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THE INFLUENCE OF THE SPANISH DECENTRALIZATION PROCESS, THE EUROPEAN REGIONALISM AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE REGIONALIZATION OF EXTREMADURA

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Abstract

This dissertation makes an overview of the process of regionalization in the Spanish autonomous community of Extremadura in the last 30 years. We explore concepts of region, regionalism and regionalization within a common European framework and within the theories of the New Regionalism in Europe. This paper studies the decentralization process in Spain after the promulgation of the 1978 Constitution, analysing the position and role of Extremadura in that process. Likewise we analyse the role of the so-called Historical Regions in the decentralization process and the creation of Autonomous Communities. We observe some of the regional policies of the European Union in its attempt to create a polycentric network for development where economic and social cohesion are the main premises, promoting diversity as an engine of development and unity. It also embraces highly contested concepts in the social sciences as globalization and regional identities. We addressed the role of regions as autonomous entities in the European Union and on a global space. Likewise approach the capacity for action and cooperation of the regions and their outward promotion. The aim of this dissertation is to try to analyse the influence that the three main factors may have in the process of regionalization of Extremadura. Spanish decentralization process and the creation of Autonomous Communities; the influence of regionalist policies of the European Union in the region concept and its constitution as a protagonist in territorial cohesion policies; and the effects of globalization on local spaces and resurgence of the region and regionalist identities.

Resumo

Esta dissertação faz uma visão geral do processo de regionalização na comunidade autónoma espanhola da Extremadura, nos últimos 30 anos. Nós exploramos conceitos de região, o regionalismo ea regionalização dentro de um quadro europeu comum e dentro das teorias do Novo Regionalismo na Europa. Este trabalho estuda o processo de descentralização na Espanha após a promulgação da Constituição de 1978, analisando a posição eo papel da Extremadura nesse processo. Da mesma forma, analisamos o papel das chamadas regiões históricas no processo de descentralização ea criação de Comunidades Autónomas. Observamos algumas das políticas regionais da União Europeia, na sua tentativa de criar uma rede policêntrica de desenvolvimento, onde a coesão económica e social são os principais locais, promovendo a diversidade como um motor de desenvolvimento e de união. Ele abarca também conceitos altamente contestadas nas ciências sociais como a globalização e as identidades regionais. Abordamos o papel das regiões como entidades autônomas na União Europeia e num espaço global. Da mesma forma abordar a capacidade de ação e cooperação das regiões e da sua promoção externa. O objetivo deste trabalho é tentar analisar a influência que os três fatores principais podem ter no processo de regionalização da Extremadura. Processo Espanhol descentralização ea criação de comunidades autónomas, a influência das políticas regionalistas da União Europeia no conceito de região e sua constituição como protagonista nas políticas de coesão territorial, e os efeitos da globalização sobre os espaços locais e ressurgimento da região e identidades regionalistas.

ABREBITATIONS

CAP – Common Agricultural Policy

COR – Committee of the Regions

ECB – European Central Bank

EDF – European Development Fund

EGTC – European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

EU – European Union

EURPSTAT – Statistical Office of the European Communities

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

NUTS – Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics

PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

PGI – Protected Geographical Indication

R&D – Research and Development

TSG – Traditional Specialties Guaranteed

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IV CHAPTER

INTRODUCTION

Speaking of regions may be familiar, it may seem that its definition and its implications beyond the mere description is something already known and established. This is far from reality. Region is an ambiguous notion where geographical space and social construction come together to create organizations that we analyse and study but where we live and die. The notion of region varies from one country to another (Marcou, 1999). The regions are presented as a constantly moving entity, not only borders but also several features, ranging from geography, society and identity until institutions, competencies and laws. The regions are the areas closest to our reality, hence its importance.

In recent years, Europe was plunged into a regionalization process the authors call New Regionalism. The presence of imminent starring region in social, political, economic and cultural has adopted an exceptional value to this space, hence our analysis.

Regions can be created in one way or another, there is no established standard. Some have enjoyed prominence during years of history, being today regions with deep regionalist feelings, even some nationalists. Besides these regions have regional experience and maybe some degree of autonomy. Others are of a recent birth; some may even administrative purposes to which they can be "blamed" for not having an identity or regional culture. This is far from reality. Identity is also very ambiguous concept that has to be studied carefully, as its dynamism moves to various identity works and authors.

When we talk about region and identities, we can not escape a concept widely spoken today, globalization. If globalization actually has the opposite effect to the literal meaning of its name, then it is a concept that we must consider in this paper. The truth is that in one way or another the resurgence of regional identities and globalization go hand in hand.

Spain, after more than 30 years of dictatorship with strong centralized state, will lead a decentralization process unprecedented in the history of this country. With the Constitution of 1978 as a reference, the different regions of Spain will be acquiring a degree of autonomy that is still growing today. Some of these regions such as Catalonia and the Basque Country, have a historic regionalist tradition can push other regions to be constituted as autonomous communities and form the map you can see today in Spain.

After the entry of Spain into the European Union, common development policies take effect in the Spanish territory. These policies focus on a scale: regional. So in a relatively short time, the Spanish autonomous communities, not only are empowered, but will have an increasingly prominent role. If we add all European trends (and Spanish according to the Constitution), by which respects and promotes cultural diversity within their own borders, this will give greater safeguards to the regions.

The Autonomous Community of Extremadura was officially born in the early 80s with the arrival of the Spanish Constitution. Extremadura Never before had formed a recognized geographical area, nor never had regional institutions that represent them. Extremadura is born and reaches a degree of autonomy similar to that of the other Spanish autonomous communities. Furthermore, this region depends heavily on European policies for development, given their low statistical indices of economic development. So Extremadura is formed as a region comparable to the others.

Our goal in this paper is to analyse the process of regionalization of Extremadura, from the Spanish Constitution of 1978, in an environment where European regionalist policies are becoming increasingly important in a globalized world and that given their side effects while homogenized regionalist sentiments revives.

The aim of this work is to provide the necessary and precise information to determine the influence that has had Spanish decentralization process, regionalism within this country and the European regional development policies in the process of regionalization of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura. Moreover the globalized context and the European trends may have caused strong influence in its promotion as a region with Institutional bodies and its own identity.

I CHAPTER

1.1 Assumptions and Methodology

The main objective of this dissertation is to analyse and discuss the influence of the Spanish regionalism and the regional policies of the European Union in the development of a regional identity in Extremadura. For that, we are going to analyze the territorial, political, cultural and economic arguments, in the process of regionalization, and how the promoters of regionalization and the European Union use them. We will generally delve into the process of regionalization of Extremadura, the current situation of the Autonomous Communities and the activities of regional stakeholders, political and administrator actors within the policies of European Union. In a first moment we will approach to what extent an environment with a deep aim of regionalization and internal division may influence in the creation of a sense of region, to what extent other regions can influence in the creation of a regional identity. Then we will try to analyse how the European Union regional policies influences the development of that regional identity, as well as the self-sufficiency for be in control of the government, the development of the region and the trans-border cooperation.

We will focus on the Spanish region of Extremadura. We will study and discuss its establishment as a region. Extremadura is not part of the group of the historical regions of Spain, neither of the group of nationalities within the country. It is defined as a 'mere' region, which due its proximity to Portugal and the debatable isolation from other regions of Spain, has focused its interest in a strong regional development, trans-border cooperation and the promotion of its culture and traditions beyond its boarders.

To complete the work we will analyse the concepts of globalization and the emerge of regional identities that may influence in the sense of region and regionalism in Extremadura.

Methodologically we have followed an analytical-interpretative approach. The logic of this approach has been based in a working model common in social studies, which after a theoretical basis, seek for the main factors and premises that may influence in that regionalization process and it impact. These studies explore different trajectories of regionalism, understanding the main challenges and alternatives for local governance.

First we have created a theoretical base working with written publications about region, regionalism, decentralization, creation of regions, European Union Policies, globalization, identity, projects, as well as researches and other current researches on social sciences as geography, anthropology, sociology, demography, urbanism, etc. Second, we have proceeded to collect and analyse those publications in order to aim to find those factors that determine the process of regionalization in Extremadura.

In the empirical analysis we have analysed works and European Union publications regarding the process of regionalization in Europe as well as social works that observe identity issues, local and regional movements and more complex concepts such sense of belonging to a place. After that collection and the analysis, we proceeded to its interpretation, that combined with the literature attempts to answer the questions that have arisen this research, i.e., getting results and try to find the factors that indicate whether we are talking about a real influence in the regionalization process of Extremadura.

1.2 Organization of chapters

In the *II Chapter* we delve into the definition of the main concepts we are going to work with. Concepts as region or identity have a tremendous influx on works and studies in Social Sciences, and not only. Thus we will observe different approaches of the same concepts in order to understand the definition that we will use in the present work. More over we will attempt to give a common European Framework to those concepts with the aim to give a validate rule to our definitions when talking about regions in Europe. In this section we will tackle the problems that may arise while

dealing with concepts that may seem known and e with established definition but they are usually very ambiguous.

We will generally study the two main different approaches of Regionalism in Europe, analysing in deep the New Regionalism that some authors asserts, occurred in Europe in the last 30 years. Furthermore observe the basic elements that appear in the process of regionalization and regionalization different types that may occur in the environment of the European Union.

Once seated our theoretical and understood the basic concepts, we will focus on the process of decentralization in Spain since the introduction of the 1978 Constitution, which states the bases to dismantle a strongly centralized state after the dictatorship of Francisco Franco.

Then address the role of different regions in the framework of development policies and territorial cohesion. We will see what are these policies and which are its major premises. Also, we shall see how the European Union sets a regional organization based on the already established European regions. Finally, in this section will also address in greater depth the role of regional identities and how they are affected by globalization.

In the *III Chapter* we will focus on the Autonomous Community of Extremadura. This Spanish region is not considered a historic region, however, today is heavily regionalized. We will analyse its position within the Spanish decentralization process.

Observe the influences that other Spanish regions, with more regional experience and a stronger regional identity can cause on Extremadura. Likewise we will analyze the possible influences that the previously studied European policies can cause. We will continue with the study of regions and globalization and the role that local and regional institutions play in this process. Regional institutions, closer to the people, gain prominence and become more important in the dialogue between the European Union and Europeans themselves.

In the *IV chapter* we will attempt to observe the degree of regionalization that has reached Extremadura. We will see its position as a region with the same range as

other European regions and nationalisms.

Likewise we will consider the ability of Extremadura to interact in itself, establishing direct dialogue with the EU and other regions, which can be part of other countries. We will study the strategies of Extremadura to promote itself as a region, different form others with its own identity. We will see the efforts that local, regional institutions, local businesses and even the citizens themselves do to promote and achieve the so-called development.

Finally we intend to observe the expectations that regions have in a European regional competition, which in turn calls for cohesion and cooperation. With these assumptions will attempt to establish whether or not there is prominent influence in the process of regionalization of Extremadura

II CHAPTER

1.Regionalism

1.1 Definition of main concepts and theories

This thesis is a about a specific type of territory, the "region". The concept of region continues to be significant in human geography and its importance is increasing in other fields too (Paasi 2002; Escobar 2001). To asset a definition of region would be an arduous task since still, "region is a complex concept but at the same time is an ambiguous term" (Popescu and Nica, 2011). This term is often taken for questions of economy, culture or identity phenomena or processes occurring in a given space. Gilbert (1988) made a distinction between three different approaches. The first is connected to the spatial organization of social processes concentrated on the political-economic basis of regions. The second acknowledges region as a setting for social interaction. "Both of these approaches perceive that space, its symbolic construction and ideological dimensions and its material basis as social and cultural constructs" (Paasi, 2002). The third approach to region is understood as a set of cultural relations between a specific group and its particular place, concentrating on the notion of regional identity.

Region may have several interpretations, classifications or categories. We can circumscribe it geographically, as an intermediate level, between the state and locality (Pulhe, 1995). But the territorial scope of a region may be broad, since some regions in this sense are larger than some states and smaller than some localities (Keating, 1998). Thus regions may be understood not only as territorial spaces but functional entities.

We can define region under a territorial and geographical criterion, thus region appears as physical space in a level between the state and the locality. A cultural approach would describe region according to the language, dialect or patterns of social communication or by the feeling of regional identity as well (Keating, 1998). This sense of regional identity may not exist in some places and where it does may vary politically, demanding autonomy for a certain territory, constituting regional alliances or a mere reconnaissance as an regional entity. Some authors describe region as social creation that can be made and remade. Therefore we can observe regions as institutional divisions, historically constituted or created more recently for a better administration after a political decision or for the mere right to self-determination. Even thought the citizens of those recently created regions may develop a sense of regional identity.

Furthermore, regions may be understood differently based in various perspectives. Some regions may be seen as dependent or subordinate to a dominant central place. Other conceptions locate regions in a continental framework, or place them within the global market, or even see them as something that challenges the state itself as the framework of identity and action (Keating, 1998).

We can observe that region can be defined and understood in several ways, but we do not intend to insist giving numerous definitions submerged by different criteria. In spite that, we will attempt to give a common definition in the frame of the European system. There is still not an official agreement between the Committee of the Regions, the European Parliament and the European Commission to define region (Popescu and Nica, 2011). This lack of consensus may be understandable if we take into consideration the fact that regions and its processes of regionalization are different and their nature and functions with regards to their states are different as well. The European Parliament's Community Charter for Regionalization offers a

definition of region that we are going to take into consideration for our present work. In this sense, region is:

> A territory which constitutes, from a geographical point of view, a clear-out entity or a similar grouping of territories where there is a continuity and whose population possesses certain shared features and whishes to safeguard the resulting specific identity and to develop it with object of stimulating cultural social and economic progress [1].

This definition foreshown what the European Regional Policy will intent to aim. The concepts of territory continuity, shared features and cultural, social and economic progress, for instance, are part of the main notions of the European Commission for the development of the "Europe of Regions" [2].

We commented above the complicity to define the concept of region, which may have several interpretations and classifications. Thus we circumscribe the definition of region made be the European Parliament mentioned above, as our notion of region for this work. Consequently, we can resume and describe regions as territorial units constructed by various elements with greater or lesser cohesion. Where the elements of geography, economic cohesion, cultural identity, administrative apparatus, popular identity, and territorial mobilization coincide in a space.

We will add to our definition, and not for that a confrontation may be created, the notion of region as social construction as well. "Regions must be seen as open systems rather than self-contained societies" (Keating 1998), may be perceived as flexible blocks. Thus we come back to the notion of region as an ambiguous term, due to some regional spaces may have different forms across the economic, cultural and political dimensions. Moreover certain regions may be not look for a better or clearer regional identity, for instance. However regions need that regional identity which will legitimize institutions representing regional interests (Popescu and Nica, 2011).

Here is when it comes the concept of "regionalism", commonly referred to the creation and implementation of institutions and bodies that represent a common sense

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[1] European Parliament. Resolution on Community regional policy and the role of the regions and Annexed Community Charter for Regionalization. Official Journal C 326, 19 December 1988, available at <http://aei.pitt.edu/1758/1/ep_resolution_regional_11_88.pdf>.

[2] European Comission: Regional Policy, Fields of activities, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/activity/index_en.cfm>

of identity and a collective interest and purpose within a geographical region.

"Regionalism is a current that strongly asserts itself on the European scene" (Popescu and Nica, 2011). This concept may be acknowledged as a dynamic term, since there are several ways to define it and approach it. It is difficult to establish the origins of regionalism (Fawcett, 1996). Thus, within the theoretical works that aim an explanation of regionalism, we can highlight two currents frequently mentioned: the regionalism after the II World War and the regionalism started from the decade of 80's, the "New Regionalism".

After the Second World War the weakening of the nation-state creates the favorable environment for the development and the theoretical approach of this phenomenon (Keating, 1998). The global market was intermediated by the state. The territorial policies focused on the mediator role of local political elites and on the distribution of resources in order to benefit of comparatives advantages. The creation of modern institutions supposed the creation of regionalism, as political project by which a state is governed in its attempt to organize its political and economic space into regions; that is to say, regionalism is more than an administration type of a territory (Popescu and Nica, 2011). Furthermore, regionalism has a social uphold, a collective that claim for regional petitions, owing to the fact that regions have social, economic, political and cultural aims.

By the 80's local and regional society became more advanced, stronger and solicit more regional interests (Keating 1998). The globalization, internationalization and the influence of the European Regionalization process eroded the state's power authority (Popescu and Nica, 2011, Gibernau, 1999; Featherstone,1993). Hence, a new wave of regionalism appeared. This "New Regionalism" became stronger, overcoming the national frame and competing with other regions (Keating, 1998).

The influence of the regional institutions in the international politics, relations and bodies grew. Their participation in the global market is more significant. Regions are governed by regional governments and administrations that more than act as an intermediation between the state and the region like in the past, they act by their selves. Regions acquire more competences. The political decision makers manage their territory and create policies adapted to the global competition, in aim not only to

bring certain success, but also to promote the regional interests. Regionalism is the force that supports the creation of regions.

At this stage, once we understood what region and regionalism is, we must find out what the concept of "regionalization" comprehends. Overall, regionalization could be defined as the creation, establishment or recognition of a level in the territorial organization of the state, in which regional institutions are created and which are granted with political decentralization, administrative competences, economic interdependence and other measures.

Furthermore a regionalization process implies a certain degree of local autonomy that varies from one region to another. From the last twenty years, regions in European Union have been benefited with the regional policies created by the EU through its construction process to correct economic and social disparities between different parts of Europe. This desired integration is achieved through regionalization and communalization of powers[3].

In addition, we are going to see five forms of regionalization proposed by Professor G. Marcou: (year?)

- *Administrative regionalization*: the central government delegates some responsibilities to the subordinated authorities. E.g. Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Slovakia, Sweden, etc.

- *Regionalization through existing local collectivities*: decentralized institutions act in their own frame of power. E.g. Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Rumania, etc.

- *Decentralization*: a territory will form a region where an administrative council will be established elected by universal and direct vote. E.g. Czech Republic, Poland, United Kingdom, etc.

- *Regional Autonomy*: regional assemblies are granted with legislative power and other competences guaranteed by a Constitution or a document with similar value. E.g. Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Spain,

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[3] Congress of Local and Regional Authoroties, Resolution of the Conference of local and regional authorities of Europe on imbalances in Europe (RES 100), 1978, 2-3. Available at <https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&Instran etImage=330832&SecMode=1&DocId=661974&Usage=2>.

etc.

- *Regionalization through federal authorities*: a union of states with equal rights forms a federal state. E.g. Austria, Germany, etc. (Marcou 1999).

Therefore, regionalization is seen as a process that aims to construct an autonomous capacity of actions in some manner, promoting an infra national but supra-local territory mobilizing an outbreak of "regional identity" in many cases.

Altogether, regional Identity, in its contemporary form, it is a social construction, forged in a specific context under the influence of social, economic and political pressures (Keating 1998). We understand identity also, as a process, which combines our past with, the nowadays: actual society, social, cultural and economic relations (Woodward, 1997). Identity is a production, which is never complete, always in process. But in this work, we don't intend to define and explain the complexity of the concept "identity" or to establish a classification of all the categories developed to define identity. Nevertheless, we would like to state clearly the approach and definition that we are using and we will use in this analysis.

There are three components that we must bring to the fore in order to understand regional identity as a key element for constructing regions and its relationship in political actions (Keating, 1998):

The first element is cognitive: the people should be aware of the existence of region and of its geographical limits. Furthermore, this also requires the knowledge of the regional specifics and characteristics, and the existence of other regions from which it can be compared and differentiated.

The second element is the affective one, how the people perceive and feel about the region in order to provide a framework for common identity and solidarity. The third element is the instrumental or practical one, relates to the way the region is used as a basis for mobilization and collective action in pursuit and search of social, economic and political objectives (Keating, 1998; Popescu and Nica, 2011).

Regional identity, as a social construction, is elaborated under the pressure of those three goals. Moreover, regional sentiment can manifest towards the achievement of

autonomy, although the share of the cognitive and affective elements not always imply political mobilizations.

In the post-modern nation-states we see an important increase of movements that exalt the specifics and characteristics of regional identities in Europe (Keating 1998). Globalization, the international market and migratory flows have brought a multicultural environment in our societies (Lapresta and Huguet, 2008). For globalization we understand a global notion where the world is perceive as "a place", where the nation-states have more troubles to choose between leave or avoid the consequences of structure becoming more enclosed due the increase in volume and speed of flows of capital, goods, people, information, technology and images.

The perceived threat of cultural homogenization is one of the factors contributing to the revitalization of minority cultures struggling to find a niche in the global net (Gibernau, 1999). As a consequence of globalization we find an identity crisis (Woodward, 1997). In addition, the identity sense and feeling grow and there are efforts to highlight it.

In this context, regional identities rise and have an important role in the organization, administration and management of the states that they belong. We should take into consideration that regional identity is one of the main elements for the creation of a region or its process to achieve their goals as a social and political spaces and systems of actions (Gibernau, 1999, Keating 1998; Popescu and Nica, 2011). In the process of construction of identities they aim to highlight their selves, its culture, identity features, language, economy system, etc., to be known and differentiated from each other. They focus their efforts towards its recognition, competences, social or economic policies, autonomy and independence occasionally.

In some cases, this rise of a regional and/or cultural identity claim for the recognition of this region as a Nation (Gibernau,1999). This brings us the question of what constitutes and nation. According to Fitjar (2010) there are two conceptions to take into account in this debate. In one side the voluntarits maintain that nations are imagined communities built by a common culture and united by a common will.

In the other side primordialists see nations as a cultural union, either linguistic, religious or ethnic, that in the case of cultural minorities within of a state, want to

achieve self-determination because of their linguistic, religious, ethnic or cultural differences with the majority, trying to achieve institutional recognition at the same time.

"Thus, both perspectives lead to the conclusion that regionalism in the form of minority nationalism will be more prevalent in culturally distinctive regions" (Fitjar 2010, p17). Those distinctive regions may demand political self-determintation and mobilizations. "A separate language, religion or ethnicity 'constitue[s] only a potencial' for territorial mobilization" (Urwin 1982, p 429 cit. in Fitjar 2010, p 17). Hence regional identity becomes a major factor in political mobilization (Woodward, 1997). But cultural factors cannot explain the levels of regionalism in Western Europe, and other factors may influence in the regional mobilization, taking into account political trends and influences in the region itself.

In Spain for instance, we can find different cases, therefore is interesting to study and compare. Spain is divided in 17 Autonomous communities and 2 autonomous cities, the first-level administrative division in the country. The autonomous communities guarantee the autonomy of nationalities and regions that conform the Spanish state, according to the Constitution of 1978. Since the democratic transition, the adoption of the Constitution and the entrance to the EU, Spain has developed a deep process of regionalization.

1.2 The process of regionalization in Spain: political, territorial, cultural and economic arguments.

The process whereby Spain reached the current level of regionalization is long and it encompasses the study of history, geography and other disciplines. We do not intend to explain the utter process here; instead, we will focus in the decentralization process in Spain since the Constitution of 1978 and the further regionalization. The complex Spanish decentralization process has led to a radical transformation of the model of territorial organization (Alonso 2010, p 11). However, this process can not be understood without placing it in a more general context of transformation of Spanish State, characterized by the practice of two different processes: democratization and decentralization.

The advent of democracy and the constitution of 1978 represented a new approach to regionalism in Spain. During the Franco's dictatorship Spain was a centralize country where the aims of self-determination, regional autonomy or regional identity were persecuted.

The democratization process engendered a drastic change. The first democratic government of Adolfo Suarez established after the General Elections of 1977 settled the decentralization policy for the country, creating the pre-autonomies, based on earlier territorial divisions, but with modifications and autonomy for them. Autonomy is the recognition of a certain level of self-government to the regions; obviously, the problem lies in determining what their scope (Giménez 2004, p 431). In 1979 was concluded the map of the pre-autonomies that, with very few exceptions, prefigured the final regional map adopted after the entry into force of the Constitution (Alonso 2010, p 15).

The Constitution of 1978 in the Section 2 "recognizes and guarantees the right to self-government of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed and the solidarity among them all"[4]. But also accentuate the unity and indivisibility of the State. This resulted in an unprecedented level of decentralization in Spain. However, the decision on whether or not a particular community can become an autonomous community is delegated to an assembly formed by the central government parliamentarians elected in the province seeking autonomous community status, plus, in some cases, by the members of the local supra-municipal bodies (provincial assemblies) of the territories aiming to become autonomous communities (Viver 2010, p 7). "The statutes are the basic institutional law of each autonomous community" (Giménez 2004, p 432). "Regions were created, i.e., reached their legal and political existence by the approval of their statutes of autonomy" (Torres cit. in Giménez 2004, p 432). The duty of these assemblies was to approve the proposal of the statute of autonomy. These statutes established the powers and institutions and the governmental and administrative bodies that the community will have, as well as the boundaries, competences and other matters. Then the statutes had to be approved by the Spanish Parliament.

To aim a deeper study of the statutes, its constitutional functions and substantive

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[4] Spanish Constitution (1978), Congress of Spain. Available at:
<http://www.congreso.es/consti/constitucion/indice/index.htm>. [Retrieved on 17/03/2013]

limits would be an onerous task and it would lead us beyond the purposes of this work. Nevertheless we shall mention the process of drafting the statutes. Both the central government and regional governments were involved in the drafting and then approval the statutes (Viver 2010, p 8).

Those Autonomous Communities that established a Statute of Autonomy during the II Spanish Republic in 1931-39, according to the Spanish Constitution, have the possibility to establish the Statute of Autonomy through a simplified faster process. Those territories, Catalonia, Basque Country and Galicia, the so called "historical communities" (Bassols 2004, p 82) had a deep sense of region (or nation?) represented by their regional branches of national parties that interfered in a greater extent in the central government representing their interests. The other Communities, the "no historical", those who had not approved at the plebiscite Statutes of Autonomy during the Second Republic could access to a reduced autonomy.

The section 143 of the Constitution sets that, " […] ordering provinces with common historic, cultural and economic characteristics, insular territories and provinces with a historic regional status may accede to self-government […]". Moreover, according to the section 144, an autonomous community may be created, when so expressed the national interest, which is determined by the Cortes Generales. The communities had a period of 5 years to establish their Statutes of Autonomy. Therefore, and due the lack of consensus of some regional governments, the central government was more involved in the process and the members of the two major political parties created the majority of the autonomous communities legislature.

Throughout this process it was evident that the intensity of regional consciousness was especially different from some regions to others where, in some cases, was almost inexistent (Fusi cit. in López-Aranguren, 1995, pp 41).

Thus, the different provinces that composed the Spanish state began the process of creating autonomous communities. As we mentioned previously, the historical regions made this process faster. Still, we should mention that the formation of provinces, regions and its borders are part of a dynamic, evolving and constantly changing process, which can be altered by the power of its inhabitants, according to the constitution. Other territories of the Spanish state had more difficulty organizing

their regions. This complicated process obeyed territorial factors coined throughout history and political factors.

As we mentioned before, the section 143 of the Constitution sets that, " […] ordering provinces with common historic, cultural and economic characteristics, insular territories and provinces with a historic regional status may accede to self-government […]". To determine which provinces would conform each community were taken into account historical, geographical, economic and political criteria.

For common evolution through history were created the regions of Galicia, Asturias, Basque Country, Navarre, Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Extremadura and Andalusia. Castile and León though, had to follow territorial patterns, clustering provinces that had no clear distribution such as Segovia, which was added by Decree Law. Cantabria would no longer be part of Castile and La Rioja as well. The province of Albacete that, initially was going to be part of Murcia, was added to Castile-La Mancha. The Canary Islands and Balearic Islands would be Autonomous communities for its insularity. Madrid was created for administrative reasons (Giménez 2004, p 433). In 1979 would get autonomy Catalonia and the Basque Country, Andalusia and Galicia in 1980, in 1981 the Principality of Asturias and Cantabria, in 1982 La Rioja, Murcia, Aragon, Canarias, Castile-La Mancha, Navarra and Valencia, and in 1983 Baleares, Castile and León, Extremadura and Madrid.

In the regions with a single province was abolished the county council and therefore have disappeared as such, and the old provinces of Oviedo, Santander and Logroño now became Asturias, Cantabria and La Rioja, respectively. The same goes for Madrid, Murcia, Navarra and the Balearic Islands, although the name "short" of the autonomous region coincides with that of the old province.

In short, after the ratification of the Constitution, and as a result of the implementation of the principles contained in Title VIII, in the course of a few years, the process of establishment of the 17 autonomous communities and the approval of its Statutes was completed. They were also equipped with their own governing body and representative institutions.

The decentralization of the State with the consequent delegation of powers and competences to the regions was a slow process, with disputes and complications and sometimes solved by agreements between political parties and regions. The historical nationalities usually have always demanded more autonomy and some of those disputes resulted from the different conceptions of autonomy that had the three historical nationalities and the Central Government (Alonso 2010, p 33).

We should consider that decentralization is also a reflection of a claim based on the existence of different historical, cultural, linguistic, and religious, which gives them legal and institutional entity (Ojeda et al 2007, p 12). The central government has granted privileges to these regions, according to the Constitution, what has aroused the anger of other regions that demand equality for all conform to the principles of equality and solidarity drafted in the Constitution.

The demand for more competencies grew and nationalist parties attained major influence on state decisions because of their widespread presence in Congress. These communities with a greater degree of political awareness claim a distinct recognition of their reality. Therefore, the territorial distribution of power shall constitute recognition and acceptance of differential fact of the existence of communities within its territory with a specific and political consciousness than the rest of the communities that conform the State.

In this way over years of negotiations have been implemented decentralization policies that gave more competencies to the autonomous communities to empower on issues such as health and education. Immediately after making official the agreement for the transfer of competency of health in 2002, the Government stated that the decentralization process was completed and proposed a pact "closing" the State. In short, the competence map was homogenized. (Aja and Viver 2003, p 73).

But the dissatisfaction of historical nations still remained and opened a period of reflection on the whole model (Alonso 2010, p 15). Moreover one of the major critics to the decentralized system is the absence of a "closing clause," clarity about the end of the process (Alzaga cit. in Giménez 2004, p 436). In addition we understand decentralization as a process, a process that may and should be characterized as

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evolutionary reality, it is not a decision to remain permanently fixed but must respond to the demands of institutions and, above all, a constantly changing society. Decentralization is the result of passing through different stages that are the consequence of the evolution of the groups, as well as its interests in a society (Ojeda et al. 2007, p 17).

What can be said without fear of misleads is that the process of decentralization of the Spanish state is a model still open, asymmetrical trend, in need of a good dose of will under-standing constitutional by political actors (Giménez 2004, p 436).

Decentralization transfers the management and its importance from the central government towards regional management. Regionalization process develops due to the need to enhance and empower the economic role of geographic spaces, such as strategy development and incorporation of these spaces to the world market, considering the regionalization as a way to decentralize the state.

The democratization model, meanwhile, adds to the region a greater role in the development of a practice of public participation in regional management, so as to consolidate and develop democracy, to develop a strong regional identity (Millán, 1991).

The possibility to have self-administration and autonomous govern, and the recognition of those territories as nationalities and regions will encourage a process of regionalization that will be emphasized when Spain joined the European Union.

Spain, as well as the European Union, is a territory with a severe cultural, economical, geographical variety concentrated in a small area.

1.3 European Union: Region as scale for development policies

    1.3.1 Regional policies: territorial cohesion and regional development

The European Union has a huge territorial diversity with geographical, climatic, cultural, economic and social differences that make this territory an area richly diverse. The green paper on territorial cohesion sets in its title "Turning territorial diversity into strength", stressing that diversity as a basis for enhancing the development of the EU. The development of the different regions of Europe, those joined by the Union, is to create strategies and policies that would suit each of the different areas that compose it, meeting the needs of each of these communities achieving a territorial cohesion and common welfare for all.

The EU's regional policy aims to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion by reducing differences in the level of development among regions and Member States.[5] At the core of the EU's cohesion policy is the concept of regional development. Within the Union there are many regions, some of them have reached high levels of development meanwhile others "[…] are ostensibly and unacceptably behind. The gap between the two groups is what cohesion policy aims at reducing, if not ultimately closing" (Hooghe 1996, p 60).

According to the European Commission [6], the European Union regional policies are investment policies to support job creation competitiveness, economic growth, improved quality of life and sustainable development. Besides it establish that:

> Regional policy is also the expression of the EU's solidarity with less developed countries and regions, concentrating funds on the areas and sectors where they can make the most difference. Regional policy aims to reduce the significant economic, social and territorial disparities that still exist between Europe's regions. Leaving these disparities in place would undermine some of the cornerstones of the EU, including its large single market and its currency, the euro.

Since its inception the European Union established a framework for intervention which would attempt to bridge the gaps between members belonging to the union, creating a common, equivalent, harmonious, balanced, and sustainable framework to

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[5]http://www.seap.minhap.gob.es/dms/es/prensa/actualidad/noticias/2010/03/20100310/text_es_files/RegionsoftheEuropeanUnion-Eurostat-.pdf (p7)
[6]http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/index_en.cfm

create economic and social cohesion, increasing levels of life and solidarity among its members. "European Union has in view to narrow the gap between the development levels of certain regions"(Mateoc-Sirb et al. 2009 p. 63-3). The Cohesion Policy goal is to select and co-ordinate sectoral policy initiatives that are instrumental in developing a given territorial space--region, sub-region, or local area (Hooghe 1996, p 10). This social and economic cohesion would strengthen after the Lisbon Treaty and the EU's new high-level strategy (Europe 2020) where the dimension of Territorial Cohesion was introduced[7].

In the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (2008) the concept of territorial cohesion is used as a tool to ensure the harmonious development of the regions and what is more important, territorial cohesion should ensure that "their citizens are able to make the most of inherent features of these territories". It emphasizes and exemplifies the European Union's motto "United in diversity" when identifying territorial cohesion as a means of transforming diversity of different regions of the Union, in a resource that contributes to sustainable development across the EU (Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion Turning territorial diversity into strength).

Due to the difficulty of setting a clear definition for territorial cohesion, lack of acceptance and the severe differences in approach and dimensions in the definitions proposed by other authors and works, we have decided to adopt the definition of Medeiros (2012) that defined territorial cohesion as:

> The process of promoting a more cohesive and balanced territory, by: (i) supporting the reduction of socioeconomic territorial imbalances; (ii) promoting environmental sustainability; (iii) reinforcing and improving the territorial cooperation/governance processes; and (iv) reinforcing and establishing a more polycentric urban system.

Territorial cohesion may be one of the key EU policies if we consider that in the period 2007-13 the budget for regional development policy and territorial cohesion was € 347bn - 35.7% of the overall EU budget for that period.[8]. Moreover, "territorial cohesion was fundamental goal of the European Union in the Lisbon Treaty in 2009"

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[7] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/cohesion/index_en.cfm
[8] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/funding/index_en.cfm

(Medeiros 2012, p 29). The total budgetary allocation for cohesion policy is decided for a period of five to six years, with pre-set allocations for each year and for the larger budgetary categories (Hooghe 1996, p 6).

The funds from the budget are destined to co-ordinate multi-annual programmes that are designed to promote economic development, mainly in regions with a GDP per capita lower than 75 per cent of the European average, regions in industrial decline and rural areas (Hooghe, 1996, p. 4).

Within this institutional framework of development policies and the European Commission, provides a common scale which shall promote policies and strategies for development. This scale does not lie in state approach as expected, but in the region, the new protagonist of the economic, social and cultural development of the European Union.

1.3.2 Regions as scale for EU policies

The scale to provide a common framework for territorial cohesion and development policies is the region. The European Commission states that all levels of scale from EU to local are involved in regional policies. Those policies are implemented by national and regional actors in partnership with the European Union and its legal basis of the EU Treaty. "The last twenty years have seen the emergence throughout the EU of regional public and private actors. First of all, regionalization has taken place in many states" (Hooghe 1996, p 70).

The scope and scale of the decentralization varies strongly from one country to another (Keating 1988), although "nearly all states have devolved power to subnational units in order to make the state structure more flexible and rational" (Hooghe 1996, p 9). The region would acquire a leading role in European territorial cohesion after the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, which stipulated in art. 130:

"the European Union policy must attenuate the differences between regions, the opportunity

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differences due to delayed development, it must create the structural instruments and the national and Community economic policy instruments that are correlated in order to remove the significant regional differences and to coordinate the different EU financial sources in the interest of an efficient regional policy".

"Thus regionalism became a development favoring factor" (Mateoc-Sirb et al. 2009 p. 62). It may be possible that we are seeing a tendency of new regionalism in Europe, taking into account the ideas that Keating (1998) states in his work *The New Regionalism in Western Europe:*

> The New Regionalism is predicated on a link between the region and the international or European order, with regions seeking their own place in the state, Europe and the international market.

Consequently, the region becomes the protagonist space and better positioned for economic, social and territorial policies of European Union. Regions would acquire an important role in the budgetary allocations of the European Union and would become the direct beneficiaries of the Structural Funds promoting the structural policies and developing programs. As the territorial agenda of the European Union asserts:

> Regions […] of varying size are best able to build upon their own strengths in the context of a Europe-wide cooperation with entrepreneurs as well as societal and political stakeholders. If they succeed in implementing networks in a polycentric European territory in an innovative manner, they will create conditions to allow them to benefit global competition in terms of their development.[9]

The power to administer directly the funds granted by the European Union and the single intervention of the Union to control and coordinate the conformity of the use of funds will ensure greater independence of the development of regions, without the intervention of the State to which they belong (Mateoc-Sirb et al. 2008 p. 64-4). But this change in the scale of intervention and action in regional and local actors in development policy, obey the tendency of significant change that has taken place in

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[9] http://www.eu-territorial-agenda.eu/Reference%20Documents/Territorial-Agenda-of-the-European-Union-Agreed-on-25-May-2007.pdf (p 4).

the organization of production and the growing competitiveness of regional markets (Hooge 1996, 68). In order to strengthen their international identity and specialization as a way of becoming more attractive for investment, regions, cities, towns and rural areas foster to cooperate with other authorities within the locality or with other countries.[10]

In this regard, regional and local institutions make more sense and acquire greater force as the motor to drive the development of these spaces. The proximity of citizens with these local institutions make it possible to respond the social demands more successfully, thereby allowing a stronger bond of this community and the region.

The regional institutions endowed with decision-making powers would acquire a reinforced role for the formulation and implementation of different policies with financial support for small and medium-size companies that operate within the regional boundaries, although they may operate trespassing their boundaries cooperating with other regions and institutions.

The region obtained an important role to gearing up the local economy for wider competition. The local producers could be helped to reach internationalized local producers markets, "and attract, in the wider European context, technology, partners for joint-ventures, and decentralized production facilities" (Hooghe 1996, p 68) This would explain the growing importance of regions in the European context and the insistence of the European Commission to grant a third of the Community budget to territorial cohesion and regional development. Local and regional actors are presented as the best alternative to promote, enhance, manage and create this development and that competitiveness the EU pursues. Hooghe (1996) presented 5 main reasons that explained why regions are the most suitable spaces for the interaction with small and medium-size firms and therefore as the best place for European development policies:

1- Their geographical size allows them to operate at the area-wide level and make use of a variety of resources and institutional functions.

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10 http://www.eu-territorial-agenda.eu/Reference%20Documents/Territorial-Agenda-of-the-European-Union-Agreed-on-25-May-2007.pdf

2- They can achieve a critical mass of administrative and technical expertise in interacting with relatively small production units scattered across a region's territory.

3- In a variety of national settings, regions manage significant amounts of financial resources in providing incentives to small local producers and can fine-tune these incentives in collaboration with sectoral associations.

4- They have legislative powers in matters related to industrial parks, loans to entrepreneurs, infrastructure planning, environmental control, vocational education, social service planning and provision, business services, transfer of technology to local firms, etc.

5- Regions can define intersectoral policies to serve a broad range of economic and social interests, which are territorially based and functionally interconnected, within the region.

Nevertheless we have an important factor that has to be analyzed in the context of European regions. The position of the region as a direct actor in European politics involves a direct contact of local and regional stakeholders with citizens and with sectors of the European Union. But, have the regions institutional representation in the EU?, to what extent are heard the voices of citizens?, Is there a full integration of the regions in the European Union?.

To address these problems was created in 1992 The Committee of the Regions, which was established in 1994 after the Treaty of Maastricht[11]. The COR (Committee Of the Regions) is the EU's assembly of regional and local representatives, an advisory body that allows local and regional authorities to make their voices heard in the decision-making process of the European Union. The COR provides political legitimacy and institutional representation for all European Union's territorial areas, regions, cities and municipalities, through an assembly of holders of a regional or local electoral mandate serving the cause of European Integration (COR, Mission Statement, 2009, p 1).

According to the COR [12] there are three fundamental principles to ensure that decisions are taken and applied as close to the citizens as possible and at the most appropriate level:

1- Principle of Subsidiarity: It champions that decisions in the EU are taken as

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[11] http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary/committee_regions_en.htm
[12] http://cor.europa.eu/en/about/Pages/key-facts.aspx

close as possible to the citizens. It ensures that the EU doesn't take any actions that could be carry out more efficiently by national, regional or local authorities. The COR, has the right to bring an action before the Court of Justice of the European Union.

2- Principle of Proximity: denotes the importance of the closeness of all levels of governance to the citizens. Moreover it determines that the work of national, regional and local authorities must be transparent in order to ensure the participation of citizens in the democratic process.

3- Principle of Partnership: in the decision-making process must be involved the four levels of governance - EU, national, regional and local- cooperating closely to each other.

The COR continues the trend we saw previously with the emphasis of the cooperation between different regions of European Union for secure harmonious and sustainable development across territories of Europe. They focus on the economic, social and territorial cohesion objectives of European Union and champion the principles of equity and solidarity between it members. Furthermore addresses the belief in that cooperation to construct a closer and more supportive union among the people of Europe "and respond to the challenges of globalization" (COR, Mission Statement, 2009, p 2).

1.3.3 Organization of regions for EU policies: NUTS

According to the European Commission[13] the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) is a hierarchical system for dividing up the economic territory of the EU for the different purposes:

1- The collection, development and harmonization of EU regional statistics.
2- Socio-economic analyses of the regions.
3- Framing of EU regional policies.

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[13] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction

Eurostat provides a historical background of the NUTS[14]. At the beginning of the 1970s, Eurostat set up the NUTS classification as a single, coherent system for dividing up the EU's territory in order to produce regional statistics for the Community. For around thirty years, implementation and updating of the NUTS classification was managed under a series of "gentlemen's agreements" between the Member States and Eurostat.

Work on the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003, to give NUTS a legal status started in spring 2000. This was adopted in May 2003 and entered into force in July 2003.

The regulation also specifies stability of the classification for at least three years. Stability makes sure that data refers to the same regional unit for a certain period of time. This is crucial for statistics, in particular for time-series.

However, sometimes, national interests require changing the regional breakdown of a country. When this happens the county concerned informs the European Commission about the changes. The Commission in turn amends the classification at the end of period of stability according the rules of the NUTS Regulation.

A first regular amendment, Commission Regulation (EC) No 105/2007, was the replacement of the NUTS version 2003 by the version 2006 on 1 January 2008. This was preceded by completions of the NUTS classification with the regional breakdowns of the countries that have joined the EU in 2004 and 2008: Commission Regulation (EC) No 1888/2005 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 176/2008.
The second regular amendment, Commission Regulation (EU) No 31/2011, has been adopted by the Commission and will be applicable from 1 January 2012.

In case of an amendment to the classification, the Member State concerned has to replace historical data by time series according to the new regional breakdown within two years. The decision on the list of the time series and their lengths is subject to feasibility evaluation.

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[14] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/history_nuts

The current NUTS classification valid from 1 January 2012 until 31 December 2014 lists 97 regions at NUTS 1, 270 regions at NUTS 2 and 1294 regions at NUTS 3 level.

2. **A Europe of regions: regional identities and cooperation**.

Think about the identity has become a subject, which is becoming more important today:

> Once the probability began to wane from his survival without associated reflection when instead of something given obvious and started to seem problematic, a task (Bauman, 2002, p. 51).

The first explicit reference of the EU Treaty the concept of subsidiarity is in its preamble, in which the signatories are declared "resolved to continue the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe in the that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity ". The preamble expresses, also, the desire to "deepen the solidarity between [the] people [Europeans] while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions" and emphasizes the dynamic and unfinished nature of the European integration process, a continuous process for achieving development "of ever closer union" in which the EU Treaty is nothing more than "a new stage." new subsidiarity principle involved, therefore, of this dynamic nature inspired from the beginning the process of European integration. A pillar in the European edifice.

The principle of subsidiarity and utterance evokes a double suction in the regulation of relations between different social groups. On the one hand, and in relation to the idea of bringing the power of decision to the citizens, the principle of subsidiarity is committed to the idea of democracy by advocating the increase of the levels of representation and transparency in the organs political decision making, something that the literature has shown enough. On the other hand, the principle assumes the existence of different levels of government troops, or put another way, a decentralized power structure.

The EU also recognizes the need to institutionalize subnational entities, facilitates the creation and focuses its policies directly to the regions, having a direct dialogue with these regional entities. Europe turns to the regions.

The term 'Europe of the Regions' has almost become a commonplace in the last decades (Borrás-Alomar et al. 1994, p 28). Identity is certainly about belonging, and belonging has both objective and subjective aspects (David M. Smith et al. 2007, p 10). The Expansion of European Union from 15 to 272 states has increase the trend towards greater diversity within the Union through the further differentiation of national and regional cultures (David M. Smith et al. 2007, p 12). "Identity is marked by similarity, that is of the people like us, and by difference, of those who are not." (Woodward, 2004, p. 7).

We want to see Europe, united in diversity in a globalized world, make the very most of its territorial, cultural and linguistic diversity, as this is the source of its strength and guarantee of its people's identity. We play our part in promoting European democracy and citizenship and their values, and contribute towards the anchoring of fundamental rights and the protection of minorities. (COR, Mission Statement 2009, p1)

We claim autonomy for regional and local authorities and their right to secure appropriate financial resources to enable them to carry out their duties. We therefore promote the principles and mechanisms of good governance and encourage the process of decentralization. (COR, Mission Statement 2009, p2)

The EU in its Territorial Agenda strengthens the role of the region and especially gives prominence to regional identities as a way to enhance and promote territorial cohesion, and especially to continue the empowerment and respect for diversity of identity in Europe:

> "We agree that regional identities and potentials, needs and diverse characteristics of the regions, cities and villages of Europe gain meaning through a policy of territorial cohesion and

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through other regional development policies"[15].

The truth is that the issue of identity is complex and be Extremadura or Catalan or Welsh is a notion of "Belonging", ie, we may be different, but you might end everyone is equal. Extremeños? Yes, Catalan? Yes, but at the after all all we could also be Spanish, European, Southerners, Western, etc.

> "[…]symbols and representations are important in marking the ways in which we share identities with some people and distinguish ourselves as different from others." (Woodward, 2004, p. 7). The culture of a society is its shared meanings, values and practices." (Woodward, 2004, p. 22).

The regional identity within the framework of EU action can be strengthened so that the regions have capacity to cooperate with each other, without the necessity of the Central Government. We could say that we loop, since the regions already strongly marked regional identities reinforce the capacity of independent action and cooperation with other regions. According to the European Commission Cohesion policy encourages regions and cities from different EU Member States to work together and learn from each other through joint programs, projects and networks. In the period 2007-13 the European Territorial Co-operation objective (formerly the INTERREG Community Initiative) covers three types of programs:

- 53 cross-border co-operation programs along internal EU borders. ERDF contribution: €5.6 billion.
- 13 transnational co-operation programs cover larger areas of co-operation such as the Baltic Sea, Alpine and Mediterranean regions. ERDF contribution: €1.8 billion.
- The interregional co-operation program (INTERREG IVC) and 3 networking programs (Urbact II, Interact II and ESPON) cover all 27 Member States of the EU. They provide a framework for exchanging experience between regional and local bodies in different countries. ERDF contribution: €445 million.

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[15] http://www.eu-territorial-agenda.eu/Reference%20Documents/Territorial-Agenda-of-the-European-Union-Agreed-on-25-May-2007.pdf

The European Territorial Cooperation objective is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and supports cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation programs. The budget of €8.7 billion for this objective accounts for 2.5% of the total 2007-13 allocation for cohesion policy, including the allocation for Member States to participate in EU external border co-operation programs supported by other instruments (IPA and ENPI). For European Territorial Co-operation the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) regulation is applicable, in particular chapter 3.

The European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) is a new European legal instrument designed to facilitate and promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation. Unlike the structures, which governed this kind of cooperation before 2007, the EGTC is a legal entity and as such, will enable regional and local authorities and other public bodies from different member states, to set up cooperation groupings with a legal personality

The transnational programs add an important extra European dimension to regional development, developed from analysis at a European level, leading to agreed priorities and a coordinated strategic response.

This allows meaningful work between regions from several EU Member States on matters such as communication corridors, flood management, international business and research linkages, and the development of more viable and sustainable markets.

Themes covered include:
- Innovation, especially networks of universities, research institutions, SMEs;
- Environment, especially water resources, rivers, lakes, sea;
- Accessibility, including telecommunications, and in particular the completion of networks;
- Sustainable urban development, especially polycentric development.

There are currently 13 transnational co-operation programs (Figure 7)

3. The rise of regional cultures: Globalization.

The globalization process favours the development of different movements simultaneously. On the one hand, an attitude "integrationist" and other separatist or autonomous trend. Are observed at the level of international politics, various groups, predominantly integrationist or separatist, which in turn can have both behaviours for different opportunities.

In modern societies we observe two movements: first, a phenomenon inclusive economic alliances between countries (European Economic Community) mobility of factors, imitation of manners, and on the other, localism that seem to act as an effect of reaction to counteract the effects of the first or for further advantages thereof, from a local perspective.

> In recent decades worldwide have coexisted two parallel processes: globalization, on the one hand, and the reaffirmation of diverse cultural identities on the other. Both processes are interrelated, since the cultural homogenization that is often associated with globalization poses a threat to local cultures, the specific identities. This is how the fear of losing cultural references that define people, and hence conflicts and claims about local or regional identities. In this double process had much to see the policies of nation-states, which often govern distinct identities in a single state framework. For the nation-state does not become "failed state", civilizing will is needed to legitimize those identities. (Castells 2010, p 254)

That "we" built from the inclusion, acceptance and confirmation of its members is the comforting security realm, isolated from a terrifying wilderness was inhabited by "them." Unable to obtain security unless trust that "we" have the power to accept and strength to protect those who have already accepted. An identity is perceived as safe when certifying the powers that seem to prevail over "them" foreigners, opponents, others hostile, which is interpreted simultaneously as us in the reaffirmation process (Bauman, 2002, p. 54)

The region obtained an important role to gearing up the local economy for wider competition. The local producers could be helped to reach internationalized local producers markets, "and attract, in the wider European context, technology, partners for joint-ventures, and decentralized production facilities" (Hooghe 1996, p 68) This would explain the growing importance of regions in the European context and the insistence of the European Commission to grant a third of the Community budget to

territorial cohesion and regional development. Local and regional actors are presented as the best alternative to promote, enhance, manage and create this development and that competitiveness the EU pursues

While there is a strong case to be made for the impact of both globalization and European integration on the rise of regionalism in Western Europe since 1970s, both of these processes are developments on the macro level that should have an effect on all European regions. While differences across regions in terms of cultural diversity might affect the ability of these phenomena to fuel regionalism, another explanation for variation in levels of regionalism across both time and space might be political or economic processes going on within the regions themselves. (Rune Dahl Fitjar,p 24)

"While the economic connections between globalization and regionalism have featured prominently in the regional literature, there are also some works in globalization literature that consider a more cultural impact of globalization.

Here cultural consequences of globalization, such as homogenization, are considered to elicit a defensive response on the regional level, as people increasingly mobilize their local and regional identities in order to protect them from the threat of disappearance in a globally homogeneous culture. Friedman (2000) in order to protect their culture and roots, people mobilize their regional and local identities. Castells also sees territorial identities as essentially a defense mechanism against the pressures of globalization, which leaves "people with no other choice than either to surrender or to react on the basis of the most immediate source of self-recognition and autonomous organization: their locality" (1997,p 61). In his view the effect of globalization is mainly to individualize, or even atomize, society, as local networks are increasingly eroded. This individuality makes some people feel insecure, and collective identities represent a "defensive reaction against the impositions of global disorder and uncontrollable fast –paced change"(ibid, 64)

III CHAPTER

1. The creation of regional identity: Extremadura

1.1 The position of Extremadura during the process regionalization in Spain

The debate over whether a region exists, with no institutional representation and without the recognition of other organizations and institutions is arduous and lengthy. We do not intend to respond to this debate in this paper, however, we will analyze the position of Extremadura, now a Spanish Autonomous Community State, with regional institutions and legal and institutional recognition, in the decentralization process of Spain, in the environment of European Union and in a globalized world.

Extremadura is an autonomous community of Spain located in the south west of the Iberian Peninsula, sharing border to the west with Portugal and three Spanish Autonomous Communities: Castile and León to the north, Castile-La Mancha to the east and Andalusia to the south. The region covers an area of 41 635 km ², which represents 8.25% of the total area of Spain, being the fifth largest autonomous community nationwide. Its population in 2012 was 1,108,130 inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadística), representing only 2.36% of the total Spanish population. Its component provinces are Cáceres and Badajoz.

The Junta de Extremadura is the official body that exercises the functions of the government of the autonomous community of Extremadura. The competences and powers of the regional government are found in the Statute of Autonomy of Extremadura. Its headquarters, according to Article 5 of the Statute of Autonomy, are in Mérida, capital of Extremadura. Currently the President of the Government of Extremadura is Jose Antonio Monago, elected after the elections of May 22, 2011 by the Assembly of Extremadura, the first President of the Junta of the Popular Party.

With the restoration of democracy and the promulgation of the Constitution in 1978, was opened in Spain an important process of political and administrative decentralization that resulted in the creation of the different regions, with a wide autonomy regime. The Constitution established the conditions and the procedures to be followed, especially in the preparation of the relevant Statute of Autonomy and the type of competences and powers that the Central Government would delegate. This process of supranational origin is complemented with another force developed at the state level also inspired the philosophy of subsidiarity, which is the claim of greater

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powers by sub-state entities, claim sustained on the basis of their greater proximity to citizens and, as a consequence, its best representation and democratic legitimacy.

Extremadura was just one of the Spanish territories that began this process. Extremadura didn't represent a Historical Region; hence it would have to follow the slow process to become and Autonomy. The process of drafting the Statute of Autonomy lasted six years, and covers the period of the years between 1976 and 1983. We can point to three characters that shaped this process:

The clashes and disagreements between the two main political forces of the time in Extremadura (ie UCD and PSOE), but ultimately saved by final agreements, fruit of the spirit of consensus that existed in those years in certain political environments. When drafting a legal text to the Statute, the main points of dissent and conflict were threefold: to establish the headquarters of the regional capital, differences of opinion about the number of provincial deputies who were chosen by each of the two provinces to shape the future Assembly of Extremadura and finally, decide the article of the Constitution which was gaining autonomy (the 143 or 151). From numerical equality Caceres called deputies and from Badajoz advocated an equal basis, but tempered by proportionality regarding the inhabitants, and it was proposed that Badajoz would have 35 deputies for the province and 30 deputies for Caceres.

Thus would be necessary to observe the following sections of the Constitution of 1978 in order to understand the autonomy reached by the territory of Extremadura:

Section 143

1. In the exercise of the right to self-government recognized in section 2 of the Constitution, ordering provinces with common historic, cultural and economic characteristics, insular erritories and provinces with a historic regional status may accede to self-government nd form Self-governing Communities (Comunidades Autónomas) in conformity with he provisions contained in this Part and in the respective Statutes.

2. The right to initiate the process towards self-government lies with all the Provincial ouncils concerned or with the corresponding inter-island body and with two thirds of he municipalities whose population represents at least the majority of the electorate of ach province or island. These requirements must be met within six months from the nitial agreement reached to this aim by any of the

local Corporations concerned.

3. If this initiative is not successful, it may be repeated only after five years have elapsed.

There some factors that we shall include in that analysis. We should consider that the sluggishness and lack of frontier town in relation to the idea of autonomy and, therefore, in order for the process to obtain it.

Demographic changes: social cohesion and migration

The economic crisis that began in 2008 is bringing some changes on the Spanish society. Due the recession and the high rates of unemployment in Spain during tha last 3 years the birth rates of the immigrant population has been declining. Furthermore some immigrants chose to come back to their origin countries. The situation now is that there are more emigrants than immigrants, returning to the negative flow of migration.

According to the INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadística), a total of 132,535 people, from which 27,004 were Spanish and 105,531 foreigners, left Spain in the first quarter of 2012, looking for an opportunity in another country driven by the critical situation of the Spanish labor market.

In contrast, 101.184 people (8.751 Spanish and foreign 92.433) chose to come to Spain in the first three months of 2012, bringing the Spanish migratory balance negative in 31.351 people.

Furthermore, according to INE, between January and March in Spain 97,326 people died and 118,097 were born, while the number of children per woman remained at 1.4 and the average age at which women have their first child in 31 years .

The data of the INE also highlights the further increase in life expectancy of the Spanish in the first quarter, which stood at 79.34 years in the case of men and 85.16 years in of women, compared with 79.06 and 84.98 years, respectively, in 2011.

Attention should be drawn to the phenomenon of return immigration (García-Coll, 2005). In all migration processes there is always a certain proportion of migrants that return to their countries of origin, even with no economic crisis in the host countries. The return of the migration phenomenon in Spain was also important before the

economic crisis. The Residential Variation Statistics conducted by the INE data from the ups and downs in the Register of the Spanish municipalities provides the data of some 200,000 returnees per year by 2008. But the real amount could be much higher since many returnees are not detected by the Local Census statistics and several immigrants are in Spain in an illegal situation.

The return to Morocco has important dimensions, but higher than before the crisis. Moroccan men are not planning a return, but are finding many cases where the husband stays and send back to Morocco women with children. Another phenomenon that is occurring is that Moroccans left Spain to go to another European country (Belgium, Germany, etc.). The return of Americans has also increased, but it doesn't have large dimensions. Many who are returning say go "for a season," to see how things evolve. Those who take the option of return they want to ensure that they can return to Spain if necessary, and things have improved here. So much of Latin Americans that are returning are people who already have Spanish nationality (Arango, J. 2004). This fact decreases the official measures of immigrant's returnees. The most important return is occurring with Romanians. But the statistics are less effective with Rumanians due their discretion and their condition of European Union citizens.

The return is a phenomenon that occurs from individualized decisions that only corresponds to take to the immigrants themselves. However, we wonder about the effects on the host society. In the short term can alleviate the situation of unemployment, although its effect would be very small. The fight against unemployment passes through more general measures, and the return of immigrants should not be included within them.

Despite the statistics that we analyzed before, we should consider that there are still 6 millions of immigrants in Spain. The biggest cities of Spain, including Madrid and Barcelona contain most of the immigrants that came during the last 15 years. This mass arrival and the process of suburbanization have brought consequences.

Immigrants are typically organized and relate to people from the same country and / or race. The situation in which many of these families live is precarious and often conflicts arise. Suburban neighborhoods of apartment buildings have become in many cities, in hazardous locations. Street gangs proliferate and illegal businesses and street

fights are becoming more frequent. The youth of the suburbs (including Spanish) live everyday family conflicts due to poor conditions in which families are: unemployment, evictions, violence, etc.. This draws them to alcohol and drugs. A percentage of the population living in the suburbs has no choice but to live there for economic reasons, but the families try to move on and their children attend school regularly in search of a better future, and access to college.

Note that in many cases the mixtures of races, cultures and religions have created picturesque images in the Spanish quarters, where in many cases conflicts and violence do not exist. This usually happens in neighborhoods where there is no clear dominance of an immigrant culture. In this way citizens help each other to succeed.

However, a study from the Ministry of Labor and Immigration of Spain said that in recent years has increased the general trend of rejection of foreign-born population, and the increase in xenofobia. In addition to this, new Spanish generations born in the country continue to share the ideals of identity of foreign parents, generating ethnic groups for people born in Spain.

Illegal immigration brings normally negative consequences. Derived from it other issues of great social seriousness, often compounded by the existence or reliance on organized criminal mafias, who live on the needs of immigrants. Thus we find issues such as social deprivation, poor access to housing, which commonly is settled with the occupation of substandard housing, illegal or semi-clandestine life in which the illegal move, labor-time jobs of poor quality or badly paid, crime, prostitution and exploitation of minors (Arango, J. 2004).

Economic change: high unemployment
Because economic models prevailing in Spain, described above, the economic crisis that began in 2008 has had major consequences in Spain and therefore in their cities.
A major consequence is a sharp rise in unemployment.
The number of unemployed who left their jobs for three or more years increased by 43% in 2011, reaching 704,900, so that the weight of this group on the total number of unemployed reached 15.4%, 3.9 percentage points higher than in 2010, according

to the National Institute of Statistics (INE) extracted from the Labor Force Survey.

Most of the existing unemployed in 2011, the year closed with almost 4.6 million unemployed, came mostly from pre-employment situations, so that more than half, 52.1% stopped working in 2011 for having completed his contract.

The second important reason to end in unemployment was the dismissal or withdrawal of the job, including employment regulations. More than a million people was suddenly out of work for some of these reasons, equivalent to 23.3% of all unemployed.

The construction sector is one of the hardest hit by the crisis due to the end of "boom" and subsequent real estate sales decline. In 2008, many construction companies filed bankruptcy.

The effects of the economic crisis also had a strong impact on the Spanish financial system. The defaults for numerous companies and individuals with poor management have led to the intervention of some financial institutions by the state. Among them the largest bank in Spain, Bankia, which as of today is in a severe recession process that must be remedied with the largest financial rescue in the history of Spain.

During the years of economic growth, rising income of Spanish families was not well distributed. According to data published in 2009.In 2007 Spain was one of the EU countries with greater income inequality. The ratio between 20% of people with more income and less than 20% is 5.3 points, while the EU average was 4.8. This explains why the poverty rate in Spain has not been upgraded at a time of economic growth and employment, as expected by European authorities and state governments. However, the degradation of working conditions, job insecurity, temporary and stagnant labor income call into question the previous model, which is reflected in the emergence of the category of workers at risk of poverty (11% of the employed population, a percentage exceeded only by Greece and Poland). Social policies based solely on criteria of economic growth and macro levels of job creation, do not allow escape poverty. The INE provides that 19.6% of the Spanish population is below the poverty line (has less than 60% of median income).

The socio-economic inequalities do not occur both between urban and rural, but

within the same cities that are inhabited both by people who swim in material wealth, for precarious workers, socially excluded and marginalized who have difficulty afford housing and food. Single mothers, the elderly or the unemployed, are the social mass poverty in Europe. It's called the "fourth world", composed of men, women and children, generation after generation, are excluded from fundamental rights enjoyed by the rest of society.

In parallel, the insignificance of the regional parties both in the process of drafting the text and its regional implementation.

The sixties did not bring new life into the region. In contrast, in the rest of the country, economic progress by forced marches fostered renewed cultural activity, born to overcome Franco historicist discourse.

National economic development allowed a mental horizons opening of Spanish, so far engrossed in mere subsistence. The country grew and allowed many groups dream of prosperity and "progress." The "modernization" of society brought about a change of horizons, an update of thought, more secular and economist. A critical mass of Extremadura population was forced to migrate to the industrial centers of Madrid, the Basque Country and Catalonia, which accelerated traffic reformist ideas with the system. Regionalism was done as a manufacture of Extremadura emigrants, while overcrowding enhanced the community nostalgia suburbs.

While those who left accelerated the process of political and social democracy and nationalism assimilating centrifugal within the region mutations were less noticeable until the creation in the seventies of the University. Extremadura maintained its place as a safeguard of the Hispanic, bastion of pure spirituality and guarantor of the values of the regime. Region timeless Hispanic essence and universality Eduardo Hernandez Pacheco emphasized by the Marquis of Lozoya. "Magical quadrilateral reduced space where were developed all the American nations" (Bravo 1960, p. 4-5).

If take into consideration the development of Extremadura as region through history we can delve onto a deep study, not our aim here, and also onto a discussion specially regarding its etymology.

Reject the etymology of Extreme Dorii to Extremadura and having related only to the concept of Extreme or implicitly border Extremadura have detached to a predetermined geographical space for their own significance and have assigned a dynamic content, since the concept of Extreme or border is always something mobile and variable, continued reliance on political vicissitudes, and much more in medieval Castile, driven by the ideal of recovering the mainland soil occupied by the Muslims. (Martinez, p. 67)

Thus, throughout the fifteenth century, the Spanish Extremadura as the administrative entity disappears in the Castilian Central Government, and had never had nor own bodies in the territorial government as Merinos Developed and Seniors, as each community of Villa and Tierra depended directly from the King without other intermediate authority, administrative disappearance will be complete at the XV century.

With the Spanish Extremadura administrative disappearance is going to also extinct as geographical designation in consciousness and in the language of the people, and so just find and mentions of it in the fifteenth century, let alone in the sixteenth. (Martinez, p 79)

1.2   The influence of other Spanish regions and nationalisms.

The Basque proposal of a new Political Statute and the reform of the Statute of Catalonia (October 2002), generalized the process of change in all autonomies ushering in a new wave of statutes in various regions (Valencia and Catalonia in 2006 Balearic Islands, Andalusia, Aragon and Castile and Leon in 2007) that is still open. (Alonso 2010, p15-16). Thus in Spain the peoples of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia have required their recognition as having "regional nationalities" within Spain and have led the way in securing the establishment of regional "autonomous communities" under the Spanish Government. (David M. Smith et al. 2007, p 11)

It has been noted that the change in the structure of the state has been the result of an initial burst of some Autonomous Communities and Autonomous Pacts signed between the two major parties by which Spanish reacted to that momentum. Clearly, not all autonomous communities played the same role, for while the Autonomous Communities of Article 151 of the Spanish Constitution (CE) were active protagonists, the Autonomous Communities of Article 143 of the EC were largely passive subjects this transformation process undergone by the State. (Alonso 2010, p 20).

The demand for more competencies grew and nationalist parties attained major influence on state decisions because of their widespread presence in Congress. These communities with a greater degree of political awareness claim a distinct recognition of their reality. Therefore, the territorial distribution of power shall constitute recognition and acceptance of differential fact of the existence of communities within its territory with a specific and political consciousness than the rest of the communities that conform the State.

In this way over years of negotiations have been implemented decentralization policies that gave more competencies to the autonomous communities to empower on issues such as health and education. Immediately after making official the agreement for the transfer of competency of health in 2002, the Government stated that the decentralization process was completed and proposed a pact "closing" the State. In short, the competence map was homogenized. (Aja and Viver 2003, p 73).

The number and origin of appeals before the Constitutional Court show that it was these three nationalities (Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia) which led the autonomic drive and contributed more to design the state model. (Alonso, 2010, p 33)

Some authors claim that the development of real sense of Extremadura as a region came from immigrants in other parts of Spain.

Extremadura regionalism developed in the periphery of Spanish industrial cities, in a community of immigrants united by cultural affinity. They were the Houses, Homes, Extremadura circles or centers, which forged a modern identity, influenced by the

ubiquitous presence nationalist. Harsh conditions led to horizontal relationships forged through artificial borders, which soon became national links. Those from Cáceres and Badajoz overcame their historical antagonism and took the first steps for the realization of a new "extremeñidad", away from the regime and overturned in the invention of a democratic tradition and differentiated.

No doubt the Extremadura association presented a greater heterogeneity of what these lines might argue. Began between social venues where Extremadura maintained their customs attachment. Soon grew and became centers of dissemination and promotion of the identity of Extremadura. Acquired special relevance celebration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the symbol of remembrance and respect for roots and a religion of their ancestors. In the industrial suburbs, the patroness of Extremadura Franco lost all the mystique of the Hispanic and Spanish greatness. On the other hand, the realization of choirs and dance groups revived-awakened and forced folklore, inventing traditions, steps and dresses that once belonged to the course of history. To realize the symbols of identity, it was necessary to start the habit and routine certain characteristics, and place them on the altar of the nation.

Extremadura groups created extensive social networks to adapt painstaking reality of emigration to the tradition of origen50. What we have traditionally considered a negative, the abandonment of villages, the regionalist associations made him opportunity to invent a tradition and claiming benefits of some idealized-but abandoned places. During the Franco regime, almost unintentionally, offered an alternative to the regime historicist discourse. Once settled the state of autonomies, were models of regional specificity. Government agencies claim "extremeñista" advantage of large cities to forge its own identity, according to the state itself symbiosis autonomy, between myth of nationalism and democracy.

1.3 The influence of the E.U.: regional policies, regional development, trans-border cooperation, and the thrust of the regional culture.

Viewed as the theoretical framework previously on development policy and territorial cohesion, as well as the region's role within the European framework, we analyze the

influence it may have had in the process of regionalization of Extremadura.

Extremadura is a purely agricultural region. Its production is based almost entirely in factories from agriculture and livestock. With the entry of Spain into the EU and regional development policies and common policies for agriculture, regions alone could interface, i.e. Extremadura somehow could look after their own interests without the Central government.

The fact that the region is not the state that can create projects for cooperation and development has given more strength, power and prominence to local and regional institutions. Citizens can make all this projects, consultations and actions directly from the regional government, ie, acting by and for a geographical space framed in the region of Extremadura.

The influence of European policies as strengthening Extremadura region can also be seen if we consider that the pillars of territorial cohesion are based on a local. Thus Camagni (2010) proposed three main components of the Territorial Cohesion:

> 1.   Territorial Efficiency: resource-efficiency with respect to energy, land and natural resources; competitiveness and attractiveness of the local territory; internal and external accessibility;
> 2.   Territorial Quality: the quality of the living and working environment; comparable living standards across territories; similar access to services of general interest and to knowledge;
> 3.   Territorial Identity: presence of "social capital"; landscape and cultural heritage; capability of developing shared visions of the future; creativity; productive "vocations" and competitive advantage of each territory. (Medeiro 2010, p 15-16)

Cultural regionalism arises when certain different factors, such as language, religion, ethnicity, etc., acquire political significance. They base this type of regionalism in identifying regional cultural unity based on language, in religion, in ethnicity, in laws and customs, folklore, art and history. It has been said that the role of history is crucial because a common history defines the character of a people and gives a feeling

of self-esteem and positive self-evaluation.

The supporters of federalism argue that smaller territories, you can rule with simpler rules. A larger and populous territory requires a more elongated and bureaucratic. It is true that in a smaller area, it is easier to solve small and medium local problems, to implement national solutions. In addition, citizens can control the exercise of public administration. This is possible when the state is closer.

The geographical grouping, considering economic and political criteria that contribute to integrate different cultures and ethnicities would be a way of evolution of a multicultural and globalized society.

But here comes the question of some regional movements that affirm the need for autonomy as a way to preserve their identity, culture and independence. They associate the word federalism to autonomy, and autonomy to local culture and the local culture would be a defense to the approval of the people, i.e. globalization.

In Extremadura there is historical chapter used for rise the regional identity: The Conquer of America. These are found not only in the deeds made by Hispanics in antiquity, which, although glorious, are not his greatest glory. "The greatest glory of Spain is to have recovered weapons and itself conquered from the Moors with great battles and conquests as they were not in any way be compared to other provinces or kingdoms of the world." It is noteworthy that Coria wit extrapolates the most varied praises authors direct to Spain to attribute them to the province of Extremadura: "Although it is true that these authors generally speaking referred back, yet continues to befall much of the praise to the Province of Extremadura and its inhabitants as in the above equals all others in Spain and none is superior. "

But you had to look for a company that is manifestly Extremadura participation equal and even superior to that of other lands. The author easily found what I was looking at the American company "Known is the great value of mind of the Spanish people in all provinces and kingdoms of the world and particularly the Extremadura in which we now call the New, which in wars and ancient conquests of our time and have always been noted and done feats and wonders that the number would be reduced to quasi impossible '

Influenced by the almost universal triumphs in that time is reaping Spanish imperialism, Francisco de Coria breaks in part with the obsession and invokes the classic tales of glory only Hispanics and, as far as Extremadura is concerned, is the first, to my knowledge, that invokes the American company as the basis and foundation of 'extremeñidad'.

2.The role of the local entities and regional development agencies.

The action theories have gained some prominence in most of the social sciences in recent years, and the geography is not an exception. Faced with a view to trying to explain the organization and dynamics of the territories or distribution of the various elements that compose them by reference to a set of explanatory factors, this kind of approach focuses on the existence of individuals and organizations, from decision making, exert a decisive effect on the construction and destruction of the socio spatial interest to geographers. Identify which actors operate in a particular territory, know and understand their characteristics or internal structure, interests and values, the mechanisms that guide the decision making process, the strategies used to achieve their objectives or their possible interactions (cooperation, competition, conflict) are aspects that now awarded outstanding attention.

Are so many metaphors that are based on the potential capacity of local actors to mobilize specific resources of the area, improve their position outside and innovative responses to the challenges of the present. Capacity in certain cases allows an area still being conceived as mere object to become collective subject, which has a "system that encourages players and can think and act on their behalf"

Local development is a concept that surprises as do the events with which usually coexist and that one day we demonstrate a hitherto unknown dimension and strength intuit powerful imprecise. It is part of a wave of social transformation that affects large radius, which transcends economic aspects, and refers to the new visions of the world and its patterns of socio-territorial organization. Here we explore the theoretical background which anchors the local development and as implemented explores

practical deployment in Spain.

Before the crisis, which is change, we argue the need for public intervention at the local level, but using the guidelines required by the new time in which raw territorial component, since the restructuring, in the form of permanent adjustment required overall revitalization of the area and, therefore, the participation of local actors. It unfolds and the concept of local development as territorial cooperation philosophy scale public-private partnership, which they associate stronger approaches to strategic planning and operating method requires specific tools integrated territorial action: local development companies.

The development in the local context is a way to promote development in this area, is ascending and continuous change in order to transform the environment with the purpose of development that necessarily accompanied by the continued economic growth equitable, stable and participatory-democratic basis and result of structural changes that enhance social solidarity, justice, quality of life and the rational use of scarce indigenous resources available to the town.

This process takes into account the role of the factors necessary to boost the potential that can be identified in the town with the aim of seeking social welfare and improving the quality of life of the community responding to the development strategy drawn. Local development and improvement ensures environmental quality, retains the built heritage, raise living standards contributing to the improvement and expansion of the possibilities for development of future generations and life on the planet.

Local development depends not only on economic factors, investment, but also involves: strengthening values territorial identity and belonging, fostering the spirit of citizenship and coexistence relational component, because only in this way promotes an image city, or territory in question, and a spirit in the town aimed at their empowerment. That is, harder it is to implement a development process if we start with a belittling by citizens of local resources and potentialities.

The Agency Employment and Local Development is an instrument that, from the knowledge of particular socio-economic context, raises the local as central to the implementation of employment policies are more adjusted to reality and to develop

measures are more effective.

Development Agencies are tasked to promote the socioeconomic development of the regions / municipalities to which they belong. Improving employability, encouraging entrepreneurship, improving competitiveness and promoting strategic projects for the environment, are the areas in which they operate agencies to achieve its mission; all this in collaboration with other public and private agencies working in these areas.

The regional government's goal is to support companies in the region that are committed to go outside to look for new business opportunities, going to new markets in which to offer their products and services.

To be eligible for aid companies developing or processing activities and business services sector, primarily in the autonomous community of Extremadura and having their registered office and tax in the region.

Also, may be beneficiaries groups, confederations, federations or associations of undertakings Extremadura of the agriculture, industrial and service sector, which also have social and fiscal, home in Extremadura.

The grants are intended to fund promotional and / or commercial for opening new markets and organizing or assisting direct and inverse missions, as well as direct participation in fairs and festivals of commercial relevance.

In this matter, people of Extremadura, Extremadura communities abroad and regional administration have the Statute of Extremadura, as a legal framework that regulates the promotion, coordination and strengthening relations Community Extremadura with other European communities abroad.

Local businesses have a key role in creating an atmosphere that influence the feeling of Extremadura region, especially given the competition between different Autonomous Communities in the agriculture sector and its derivatives. Proof of this is the protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI) and traditional specialties guaranteed (TSG) Promote and protect names of quality agricultural products and foodstuffs. It is a kind of geographical indication applied to an agricultural product or foodstuff whose quality or characteristics are essential and

exclusively to the geographical environment in which it is produced, processed and prepared.

It is a qualification that is used to legally protect certain food produced in a given area. Producers who qualify for the designation of origin, are committed to maintaining the highest possible quality and also maintain certain traditional in production, as for example in the case of wine, in certain areas are required to use the traditional grape area. Also, there is often a public regulatory designation of origin, which allows display the distinctive producers in the area that meet the rules.

The fundamental advantage of the appellation of origin is that it guarantees the consumer a level quality and specific characteristics. In return, producers obtain legal protection against the production or manufacture of these products in other areas, even using the same ingredients and procedures, allowing them to influence the final price of these. It is also noted that this figure encourages the organization of the productive sector and producers easy access to national and international markets.

This apart to publicize a geographical, social and traditions of a region, reinforces the sense of difference with other regions. In some cases, the composition of Extremadura, products protected by those ratings are a hallmark and an intrinsic part of Extremadura.

IV CHAPTER

1. Extremadura in a Europe of Regions

1.1 The position of the region

In Spain image of Extremadura is from a poor, rural region that does not reach the levels of European and Spanish development average. Considering the economic indicators, the autonomous community Extremadura poorer still, whose GDP per capita is 16,828 euros, 31% lower than the European average (EU-27). One thing that is worse, in 2010, if we consider that in 2009 the difference was 28%.

In 2010, GDP Extremadura (18.201 million euros) accounts for only 1.71 per 100 National, ahead of the communities of Cantabria, La Rioja, Ceuta and Melilla. Per capita income represents 73 extremeña of Spanish 100, the lowest of all the

Autonomous Communities. The real rate of GDP growth in 2010 Extremadura stalled after suffering a loss of 2.2 per 100 in 2009. The sectors that have been affected by this poor outcome are construction GDP and industry, while agriculture and services can be sustained.

Thus, in comparison with the rest of Spain, Extremadura is an underdeveloped region and depressed, with 2.35 per 100 of the population produces only 1.71 per 100 Spanish GDP.

When we talk about rural regions in Spain, its impossible don't make differences between them. Spain is a big and hilly country with many contrasts, different weathers, soils, ecosystems and communities. Currently only 18% of Spanish people living in the countryside.

Generally, we can differentiate six rural regions: the rural regions of the north, the rural regions of the center, the rural regions of the south west, the rural regions of the Mediterranean side, rural regions in Balearic islands and rural regions in Canary islands. Each region is different. With different communities, farms, weather, geologic and orographic conditions. And different problems also.

The rural regions of the north are characterized by a landscape very hilly, with Atlantic oceanic climate, dispersed settlement, small holding and farms .

Crops are mostly self-sufficient multicultivation located in valleys, and cattle farming with pasture in the high mountains and some valleys.

The problem is that there is a very dispersed settlement and difficult landscape, thus the communications are difficult and they have to take means of transport for everything. There are many villages with difficult access that in winter can be cut off by snowfall. Other problem is the excessive partitioning of plots, which make more difficult the agricultural tasks and the organization. The fishers village in the seaside have often problems with weather they cant browse and fishing, but is very practiced and traditional activity in the north.

There are strong relations between neighbors and villages, with some kind of cooperation. For try to solvent the problems previously mentioned, they have some

cooperatives which are responsible of a group of villages and try to cater to the people of staples like bread, milk, etc. and in addition are responsible for garbage collection, the arrangement of roads, snow clearing, etc. Those cooperatives are managed for private companies or public companies which receive some money from the European Union in programs like LEADER.

Other problem is the depopulation. Some villages started to be abandoned, specially the smallest ones. There are some programmes like " Abraza la Tierra" (embrace the earth) that is aimed at people who want to develop their project work and life in rural areas with their own initiatives and viable in the town in which they will live, sharing in the life of that community and its activities and integrating with the rest of the neighbors. Or the project of "Eco-villages", with a naturalistic and human philosophy. Even so the rural regions of the north of Spain are among the more developed rural regions in Spain.

These regions have a big advantage: the nature, the landscape, the mountains and the proximity to the sea. These regions are called the "Green Spain". These regions are visited every year by many tourist, not only in the coast, also in mountains, valleys. There are some National Parks and many alternatives to do there and good accommodation facilities. The beautiful landscape attracts many tourists and the Way of St. James also. Thus, rural/natural tourism is an important alternative to develop these rural regions.

The rural regions of the center of Spain are characterized by high locations (800 meters approx.) situated in a big and flat plateau, called "the Meseta" in Castile. That plateau is surrounded of mountains that isolate it from the climatic influences of the Ocean. There is a strong continental climate with cold winters and hot summers. There is problems with rainfall and some drought periods. This weather determines greatly the agricultural activities. The structure of settlements is more compact and there aren't much problems with communication, because is a flat land with many roads and railways. The agricultural activities more practiced are the cultivation of cereals such as wheat, barley and other upland plants and extensive and intensive livestock of cows, pigs, sheep and goats. It's also important the crops of wine-yards normally located in the riverbanks.

The more important problems of these regions are: the overexploitation of the soil, losing their faculties, the aging of population and great depopulation.

First one is important. These rural regions have been over cultivated since old times, and the soil is losing their faculties and properties. Now some farmers have problems with the growing of some plants and crops, and so often they have to re-cultivate the same soil, without time for resting. The use of pesticides and similar substances has also contributed. This situation is spoiling the soil every year.

But the most important problems in these regions are aging of population and the depopulation. The young people go to the cities to make another way of life, far from the countryside and the agricultural works. Thus, only the middle-aged and old people remain in villages and towns. In this way many houses, villages and farms are abandoned and the situation for the people who still live there is going worse.

In addition many farmers have economic problems because some crops are not profitable or are damaged by the weather.

There are some projects to try to solvent these problems. The government give some financial aid (also taken from E.U.)to farmers, encourage and promote some kind of crops, and prohibits the use of artificial products. There is also a bank of the State who protects the farmers with special financial aid and some insurances. The project "Abraza la Tierra" also works in this land trying to recover people. With some project that receive financial aid from Leader, some villages and historic monuments are repaired, trying to attract visitors and recover their past.

Although there are initiatives and strategies, the process is long and very slow.

Rural tourism is also important alternative. This land have many historic and interesting towns and village which attracts some tourist. In this way there are houses in the villages as accommodation that try to show the conditions of life of this settlement and this people. The "wine tourism" is also important with many wine routs and hotel-wineries.

The rural regions of the south west are characterized by huge properties specially in the region of Extremadura. The landscape and countryside is special and is recognized by European Union like an example in ecologic land work. The name is "dehesa" ;consists in a kind of wooded pastureland used for grazing of livestock and non-

timber forest products such as wild game, cork, mushrooms and firewood. Olives and vine are the most cultivated crops and in the riverbanks we can find many different crops like fruit trees, corn, rice, etc. The most abundant livestock sheep, goats and swine. The last ones live in a semi-wild conditions at the dehesas. The exploitation of the dehesa usually coincides with areas that could be termed "marginal" because of both their limited agricultural potential (due to the poor quality of the soil) and the lack of an industrial fabric, which boils down to isolated agro-industries and very small capitalization. The settlements are compact with big towns. Actually Extremadura is the poorest region in Spain. The problems of these regions are mostly economic and unemployment. There are also some problems to access to some facilities and services but in few years it was a great progress in this staff. It's a big region with only one million inhabitants.

These regions received much financial aims from programs like LEADER to try to develop it. New roads, highways, hospitals, schools, repairing old buildings and trying to promote an endogenous agro-industry with high quality products and protected designation of origin. They are also trying to diversify activities. These regions are important because export much food, olive oil and wine to many other regions and countries.

They are trying to attracts tourists to rural regions with hiking routes, a tourism of relax in nature in small village, visit some Protected areas of nature, wild games, etc.
The rural regions of the east of Spain are among the most developed rural regions in Iberian peninsula. There are characterized by very diversified crops, olives, wine, and many irrigated crops so intensive; oranges, lemons, apples, tomatoes, peppers, wine, olives, etc. The agriculture in these regions are a big business with great companies, and also small companies with high quality products and protected designation of origin. They export food to all Spain, many countries of Europe and many countries in the world. The village in seaside are rich and the fishing activity is traditional, very practiced and with good results. Is a touristy region with many visitors every year and not only to the coast also to some mountains and village in the countryside.

The most important problems are the erosion of the soil and the water supply. These regions are in zone with water problems and long drought periods. The mountains and

hills are very inclined and without much vegetation. The rain comes in strong storms and in short periods but very intensive, thus is difficult to save water, and the erosion is big. The irrigated crops are in locations with water problems and they spend much water in this kind of agriculture. It's important also to say that the density population is high, many tourism and golf fields. In the southeast there are really deserts, with golf fields and this kind of crops. As we step to the north, the water problems disappear. In this way the region of Catalonia (one of the richest in Spain) has really good conditions for many kind of crops, livestock, etc. It is compared with Toscana region in Italy, because they have many similarities, and there are many food companies with high quality products and a famous protected designation of origin.

To solvent this problems there are some strategies, policies to save water, and some advertisement to try to making people aware about how to save water and how to use it better. Also there are some projects about transfer rivers but are difficult expensive and very polemic. The problems with eroded areas is difficult and there are some accidents and crops destructions because of this. The main strategy is , don't plant in dangerous places and alien crops. Also don't build in dangerous places with risks of earthworks and flooding of rivers.

The rural regions of Balearic Islands have the same conditions characteristics and problems than Catalonian rural regions.

The rural regions in Canary Island are characterized by a subtropical climate with different kind of fruits and crops. Are famous the bananas and more tropical fruits from Canary Islands. These are managed for big companies with high quality fruits and famous protected designation of origin. Canary Islands have problems with many crops so they have to import many product from the Iberian peninsula. The livestock of sheep is the most practiced. With this food supply problem, the government decided to put for Canary Islands a lower taxes in all products. The settlement of rural regions are compacted but divided in small village. There are many problems to differentiate rural regions because there is high density population and are small islands. Nevertheless Canary islands are very touristy region so almost all activities are destined to the tourism.

This is a fast and generally view of the rural regions in Spain and the main problems. It's important to say that many things have changed since Spain join the European Union, with a significant improvement and diversification. Programs such as

LEADER, CAP, European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund were and still are very important in Spanish rural regions. The main and current strategies are competitiveness in the food, sustainability and natural environment, diversification of the quality of life in rural areas, local capacity development and diversification.

In the last 40 years the population of Spanish municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants has grown from 57% of the Spanish population at only 23%, while the rural area covers more than 80'2% of the total area. These data by themselves call for a Rural Development Policy and more so when it comes down to more detailed data.

The EU Rural Development policies encompassed in the CAP currently carried out have their origins in the Cork Declaration of 1996, his continuation in the Agenda 2000 and its tools in the various Community Funds.

Very briefly the objective of these policies is to make the "rural areas a more attractive place in which to live and work in a setting where they can find a better life increasingly diverse people of all ages" by reversing the aging process and depopulation of them, providing them with means to generate their own development, adapt to new economic circumstances and are valued as they deserve by the wider society.

This situation of backwardness is explained, in part, by the absence of human capital, human resource inadequacies skilled in the different orders of economic activity, and mainly in productive activity. There are also no medium or large economic groups, as the large national and multinational capital is oriented towards the most traditional investment areas, more developed and better infrastructure.

Extremadura depends primarily on weather conditions and lacks an articulated industrial base and technological capability to get enough of their raw materials have all the potential to reach the medium term, economic development level close to Spanish.

Making a virtue of necessity, Extremadura has embarked on a project whose goal is to move from the periphery to the centre, to occupy a point due west of the triangle reference configured as Madrid-Lisbon-Seville. This is reflected in renewed text of the Statute of Autonomy that revels in historical grievances but whose mainstays Constitution, Europeanism, innovation and neighbouring Portugal.

This endeavour has its translation in all actions that will shape the future development of this community. In the fields of education and health, the firm commitment and decisive for the application of new technologies for a more advanced society and fairer. At company level, the promotion of strategies to consolidate a productive, allowing its inhabitants to live where they want. In its outreach, promoting relations with the EU and, above all, taking to Portugal as a strategic partner.

Thus, Extremadura has been creating opportunities, advancing in a convergence that seemed distant. And this path is a clear offer: for every euro that the Spanish government and the EU to invest in Extremadura, the Community will invest three. This approach is paying off. Infrastructure as the TGV, the network technology supported in the optical fiber, the highways, the support to the imagination as an engine of change, not only has mobilized internal initiatives but already attracting companies like IBM, Indra or Siemens.

In a scenario of global crisis, Extremadura has shown its bets: its economy supports better the situation because it relied primarily brick and mortar mirages because slowly developed tourism sector and deals based on inimitable, because they prepared the ground to seize new employment opportunities based on renewable energy, because it used to fund the technological revolution that encouraged young people to stay and take, because a system set up R & D + i based on university-industry collaboration .

1.2 Extremadura as a brand

Extremadura, aware of his role in a regional competition environment created the Brand Extremadura. The brand Extremadura is one of the most important strategic variables for the region. Not just a mere name and a symbol, is the hallmark of

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Extremadura and its image not only encompasses the wealth of their people and their people, but those emotional intangibles that are the essence of the region.

On this basis we have created a corporate identity that aims to be the hallmark of the region and becomes part of their identification elements are just as its flag, anthem and coat.

Extremadura is leading a process that involves significant structural changes that are enabling the launch of the region. This joins the dynamic growth of the society of Extremadura, constant innovation and excellence as areas for progress are turning their gaze to the region as one of the best communities in which to invest.

In this scenario, the repositioning and transformation of the image of the region through Extremadura brand has been based since 2006 in passion and a clear identity that have become the hallmark of Extremadura to position the region as a destination quality, trust and innovation. Extremadura brand gives clear and positive reputation, and its value Extremadura opens doors to the world and vice versa. In an increasingly competitive and globalized, the importance of a strong Extremadura image is a competitive factor added to go outside and an excellent tool to promote internationalization.

The strategy that Brand Extremadura has been developing since its inception has been to show, first the new community they have built together, reflecting on what makes it different from Extremadura, inviting seek balance and reflecting their philosophy of life, which primacy always devote time to things that really matter in life. And second, in the construction of the brand image, of the identity of Extremadura, has sought to involve all generations of Extremadura: Extremadura Brand are all, appeal to build the image that they want to keep from interior, from Extremadura, to Spain, Europe or the world for, under this sign of identity, show Extremadura. The card of Extremadura to the world is to show it as a balanced society, committed to all its inhabitants, which invests in people and their future, in their culture, their identity, their welfare.

In this sense, the program Brand Extremadura Autonomous Community has positioned itself as a benchmark and leading advocate of a huge number of projects of Extremadura confirming that this region supports the creation of value and talent, through a common identity.

Innovation and technology development are a priority for Extremadura, what is allowing address some of the scientific and technological projects in Europe, placing Extremadura as a reference centre in the world in fields such as supercomputing. The region is the ideal scenario where projects are being developed national and international reference such as: Advanced Technologies Extremadura Centre or the Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology in Trujillo, the Centre for Research in Organic Farming Plasencia, the future Iberian Renewable Energy Centre in Badajoz, Centre for Minimally Invasive Surgery Jesus Uson in Cáceres, the National Centre for the Application of Information Technologies and Communication Almendralejo or National Agribusiness Technology Centre in Villafranco del Guadiana.

Moreover Extremadura has a particularly rich natural heritage and diverse, with a large protected natural set, thanks to a development model in which progress coexists with the natural environment and has developed multiple forms of protection tailored to the needs of each environment: cities Caceres welcome as special protection areas for birds in the town itself, the rivers are areas of knowledge thanks to the Ecological Corridors and Biodiversity, the effects of the elements in nature, as the landscape particularly Barrueco, become in Natural Monuments, and the trees that have been witnessed in the history of Extremadura are recognized as Unique Trees.

2.Promotion, furtherance, expectations of a Regional Identity in the modern world.

In today's world, there is a trend towards integration of the countries through institutional organizations, movement of economic, communication technologies and trends emerge while localist or regionalist groups with common interests and ideas, with the intention of reaffirming identity.

This is without prejudice to seek access to global.

Obviously new technologies have created new cultural forms and past practices have redefined leading to ancient practice changes and different forms and languages which can add, supplement and even replace the old forms and use.

Briefly, arguably recorded a double movement: first a process of homogenization in the economic, institutional and communication, and secondly the emergence and / or strengthening of local cultural identities.

CONCLUSIONS

Region is considered a geographical area located between the national and local levels, but with capacity for action and autonomy regardless of the state they belong to some of the development and cohesion policy of the European Union. The region is a human community implying a regional history, cultural identity formed or forming, and a set of economic activities. The idea of a structured system of the above factors, provide coherence to the interaction thereof.

While decentralization movement seeks to preserve the cultural identity of citizens to their social or national group nearest supranational integration process responds to the needs imposed by the globalization of markets and the attempt to ensure the development and maintenance of competitiveness of European economies in global markets.

This framework has created a proper scenario in which Extremadura has reached a high autonomy and also has developed a common sense of region and regional identity. Therefore Extremadura has had a regional history, without having formed a regional official entity. Spanish Decentralization and the European Union have intensified those feelings regionalist therefore will always have existed.

The fact is that Extremadura Extremaduran has been coined identity throughout history, but never has been strengthened by the creation of a defined physical space that circumscribes, i.e. never had that option or we could say the need to regionalize. After the transition and the arrival of democracy, citizens did not hesitate to proclaim

Extremadura its autonomous status, flag and anthem is recognized and associated to a region, to an identity, the Extremaduran. The card of Extremadura to the world is to show it as a balanced society, committed to all its inhabitants, which invests in people and their future, in their culture, their identity, their welfare.

As we observed during these chapters, we can affirm that other regions with more autonomy and regional sense than Extremadura had influenced in the ambitions of Extremadura as a Region. More over, the European context has raised the sense of region that Extremadura needed it in order to develop itself not only economically but socially. The globalization process has influenced as well. Thus the people from Extremadura have searched deep to find common futures in order to develop its regional identity.

Nowadays Extremadura is looking for its own path, no by nationalism but as a region within Spain and Europe. It searches for its own goals and ambitions and its borders, symbols and people conform a geographical space called official Extremadura, this time not only with institutional support but with the support of its people.

Besides we should take into consideration that the concepts that we are talking about are dynamic, they change, thus we shall look forward in order to create new goals for new researches.

The current economic crisis jeopardized the Autonomous system, and has even raised the possibility of a re-centralization of powers and administration (put newspaper articles). This would result in reduced autonomy for the regions, we could speak of a de-regionalization. The truth is that some regions have already spoken (Example Catalonia). What will be the role of Extremadura? What will say its citizens? He will miss the feeling of being Extremadura, one in favor of Spanish nationalism?. Those are questions that shall be answered by other works or perhaps by the own investigation of the author of this dissertation.

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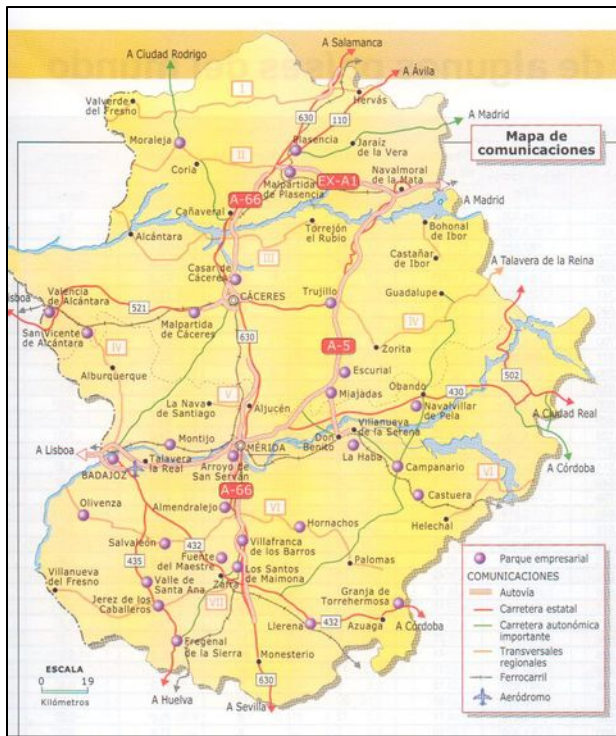
www.europa.eu – Official website of the European Union
www.cor.europa.eu – COR website

ANEXES

Figure 1: Map of Spanish Autonomous Communities

Available at: <http://mapsof.net/map/autonomous-communities-of-spain-with-other-countries-no#.Ufj6Fhb8GUg>
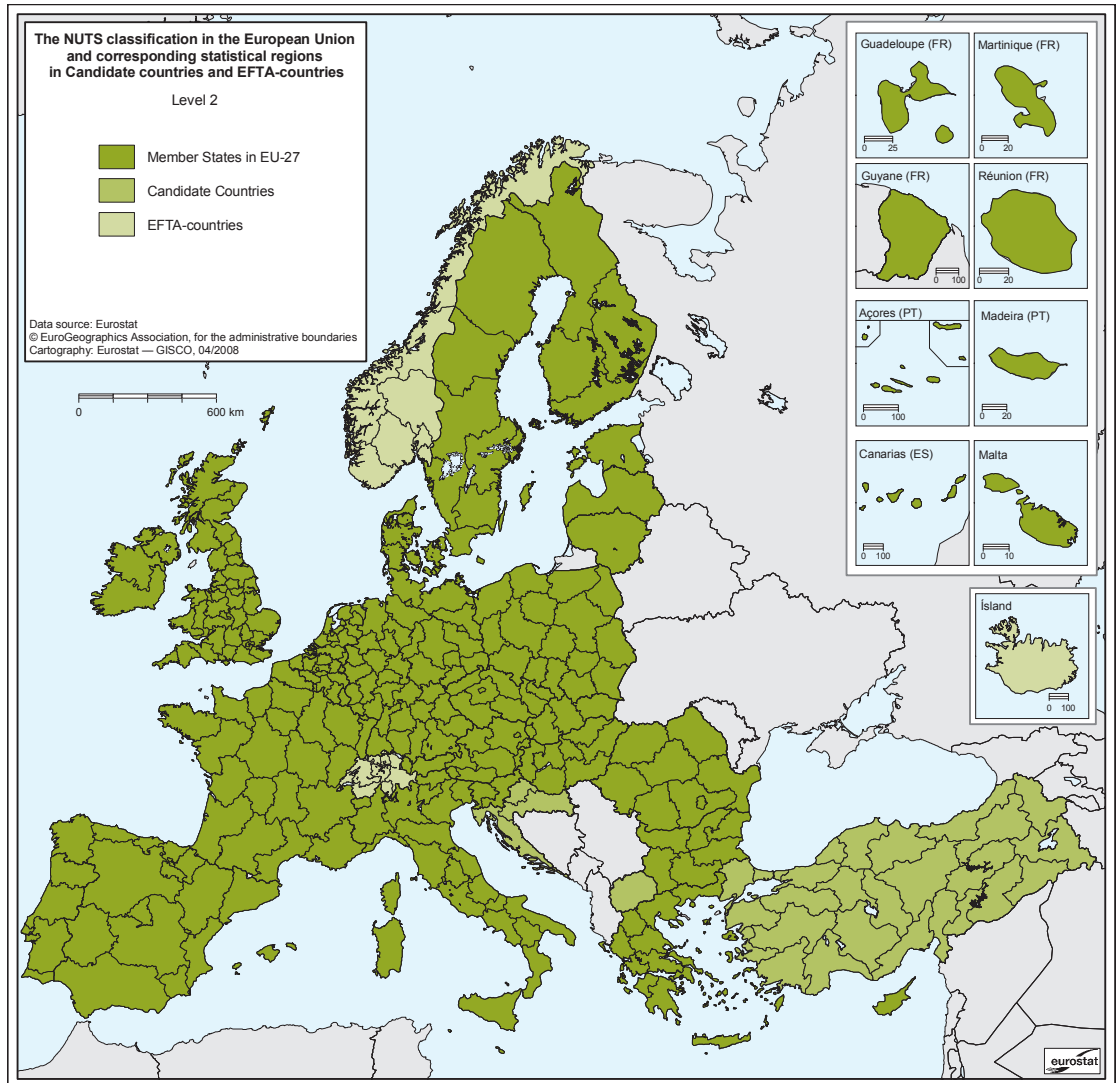
Figure 2: Map of Extremadura

Available at: <http://www.zonu.com/Europa/Espana/Extremadura/index.html>

Figure 3: Map of European Union

Available at: <http://europa.eu/abc/maps/>

Figure 4: European Union (27) NUTS Level 2 Map

Available at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/GISCO/mapjobs2008/1801EN.pdf>

Figure 5: Transnational Cooperation Programs Maps

Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/transnational/index_en.htm>

Figure 6: Official flag of Extremadura

Figure 7: Nationalist flag of Extremadura

Figure 8: Nationalist propaganda of Extremadura

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