairs, was very active in the preparation of the Beijing Conference, because Spain held the presidency of the EU in the second half of 1995 when the conference took place. The Beijing

platform of September 1995 described access to political office as crucial for women's well-being and encouraged states to make the necessary provisions for the fulfilment of the aim, including a reform in electoral law (*El País*, November 2, 1998). In addition, the Fourth EU Action Program on Equal Opportunities (1996–2000) was approved in December 1995, when the EU presidency was held by Spain. One of the main objectives of this action plan was the equal participation of women and men in decision making in all fields.

Mobilization also occurred within Spain. For instance, in October 1997 a European congress of political management by women (Congreso Europeo sobre Gestión Política de las Mujeres) was organized in Bilbao by the feminist group Lambroa (Colectivo Feminista Lambroa) to create a women's list for the European elections of June 1999. Female politicians from the parties to the left of the PSOE and regionalist parties were invited to recount their political experiences (*El País*, October 27, 1997). There have also been studies commissioned on the topic of women in decision-making positions, such as the research undertaken by the Dolores Ibárruri Foundation (1998) on the local level. The results were presented in a seminar attended mainly by local politicians from all political parties.

During the campaigns leading up to the elections of June 1999, activists energetically initiated public debates on the issue of women's access to political decision making. However, the proposal to change the electoral law in order to make quotas mandatory for all political parties is under consideration not only in feminist circles (as it is usually the case with gender matters in Spain) but also in the general political arenas.

Just as we saw in France, when the debate about the crisis of representation broke out and involved male as well as female politicians, several people who usually do not participate in debates on gender equality have made significant interventions on the topic. Such is the case, among others, of Gregorio Peces Barba, former president of the Congress of Deputies (a member of the PSOE) and currently president of the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, and Alfonso Ruiz-Miguel, professor of philosophy of law at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Both men have published articles, the first in *El País*, the country's major newspaper, and the second in *Claves de Razón Práctica*, a leading journal of opinion (Peces-Barba 1999; Ruiz-Miguel 1999). Both articles support parity activists' call to amend the electoral law and develop the claim that such a reform is constitutional.

In addition, in May 1999 the Spanish Coordination for the European Women's Lobby (Coordinadora Española para el Lobby Europeo de Mujeres, CELEM) organized an international conference on the topic including politicians and scholars from EU member states and the European institutions. Parity activists in Spain are fully aware of the danger of Spain finding itself in the same situation as France or Italy, whose constitutional courts have already declared quotas unconstitutional. Moreover, as

previously mentioned, activists are not calling for constitutional reform because of the link to the Basque issue. Despite these examples of cross-party activities, however, a major distinction between the French and Spanish actions in favor of parity is that the Iberian actions almost completely respect the left-right divide. Moreover, while women's organizations from civil society play a not negligible role, it remains a secondary one. The initiative has belonged to the Socialist Party.

In general, all individual activists and groups that fight for parity democracy see themselves on the left. The core of the movement is formed by feminist leaders and activists from the Socialist Party and women's associations in civil society but close to the PSOE (Elena Valenciano, interview). The parity movement has been unable – and is probably unwilling – to attract members from the right. The conservative party in government and Women for Democracy (Mujeres para la Democracia), the main women's association very close to the PP, never speak of “parity democracy.” They strongly oppose any attempt to make equal representation of women and men mandatory for all political parties and in all state institutions. Indeed, most right-wing parties reject even voluntary quotas.

Even more reflective of the continuing importance of traditional left-right splits in Spain is the fact that there are divisions *within* the left, just as the French (and most other movements) were divided in the 1970s and 1980s. There are groups and activists across the broad left promoting parity democracy, but they do not do so together with PSOE activists. The separation of parity activists who belong or are close to different left-wing parties is not total, of course. Some rather limited joint actions have been undertaken. The most common way such a joint action happens is that a group organizes an event and invites representatives from the other parts of the left. For instance, when PSOE activists organize a debate on parity democracy, they will usually invite a speaker from the United Left and perhaps someone from the New Left. Perhaps only one non-PSOE person will be invited. Moreover, such invitations rarely go to right-wing parity activists. As a result, individual events clearly belong to each party or group; they are not nonpartisan (Pilar Folguera, interview).

Keeping the debate within the bounds of traditional discourse helps to explain the life story of parity in Spain. It also, as we will see, shapes the re-configuration of the state, where the discourse about the role of the state and the relationship between state and civil society still distinguishes between the two major political families of left and right. Most movement has been in the direction of quotas, rather than parity, and these quotas have been established by the parties themselves. After the defeat of the PSOE government in the 1996 general elections, the party's General Secretariat for Women's Participation (Secretaría de Participación de la Mujer) and the feminist lobby within the PSOE took up the parity democracy issue and provoked a debate. At the Thirty-fourth PSOE Federal Congress (June 20–22, 1997) a resolution

passed limiting the presence of candidates of a single sex to no more than 60% in internal party positions and on electoral lists. This was, in other words, an increase of the party's quota from 25% to 40%.

The process of increasing the number of party positions held by women seems to have happened in all left-wing parties (Pilar Arias, Patrocinio de las Heras, and Caridad García, interviews). Indeed, the parity agenda is now being instituted by the newest party on the left. The New Left (Nueva Izquierda, NI) originated from a split of the United Left. Its first congress in 1998 set up a governing structure in which 50% of all decision-making positions were occupied by women.

The actual implementation of quotas for candidates has proven more difficult, however. Indeed, getting the PSOE to respect its own commitment to parity has not been easy. For example, in the regional elections of Galicia (December 1997) and the Basque region (October 1998), the PSOE lists were only 20% and 33% female respectively (*El País*, January 31, 1999). Parity activists in the PSOE mobilized in the spring 1999 to avoid a repetition of this failure to respect the party's position. Key to this action was the fact that two parity activists were members not only of the PSOE executive committee but also of the party committee in charge of the approval of electoral lists: Micaela Navarro (Secretary for Women's Participation) and Carmen Martínez-Ten (a former director of the Women's Institute). The approval of electoral parity lists was controversial, involving as it did rejection of some electoral lists prepared by PSOE leaders for their electoral districts. The committee defined parity lists as those containing at least 40% of women in winning positions.²¹ Eventually, however, almost all PSOE lists fulfilled the 40% quota (Micaela Navarro, interview).

There is also another aspect of internal politics that has led feminists to intensify their call for parity and therefore compulsory quotas. The PSOE has a primary system, since 1997, used to designate the candidate for prime minister and to select candidates to other posts including the Basque *Lehendakari*. While some parity activists within the PSOE celebrated the move to primaries, as a mechanism for internal democracy within parties, others soon discovered to their dismay that primaries are very often an exclusively male business. Most of the people who compete in primaries and win them are men. Women tend not to run in primaries and those who dare to compete are usually not elected. There are several reasons for this lack of success, among them, women often lack the backing of important sectors of the party or women are much less known by PSOE members in their districts than male candidates with whom they compete. In the interviews conducted for this chapter no parity activist was openly against primaries, since this position is taboo within many sectors of the PSOE. Nonetheless, all of them confessed

²¹ Winning positions in a given electoral district were defined as the positions that the PSOE had won in the earlier local, regional, and European elections (Carmen Martínez-Ten, interview).

that they had not foreseen the short-term detrimental consequences of primaries for the representation of women. All of them also declared that other things being equal, quotas would be less effective if primaries continue to be held than in the absence of primaries.

In part to avoid such difficult internal politics, less than two months after being elected Secretary for Women's Participation of the PSOE Micaela Navarro announced her goal of reforming the electoral law to force all political parties to include a minimum percentage of women in their lists (*El País*, August 8, 1997). After what turned out to be a premature announcement of a PSOE-sponsored bill to establish a compulsory 40% quota, the male leadership backed down. Supporters of such a bill mobilized within the party, but could not carry the day. The General-Secretary of the PSOE, Joaquín Almunia, and the candidate for prime minister in the next general election, José Borrell, both agreed that there was a risk that the reform could be struck down by the Constitutional Court (*El País*, December 27, 1998). Thus, convincing the PSOE to move on changing the law proved impossible, despite the expressed support from other left-wing parties. The idea has been revived, however, and is included in the party's platform for the next election (Patrocinio de las Heras, communication).

The Spanish parity movement also differs from the French in that it retains explicit policy goals. Some documents do represent gender parity as an end in itself, as a matter of justice.²² Parity activists picture themselves as followers of the first suffragists, who fought for the right to vote, while they are fighting for the right of women to be elected. Nevertheless, in the same documents and in the interviews conducted for this study, gender parity is also claimed because activists also maintain a social agenda. The argument goes like this. If women and men were equally represented in the political arena, policy outcomes would be different and more positive. Policy outcomes would better meet the particular needs of women. Policies would be elaborated in a more consensual way. Public measures would include the interests not only of women but also of other, less-privileged groups.

Nor is achieving more women in elected office the principal aim of the Spanish parity movement. It is one among other components of a broader feminist agenda. Equal sharing of family responsibilities is another goal almost always present in parity documents. The argument is that the distinction between the private and the public is fictitious since the personal is political.

²² Since there are no "founding documents" in the parity movement in Spain, we use as the main parity documents five articles on the topic published in *El País* by Cristina Alberdi, Minister of Social Issues, 1993-6 (1998); Inés Alberdi, first Director of the Women's Institute, 1983-8 (1994); Carlota Bustelo (1992) (all three are feminist PSOE activists); Enriqueta Chicano (1999) (President of the Federation of Progressive Women); and María Ángeles Ruiz-Tagle (1999) (President of the Spanish Association to Support the European Women's Lobby).

Responsibilities should be shared: Political decision making should not be the monopoly of men, as family and caring responsibilities should not be the monopoly of women. Spanish parity documents and the women interviewed for this chapter also referred to the need to develop care services in the welfare state, to help women combine their professional and family responsibilities.

In all these regards, the Spanish movement is still promoting the social rights of citizenship. Indeed, parity activists often claim to defend a "new social contract" between men and women, with three dimensions: equal access to political decision making; equal right to paid employment; and equal sharing of caring responsibilities.²³ While political rights come to the fore in inter-party debate, social matters still remain a visible part of the feminist agenda.

CONCLUSION

The first section of this chapter suggested that the reconfiguration of the state has had three consequences for patterns of mobilization of the women's movement. Structural changes will make multilevel politics more common. Changing relationships between state and civil society and shifting discourses about the role of the state will blur traditional left-right distinctions, enhancing cross-party actions and giving political rights precedence over social rights. Our analysis reveals that these changes in patterns of mobilization can be observed in both France and Spain, but more consistently in the former than the latter, in large part because the internal party scene remains, as we have already noted, more differentiated in the Iberian case.

Spain has been a major contributor to the politics of the EU, and the democratic-parity movement was actively present in developing and promoting the European agenda as well as using the resources of the EU within Spain. Thus, multilevel politics are present as in France. However, the traditional left-right moorings of Spanish politics have not disappeared as much as they have in France. Cross-partisanship is not the norm. Right-wing parties scorn the PSOE's and other leftist parties' enthusiasm for quotas, although they are nominating women. The left uses the language of parity when calling for quotas, while the PP has coined another expression. It speaks of "equilibrated representation" (*representación equilibrada*) (Rosario Barrios, interview). Moreover, the language of social rights has not been abandoned; increased participation by women is sought *in order to* achieve a broader agenda rather than simply to achieve gender justice. There is a left discourse, coming from both the PSOE and its leftist competitors, defending the welfare state (albeit a retrenched one . . .) while the right displays more interest in shifting responsibility from the state via downloading. Claims for increased representation of women track this distinction; the democratic-parity movement is confined to the left.

²³ One might note that the issue of sexuality is completely absent from this agenda.

The French case shows all three patterns reflecting the effects of state reconfiguration on the French women's movement. From the beginning, multilevel action was key, and is likely to remain so. Secondly, since 1992 the French parity movement has been decidedly and consistently cross-partisan. This is in sharp contrast to other parts of the women's movement, such as the National Assizes, that traced the more traditional left-right divide. Thirdly, the parity movement has become the acceptable, albeit controversial, face of the women's movement, gaining support from politicians and having at least one version of its claim recognized via constitutional reform. Its agenda of ignoring differences in policy content and focusing only on the gender of candidates has gained favor from politicians across a wide political spectrum.

Therefore, domestic politics influence the ways in which the movement for women's representation is actually inscribed in politics. The left-right divide continues to characterize Spanish politics in general, and the democratic-parity movement, in contrast to that of France, incorporates a policy agenda into its claims for better access for women to elected office. The defenders of the social agenda have not been sidelined.

Interviews for the Spanish Case

- Arévalo, Nuria. President of Young Women. Madrid, April 22, 1999.
 Arias, Pilar. Coordinator of the Women's Section of the New Left in the Region of Madrid. Madrid, April 19, 1999.
 Barrios, Rosario. Parliamentary Adviser on social affairs to the conservative group in the Congress of Deputies. Madrid, April 27, 1999.
 Bernard, Norma. President of Socialist Youth of Aragon. Madrid, April 27, 1999.
 Candela, Milagros. President of the Association for Feminist Thought and Action. Madrid, April 14, 1999.
 Chicano, Enriqueta. President of the Federation of Progressive Women. Madrid, April 15, 1999.
 De las Heras, Patrocinio. Local Councillor from the Socialist Party in the City of Madrid. Madrid, April 20, 1999.
 Folguera, Pilar. Vice President of the Spanish Association to Support the European Women's Lobby. Madrid, April 14, 1999.
 García, Caridad. Secretariat of Women in the United Left in the Region of Madrid. Madrid, April 21, 1999.
 González, Lucía. Leader of the Commission on Rights and Liberties in the United Left in the Region of Madrid. Madrid, May 4, 1999.
 Martínez-Ten, Carmen. Member of the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. Madrid, May 4, 1999.
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