

Cultural analysis of spain



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I. Cultural Analysis of Spain Introduction writing service in angular 2 Spains powerful world empire of the 16th and 17th centuries ultimately yielded command of the seas to England. Subsequent failure to embrace the mercantile and industrial revolutions caused the country to fall behind Britain, France, and Germany in economic and political power. Spain remained neutral in World Wars I and II but suffered through a devastating civil war (1936-39). A peaceful transition to democracy following the death of dictator Francisco FRANCO in 1975, and rapid economic modernization (Spain joined the EU in 1986) gave Spain a dynamic and rapidly growing economy and made it a global champion of freedom and human rights. The government continues to battle the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) terrorist organization, but its major focus for the immediate future will be on measures to reverse the severe economic recession that started in mid-2008.

Brief discussion of the countrys relevant history After a long and hard conquest, the Iberian Peninsula became a region of the Roman Empire known as Hispania. During the early Middle Ages it came under Germanic rule but later was conquered by Muslim invaders. Through a very long and fitful process, the Christian kingdoms in the north gradually rolled back Muslim rule, finally extinguishing its last remnant in Granada in 1492, the same year Columbus reached the Americas. A global empire began which saw Spain become the strongest kingdom in Europe and the leading world power in the 16th century and first half of the 17th century. Continued wars and other problems eventually led to a diminished status. The French invasion of Spain in the early 19th century led to chaos, triggering

independence movements that tore apart most of the empire and left the country politically unstable. In the 20th century it suffered a devastating civil war and came under the rule of an authoritarian government, leading to years of stagnation, but finishing in an impressive economic surge.

Democracy was restored in 1978 in the form of a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. In 1986, Spain joined the European Union, experiencing a cultural renaissance and steady economic growth.

Geographical setting Location Spain, Reino de Espana, is located in southwestern Europe on the Iberian Peninsula.

Its land is bordered to the south and east by the Mediterranean Sea except for a small land boundary with the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar; to the north by France, Andorra, and the Bay of Biscay; to the northwest and west by the Atlantic Ocean and Portugal. At 504, 782 km² (194, 897 sq mi), Spain is the world's 51st-largest country. Spanish territory also includes the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean off the African coast, and two autonomous cities in North Africa, Ceuta and Melilla, that border Morocco. Furthermore, the town of Llívia is a Spanish exclave situated inside French territory. With an area of 504, 030 km², it is the second largest country in Western Europe and the European Union after France.

Climate Due to Spain's geographical situation and orographic conditions, we can find three main climatic zones: The Mediterranean climate, characterized by dry and warm summers. According to the Köppen climate classification, it is dominant in the peninsula, with two varieties: the typical Mediterranean

climate (Csa climate), present in most of the country, and the Galician variant (Galicia and North-West Castilla), with summers less hot due to the proximity of the ocean (Csb climate) or the altitude. The semiarid climate (Bsk), located in south-eastern quarter of the country, especially in the region of Murcia and in the Ebro valley.

In contrary to the Mediterranean climate, the dry season extends beyond the summer. The Oceanic climate: Winter and summer temperatures are ponderated by the ocean, and have no seasonal drought. In the coastal strip near the Basque Country, the Asturias, and in some highlands, we find essentially a “ southern” nuance (sometimes called “ Aquitanian”), which differs from the typical type by hotter summers (mean temperature of July between 20 °C (68. 0 °F) and 22 °C (71.

6 °F)) , and much stormy than in north-west Europe - (average July temperature of 21 °C (69. 8 °F) in Santander, vs 16 °C (60. 8 °F) in Brest or Liverpool). In a less extend, we can find other sub-types like the alpine climate in the Pyrenees, and a Humid subtropical climate in the Canary Islands. The rain in Spain does not fall mainly in the plain. It falls mainly in the northern mountainsTopographyThe majority of Spains peninsular landmass consists of the Meseta Central, a highland plateau rimmed and dissected by mountain ranges. Other landforms include narrow coastal plains and some lowland river valleys, the most prominent of which is the Andalusian Plain in the southwest.

The country can be divided into ten natural regions or subregions: the dominant Meseta Central, the Cordillera Cantabrica and the northwest

region, the Iberico region, the Pyrenees, the Penibetico region in the southeast, the Andalusian Plain, the Ebro Basin, the coastal plains, the Balearic Islands, and the Canary Islands. These are commonly grouped into four types: the Meseta Central and associated mountains, other mountainous regions, lowland regions, and islands. The major lowland regions are the Andalusian Plain in the southwest, the Ebro Basin in the northeast, and the coastal plains. The Andalusian Plain is essentially a wide river valley through which the Rio Guadalquivir flows. The river broadens out along its course, reaching its widest point at the Golfo de Cadiz. The Andalusian Plain is bounded on the north by the Sierra Morena and on the south by the Sistema Penibetico; it narrows to an apex in the east where these two mountain chains meet. The Ebro Basin is formed by the Rio Ebro valley, contained by mountains on three sides—the Sistema Iberico to the south and west, the Pyrenees to the north and east, and their coastal extensions paralleling the shore to the east.

Minor low-lying river valleys close to the Portuguese border are located on the Tagus and the Rio Guadiana. The remaining regions of Spain are the Balearic and the Canary Islands, the former located in the Mediterranean Sea and the latter in the Atlantic Ocean. The Balearic Islands, encompassing a total area of 5, 000 square kilometers, lie 80 kilometers off Spain's central eastern coast.

The mountains that rise up above the Mediterranean Sea to form these islands are an extension of the Sistema Penibetico. The archipelagos highest points, which reach 1, 400 meters, are in northwestern Majorca, close to the

coast. The central portion of Majorca is a plain, bounded on the east and the southeast by broken hills.

Social institutions
Family
Agricultural Age: Extended family: several generations living and working together on the land. Industrial Age: Nuclear family: father working, mother at home not working, and approximately two children—for middle and upper classes in developed West. Also nuclear family in lower class West and socialist countries—except that women worked.

Information Age: Multiple family patterns: no one model everyone must follow to be socially accepted. Examples include: married couples with or without children; unmarried couples living together; single parents; divorced parents with children who remarry, making children part of different households; single-person households; people living in groups; gay and lesbian couples; etc. The family Model
The Spanish family has undergone radical transformations throughout this century as a consequence of demographic changes, but also owing to mutations in the socioeconomic and employment structure of society in the system of values. The principal change, the same as in the majority of European nations, is that of the transition from the extended family unit representative of rural agrarian societies to a nuclear model, made up of a married couple and children which is more in keeping with urban industrial societies.

The family has been traditionally founded upon, and still is in the majority of cases, the institution of marriage, which at present is still largely performed according to Catholic rites, although the number of exclusively civil ceremonies has increased within the past few years. The total number of marriages has varied little throughout the century, generally fluctuating

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between 7 and 8. 5 per year for each 1, 000 inhabitants. Nevertheless, a sharp decline has also been observed over the past few years along with the steep fall in births. Since 1977, the number of marriages has fallen to rates of 6. 6 per 1, 000 in 1979 and 5. 6 per 1, 000 in 1989. This notable decline in the number of marriages is similar to that given as the figure in other E.

C. states. At present, there are fewer marriages in Spain than in any other EC country or Council of Europe member State, with the single exception of Sweden. To the contrary, the practice of cohabitation is increasing, although as of yet it is still insignificant and fairly uncommon, in spite of the fact that it is increasingly socially accepted. The age for first marriages has also varied in accordance with the European patterns. It was relatively advanced during the first decades of the century, but became even more so during the Civil War.

From then on, and as a consequence of socioeconomic improvements, the age at which one first married slowly and progressively declined to 26 years of age for men and 23. 5 for women from 1976 to 1980. From 1981 to 1985, it has been observed that people are again marrying at a more mature age, as in ther European countries as a consequence of the economic crisis and the new set of values with respect to matrimony and the couple. The sharp fall in number of marriages in these past few years indicates that the marrying age has again shot up. The available data from other European countries show that the average age for marriage for both sexes has again risen by one or two years, as a consequence of more serious economic problems, especially youth unemployment.

The proportion of single-person households (slightly less than 10% of the total at present) has increased. Legislation authorizing divorce is quite recent (divorce was regulated in Spain in 1981), and the divorce rate is very low (0.5 per 1,000, in 1986 and 0.9 per 1,000 in 1990) in comparison with other European societies, practically three times as high. The proportion of children born out of wedlock is also less in Spain than in the other EC countries.

Spain shows only 5%, whereas this figure reaches 36% for Denmark and 50% in Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Population and Birth Rate In mid-1985, Spains population reached 38.8 million, making it Western Europes fifth most populous nation. The countrys population grew very slowly throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and most of the twentieth.

In the 1860s, the population increased by only about one-third of one percent annually; by the first decades of the twentieth century, this rate of increase had grown to about 0.7 percent per year. Between the 1930s and the 1980s, population growth rates hovered between 0.8 and 1.2 percent annually. In the postwar years, Spain began to exhibit population growth patterns very similar to those of most other advanced industrial societies.

Growth rates were projected to level off, or to decline slightly, through the remainder of the twentieth century; Spain was expected to reach a population of 40 million by 1990 and 42 million by the year 2000. Observers estimated that the countrys population would stabilize in the year 2020 at about 46 million. One significant factor in Spains population growth has been a declining rate of births. Between 1965 and 1985, Spain experienced a

dramatic reduction in its birth rate, from 21 to 13 per thousand, a drop of approximately 38 percent.

In 1975, with an estimated base population of about 35.5 million, the country recorded about 675,000 live births; in 1985, with an estimated base population of more than 38 million, Spain had only about 475,000 live births. In other words, ten years after the death of Franco, despite an increase of nearly 3 million in the base population, the country registered more than one-third fewer births. At the same time that the birth rate was dropping sharply, Spain's low death rate also declined slightly, from 8 to 7 per 1,000. By the mid-1980s, life expectancy at birth had reached seventy-seven years, a level equal to or better than that of every other country in Europe except France, and superior to the average of all the world's advanced industrial countries.

Male life expectancy increased between 1965 and 1985 from sixty-eight to seventy-four years, while female life expectancy rose from seventy-three to eighty years. By the early 1980s, Spain, like all advanced industrial countries, had begun to experience the aging of its population. In 1980 a reported 10.6 percent of its population was over 65 years of age, a figure that was only a bare point or two behind the percentages in the United States and the Netherlands. By 1986 the percentage over 65 had climbed to 12.2; officials estimated that by 2001, the percentage over sixty-five would exceed 15. In 1985 children under the age of 14 constituted 25 percent of the population; specialists anticipated that, by the year 2001, this proportion would decline to 18 percent.

Marriage and Divorce Marriage in Spain is more complicated than in the United States. Spanish authorities may take 30 to 45 days to approve a marriage application. Policies and procedures vary from region to region. For example, Spanish law appears to permit foreigners who are not Spanish legal residents to marry in Spain. The different autonomous communities in Spain, however, interpret this law differently. Outside Madrid, it may be required that one party be a citizen or resident of Spain. Spanish law recognizes religious marriages without a second, civil ceremony.

For a religious ceremony, couples first need authorization from the civil authorities, obtained by presenting the requirements described above. Each religious denomination may have separate documentary requirements. New divorce legislation, designed to make divorce by mutual consent quicker and easier, was approved in 2005.

Under the legislation (known as *divorcio directo*), a couple wishing to divorce must have been married for a minimum of three months (less if there's domestic violence), neither party needs to present any grounds for divorce and there's no minimum period of separation required beforehand. If the couple have children, they can agree to have equal custody of the children. The paperwork is relatively straightforward and the services of a lawyer shouldn't be required.

A divorce in court is only necessary if the parties cannot agree on the terms of the divorce or the divorce isn't by mutual consent. Female/male roles In social values, Spain began to resemble its West European neighbors to the north. The status of women, was one of the most notable of these changes,

as women began to figure more prominently in education, politics, and the work force generally. Closely associated with these changes were a number of other social characteristics including a more liberal stance on abortion, contraception, divorce, and the role of the large and extended family.

The Roman Catholic Church, long a dominant power in Spanish life, opposed these developments, but as Spain became a more materialistic and more secular society, the church's ability to determine social mores and policies was strikingly eroded. Among to non-demographic changes affecting Spanish society, the new social role of the women stands out. Her formal education has increased, as has her participation in the workplace thereby increasing her economic independence. The level of legal and social equality of Spanish women has experienced a continuous ascent in the past few years. This change, first embarked upon in the 1960s, was possible due to three factors. In the first place, emigration from the rural areas to the city was more important in relative terms for a woman than for a man, liberating her from unremunerated work in the primary sector, especially domestic tasks, and also from rigid community ethics. In the second place, the increase in her level of education must be mentioned.

Although traditionally inferior to that of men, it has progressively reached the same level, above all since the establishment of compulsory education to the age of 14. This is also illustrated by the enormous increase in enrollment in secondary and higher education. Over the past five years, the percentage of women registered in higher education increased 40%, a very significant figure if one takes into account that the total number of students in higher education also rose. However, the presence of women in technical institutes

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and colleges constitutes only 1.7% of total student enrollment. Last but not least, the third cause of the woman's change in status, and which to a great extent is a consequence of the other two, is her greater participation in jobs outside the home.

The proportion of women in the total active population, which was 13.5% in 1910, and only 15.8% in 1950, rose to 20.1% in 1960 to 24.

8% in 1981 and to 33.3% in 1991. Education The current system of education in Spain is known as LOE after the Ley Organica de Educacion, or Fundamental Law of Education.

State education in Spain is free and compulsory education lasts from 6 to 16 years of age. The role of education in society Primary education The educational law of 1990, the Ley Organica de Ordenacion General del Sistema Educativo (LOGSE) (Law on the General Organization of the Educational System), established a new system which started in 1991-92 school-year. The main points of the new system are the following: Basic education is compulsory and free of charge, and it is extended up to the age of 16, the legal age for starting work.

The educational system includes general and special education, i. e. the different levels of education are adapted to suit students with special needs. All students have basic vocational training, which is given in secondary education. Specific vocational training is organized at two levels, the first at the end of compulsory secondary education, and the higher level at the end of the Baccalaureate. Improvement in the quality of teaching must be achieved via the renewal of the contents of the courses, improvement in

human resources and material resources, and better use of the various instruments of the educational system.

Religious instruction must be available at all schools, but it is voluntary for pupils. Special systems are applied for artistic education and language learning. General education is organized as follows: nursery infant education (0 to 6 years) primary education (6 to 12 years) compulsory secondary education (12 to 16 years) post-compulsory secondary education, including the baccalaureate and the middle grade of vocational training upper grade vocational training university education (to become university student a university entrance examination must be passed) Secondary education Before the reform of 1990, secondary education used to last 3 years following eight years of ??? Educacion General Basica??? (EGB) or ??? Formacion Profesional??? (FP). It led to the ??? Bachillerato Unificado y Polivalente??? (BUP). Pupils who held the ??? Bachillerato??? (BUP) could go on to one-year ??? Curso de Orientacion Universitaria??? (COU), a university preparation course and one of the pre-requisites for entrance to university studies. After the 1990 reform (LOGSE), secondary education (ESO) became compulsory, and it now lasts four years, following six years of primary education, and it leads to the ??? graduado en educacion secundaria???.

Studies leading to the ??? titulo de bachillerato??? take another two years. Students sit for examinations and must succeed in all subjects. To enter university, they must sit for an entrance examination ??? selectividad???.

Higher education The Spanish university system dates back to the Middle Ages. The oldest among Spanish Universities is ??? Salamanca???, founded in 1218. The present system, however, is actually descendant of the 19th

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century liberal university, inspired by the centralized French model. In the last years, it has experienced its greatest growth in history, while at the same time advancing towards a self-governing and decentralized system.

Higher education is provided by both public and private institutions. The Ministry of Education with the departments of higher education in the universities coordinates the activities of state and private institutions and proposes the main lines of educational policy. The *Consejo de Universidades* sets up guidelines for the creation of universities, centres and institutes. It can also propose measures concerning advanced postgraduate studies, the defining of qualifications to be officially recognized throughout the country and standards governing the creation of university departments. The legislation on university autonomy provides for administrative, academic and financial autonomy. The *Ley de Reforma Universitaria (LRU)* gave rise to a renewal of the existing plans of study, presently intermediate degrees (three years) and superior degrees (five years, six for medicine) which are being replaced by two different types of studies: those of the single cycle, which will run for three years and are directly professional; and those of three cycles in some cases, receiving diplomas which are professionally valid; the B.

A. s (always with various specialties) and the doctorate (two years and a final thesis). Literacy rates There are no universal definitions and standards of literacy. Unless otherwise specified, all rates are based on the most common definition - the ability to read and write at a specified age. Literacy: definition: age 15 and over can read and write total population: 97.

9%male: 98. 7%female: 97. 2% (2003 est.)Rank: 62Political systemPolitical structureThe Spanish Constitution of 1978 is the culmination of the Spanish transition to democracy. The constitutional history of Spain dates back to the constitution of 1812. Impatient with the pace of democratic political reforms in 1976 and 1977, Spains new King Juan Carlos, known for his formidable personality, dismissed Carlos Arias Navarro and appointed the reformer Adolfo Suarez as Prime Minister. The resulting general election in 1977 convened the Constituent Cortes (the Spanish Parliament, in its capacity as a constitutional assembly) for the purpose of drafting and approving the constitution of 1978.

After a national referendum on 6 December 1978, 88% of voters approved of the new constitution. As a result, Spain is now composed of 17 autonomous communities and two autonomous cities with varying degrees of autonomy thanks to its Constitution, which nevertheless explicitly states the indivisible unity of the Spanish nation as well as that Spain has today no official religion but all are free to practice and believe as they wish. As of November 2009, the government of Spain keeps a balanced gender equality ratio. Nine out of the 18 members of the Government are women. Under the administration of Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, Spain has been described as being “ at the vanguard” in gender equality issues and also that “ no other modern, democratic, administration outside Scandinavia has taken more steps to place gender issues at the centre of government”. The Spanish administration has also promoted gender-based positive discrimination by approving gender equality legislation in 2007 aimed to provide equality between genders in the Spanish political and economic life (Gender Equality

Act). However, in the legislative branch, as of July 2010 only 128 out of the 350 members of the Congress are women (36.

3%). Nowadays, it positions Spain as the 13th country with more women in its lower house. In the Senate, the ratio is even lower, since there are only 79 women out of 263 (30. 0%). The Gender Empowerment Measure of Spain in the United Nations Human Development Report is 0.

794, the 12th in the worldPolitical partiesSpain has a multi-party system, which means that there are two dominant political parties, with extreme difficulty for anybody to achieve electoral success under the banner of any other party. Regional parties can be strong in the autonomous communities like Catalonia and the Basque Country and are essential for government coalitions, which makes the party system a multi-party system. The largest two parties represented in the parliament are: Spanish Socialist Workers Party: Ideology: social liberalism, social progressivism, centre-left. With 169 seats in the parliament and 43. 87% of votes in the 2008 elections.

Peoples Party: Ideology: Conservatism, liberal conservatism, neoliberalism. With 154 seats in the parliament and 39. 94% of votes in the 2008 elections.

Other regional parties include: United Left ??“ Initiative for Catalonia Greens (Communism democratic socialism ideology, 2 seats in the parliament) ??“

Convergence and Union (Catalan nationalism, conservatism ideology, 10 seats in the parliament) ??“ Basque Nationalist Party (Basque nationalism,

conservatism ideology, 6 seats in the parliament). Stability of

governmentSpains transformation from a rigid, authoritarian, highly centralized regime into a pluralistic, liberal parliamentary democracy with

considerable regional autonomy stands as one of the more remarkable political developments of the twentieth century.

That this was accomplished without civil war or revolutionary upheaval and in the midst of unfavorable economic circumstances is all the more extraordinary. Despite decades of living under a repressive dictatorship, most Spanish citizens adapted readily to the new democratic system, and they turned out in large numbers for referenda and elections. The institutions established under the new democratic regime were based on the principles of modernization and decentralization. The 1978 Constitution, which enjoyed massive popular support, established Spain as a democratic state ruled by law. Spain's form of government is that of a parliamentary monarchy, with political power centered in the bicameral Cortes (Spanish Parliament). One of the most striking features of Spain's new governmental system is the devolution of power and responsibility to the regions. Regional differences had been the source of longstanding tensions between the center and the periphery in Spain. The 1978 Constitution addresses these conflicts by providing for an unprecedented degree of regional autonomy, although not all Spaniards have been satisfied with the pace of the devolution process.

At the same time, the relationships between the more powerful autonomous regions and the central government remain complicated by the deliberately ambiguous terms of the Constitution. One difficult problem facing the government in the 1980s was the ongoing menace of Basque terrorism, as militant separatists continued to perpetrate assassinations and bombings in spite of vigorous antiterrorist measures. A more far-reaching challenge lay in the economic realm. Workers were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with

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their diminished earnings and with the governments failure to deal with the unemployment problem. The political changes since 1975 have been dramatic and profound. Spain has benefited from the shrewd leadership of its king and its prime ministers, who successfully presided over the transition to democracy and its consolidation. Nevertheless, Spanish leadership confronted the challenge of sustaining social stability in the face of economic and regional pressures.

Regional GovernmentThe framers of the 1978 Constitution had to deal with many controversial issues arising from the advent of democracy to a nation that had been under dictatorial control for decades. Among these, the most divisive was the historically sensitive question of regional autonomy. The Spanish state is unusual in the extent and the depth of its regional differences, and the society includes ethnic groups - notably the Basques, Catalans, and Galicians - that are each culturally and linguistically distinct from the rest of the country. The strength of regional feeling is such that, in many areas, Spaniards identify more closely with their region than they do with the nation. The Constitution provides two procedures for achieving regional autonomy.

The rapid procedure was for those regions that had sought autonomy in the 1930s. After approval by the Constitutional Committee of the Congress of Deputies, the proposal for autonomy was voted on in a regional referendum. The " historic nationalities" of Galicia, the Basque Country, and Catalonia acquired regional autonomy in this way.

The slow procedure required initiative on the part of municipal and provincial governments as well as final approval by the Cortes, for a degree of regional autonomy less than that enjoyed by the “historic nationalities.” A compromise procedure was devised for Andalusia because, although it had not sought regional autonomy earlier, there was widespread support for such autonomy among its inhabitants. Although the communities employing the rapid procedure gained a greater degree of autonomy than the other communities for the time being, ultimately – although probably not until sometimes in the 1990s – all were to have an equal degree of autonomy. The regional reorganization of Spain into autonomous communities was completed in May 1983, when elections were held in the thirteen new autonomous communities, although the actual process of transferring powers was far from complete. The state consists of seventeen autonomous communities, each of which includes one or more previously existing provinces. These communities vary widely in size, in population, and in economic development; moreover, the political weight of an autonomous community is not necessarily related to its land area or population.

Local Government Institutions of local government have undergone marked transformations since the Franco era, when they functioned primarily as instruments of the central government. The overhauling of administration at the local level had to wait, however, until a degree of political reform had been achieved at the national level. The first fully democratic local elections following Franco's demise were held in 1979, and limited reforms were introduced at the local level in 1981, but it was not until 1985 that the fundamental reorganization and democratization of local administration was

completed with the passage of the Basic Law on Local Government. This law outlines the basic institutions at the municipal and the provincial levels, establishes guidelines for the sharing of responsibilities among the different tiers of administration, and lists the services that local authorities are to provide. The responsibilities of municipalities vary in proportion to the size of their populations. Municipal governments share responsibility with the regional government in matters of health and education.

Both the central and the regional governments may delegate additional powers to municipalities. Because of the degree of authority that has been devolved to the autonomous communities from the central government, local institutions are politically dependent on these communities; however, they remain to a large extent financially dependent on Madrid. Legal system Organization of the judiciary system The Constitution declares that justice emanates from the people and that it is administered in the name of the king by independent judges and magistrates, who are irremovable and who are responsible and subject only to the rule of law. The judicial system is headed by the Supreme Court, which is the country's highest tribunal except for constitutional questions.

The supreme governing and administrative body is the General Council of the Judiciary. Its primary functions are to appoint judges and to maintain ethical standards within the legal profession. The 1978 Constitution provides that twelve of this council's twenty members are to be selected for five-year terms by judges, lawyers, and magistrates, with the remaining eight to be chosen by the Cortes. A judicial reform law that entered into force in July 1985 called for all twenty members to be chosen by the Cortes; ten by the <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-analysis-of-spain-analysis-paper-samples/>

Congress of Deputies and ten by the Senate. The General Council of the Judiciary elects the president of the Supreme Court, who also serves on this council.

In addition, there are territorial courts, regional courts, provincial courts, courts of the first instance, and municipal courts. The Constitution prohibits special courts and limits the jurisdiction of military courts to members of the armed services, except during a state of siege. It provides for a public prosecutor as well as for a public defender, to protect both the rule of law and the rights of citizens. A significant innovation is the provision allowing for trial by jury in criminal cases. CodeThe politicians who had played key roles in Spain's transition to democracy found that consolidating and administering this democracy was more difficult and less exhilarating than bringing it into being. Suarez, who had been pivotal in the reform process, found his leadership undermined by internal factionalism within his party coalition, the Union of the Democratic Center (Union de Centro Democrático-UCD), as well as by his ineffectiveness in dealing with the country's growing economic difficulties and regional tensions. The Socialists had not been part of the government during the transition process, although they participated through pacts and agreements, and thus they did not share responsibility for the inevitable mistakes made in the early period. When they came to power in 1982, however, they too were faced with the age-old problem of center-periphery tension.

In dealing with the regional issue as well as with the economic crisis, the Socialists found it necessary to moderate their ideological principles. Although compromise was essential, it resulted in the contradiction of earlier

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pronouncements and in the alienation of some elements of the political elites. Nevertheless, such pragmatism and moderation remained crucial to consolidating the rule of democracy in Spain. A significant factor in the Socialist victory in 1982 was the popular perception that profound economic and social reforms were long overdue. Previous governments had not been able to deal effectively with these issues, in part because of the need to focus on political and constitutional questions. Whereas most Spaniards had been willing to defer their hopes for economic improvement and for liberalized social policies in the interest of stabilizing the fledgling democracy, they became increasingly impatient for the reform process to reach their daily lives. Race, ethnicity, and subcultures One of the clearest indicators of Spain's cultural diversity is language.

Ethnic group boundaries do not coincide with administrative jurisdictions, so exact figures are impossible to confirm, but observers generally agreed that about one Spanish citizen in four spoke a mother tongue other than Castilian in the late 1980s. Nevertheless, Castilian Spanish was the dominant language throughout the country. Even in the homelands of the other Iberian languages, the native tongue was used primarily for informal communication, and Castilian continued to dominate in most formal settings. Spain has, besides its Castilian ethnic core, three major peripheral ethnic groups with some claim to an historical existence preceding that of the Spanish state itself.

In descending order of size, they are the Catalans, the Galicians, and the Basques. In descending order of the intensity of the pressure they brought to bear on Spanish society and politics in the late 1980s, the Basques came

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first, followed by the less intransigent and less violent Catalans, and, at a great distance, by the much more conservative and less volatile Galicians. In addition, heavily populated Andalusia had become the center of fragmenting regionalism in the south; and the Gypsies, although few in number, continuing to be a troublesome and depressed cultural minority. Francos policies toward cultural, ethnic, and linguistic minorities were directed at the suppression of all non-Spanish diversity and at the unification, integration, and homogenization of the country. Until 1975 Spains policy toward its ethnic minorities was more highly centralized and unifying than that of its neighbor, France, where a liberal democratic framework allowed private-sector initiatives to keep regional cultures and languages alive. With the restoration of democracy, Spanish elites (many of whom come from one of the peripheral ethnic homelands, especially Catalonia) were much more tolerant of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic differences. Article 2 of the 1978 Constitution includes this wording: “ The Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common and indivisible fatherland of all Spaniards, and it recognizes and guarantees the autonomy of the nationalities and regions that comprise it [the Spanish Nation], and the solidarity among them.” It should be pointed out, however, that the word “ autonomy” is never defined in the Constitution, leaving a serious ambiguity in Spains treatment of its ethnic minorities.

While requiring that Castilian be the official language throughout the country, the Constitution also recognizes the possibility that other languages may be “ co-official” (an ambiguous term that is taken to mean “ having co-equal status with Castilian for governmental purposes”) in their respective

autonomous communities. By 1988 five languages had been accorded such treatment: Catalan, Galician, Euskera (the Basque language), Valencian, and Majorcan. 1. The Catalans The four Spanish provinces in the northeast corner of the Iberian Peninsula constitute the principal homeland of the Catalans.

The Catalan autonomous community covers about 6.5 percent of Spain's total peninsular land area. The region consists of the provinces of Barcelona, Gerona, Lerida, and Tarragona. Elsewhere in Spain, there were also significant Catalan-speaking populations in the Balearic Islands, along the east coast to the south of Valencia, and as far west as the eastern part of the Aragonese province of Huesca. Outside Spain, the principal Catalan populations were found in France, at the eastern end of the Pyrenees, and in Andorra. The population of the Catalan region in 1986 was approximately 6.0 million, of which 4.6 million lived in densely populated Barcelona province. The other three provinces were more sparsely populated. As one of the richest areas of Spain and the first to industrialize, Catalonia attracted hundreds of thousands of migrants, primarily from Andalusia and other poor parts of the country. From 1900 to 1981, the net in-migration into Catalonia was about 2.4 million. In the 1980s, over half of Catalonia's working class, and the vast majority of its unskilled or semi-skilled workers, were cultural outsiders. Catalan was one of five distinct Romance languages that emerged as the Islamic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula began to ebb.

The others were Aragonese, Castilian, Leonese, and Galician. By the late Middle Ages, the kingdoms of Catalonia, Aragon, and Valencia had joined together in a federation, forging one of the most advanced constitutional

systems of the time in Europe. 2. The GaliciansGalicians live in the four Spanish provinces located along the far northwest coast of the Iberian Peninsula, but their language zone shades into northern Portugal as well. The autonomous region of Galicia covers about 6 percent of the total peninsular territory of Spain.

The four provinces that make up the region are La Coruna, Lugo, Orense, and Pontevedra. The total population of these provinces in 1981 was about 2.8 million. None of the provinces was densely populated. Unlike the Basque and the Catalan regions, which were rich, urbanized, and industrialized, Galicia remained relatively poor, agricultural and dominated by rural and village society, as industry had yet to make its appearance there on a large scale. Moreover, its agricultural sector continued to be among the most backward in Spain, and farm productivity was severely hampered by the tiny size of the individual plots, known as minifundios.

The minifundio was the product of an attempt to distribute land parcels in a closed rural system to a growing population by requiring that equal shares be left to each heir. After just a few generations, the land had been subdivided so much that most of the parcels were too small to support a family or to be economically viable. For these reasons, Galicia was a net exporter of population to the rest of Spain.

Between 1900 and 1981, the net outflow of people from Galicia was more than 825,000. Galician nationalism, which appeared as early as the 1840s, recalled a mythical "Golden Age" when the medieval kingdom of Galicia had existed. There had indeed been a king of Galicia who was crowned in 1111;

the kingdom was partitioned some years later, however, leaving the northern half hemmed in and isolated while the southern portion expanded southward in the wake of the Moors withdrawal. This southern part of the realm eventually became Portugal; the northern part fell into disorder. Finally, in 1483 Castilian forces restored order in Galicia, and the kingdom of Castile incorporated the region into its realm. Castilian rule also brought on economic and cultural stagnation that lasted into the nineteenth century. 3. The Basques The homeland of the Basques, known by Basque nationalists as Euzkadi, occupies the littoral of the Bay of Biscay as it curves north into France.

The region extends inland some 150 kilometers, through the juncture of the Pyrenees and the Cordillera Cantabrica, and thence south to the Rio Ebro. The region covers nearly 21, 000 square kilometers, of which about 3, 000 lie on the French side of the international frontier. The 18, 000 square kilometers on the Spanish side constitute about 3. 6 percent of Spains total land area. About 3 million people lived in this area in the late 1980s.

Approximately 300, 000 people were on the French side of the border, while the remaining 2. 7 million people were concentrated primarily in the two Spanish coastal provinces of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya and, less densely, in the two inland provinces of Alava and Navarre. This population lived under two distinct autonomous communities: Basque Country, which incorporated the three smaller provinces, and Navarre, which by itself constituted a “ uniprovincial” regional government. The Basques are among the oldest peoples of Europe. Despite their having been visited by numerous waves of

invaders, the Basques reached the tenth century still fairly isolated from the flow of West European history.

In the tenth and the eleventh centuries, the rising kingdom of Navarre absorbed most of the rest of the Basque peoples, and it created for the first time a more or less unified Basque political entity. With the kingdoms decline, however, the region fell into disorder, and by the sixteenth century, the Basque provinces had been integrated into the kingdom of Castile. From this time until the nineteenth century, relations between Castile and the Basque provinces were governed by the *fueros*, local privileges and exemptions by which the Spanish king recognized the special nature of the Basque provinces and even a number of Basque towns. As a result of the centralization of the Spanish state and the Carlist Wars, the *fueros* had been abolished by the end of the nineteenth century. The Second Republic in the 1930s offered the chance to create a new autonomous Basque regime, but all such efforts were doomed by the Spanish Civil War. After the war, the Franco dictatorship sought-unsuccessfully-to suppress all signs of Basque distinctiveness, especially the use of the language.

4. The Andalusians

The Andalusians cannot be considered an ethnically distinct people because they lack two of the most important markers of distinctiveness: an awareness of a common, distant mythological origin, and their own language.

Nevertheless, it is clear that they do constitute a culturally distinct people, or region, that has become increasingly important in an industrial and democratic society. The Andalusians live in Spain's eight southernmost provinces: Almeria, Cadiz, Cordoba, Granada, Huelva, Jaen, Malaga, and Seville. In 1986 their total population stood at 6.9 million. In general, it had

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grown more slowly than had the country's total population, and the region continued to be sparsely populated. Since 1960, the region's share of total population had declined, despite birth rates ranging from 20 to 25 per 1,000, about 40 percent higher than the Spanish average. The causes of the depopulation of the region can be found in the distinctive characteristics of its culture and economy: the large, poorly utilized estates and the agrotowns; rural poverty and landlessness; a rigid class structure and sharp class conflict; and emigration to Spain's industrial cities and to other parts of Europe. Most descriptions of Andalusia begin with the landownership system, for the most powerful forces in the region have for centuries been the owners of the large, economically backward estates, called latifundios.

These wide expanses of land held by relatively few owners had their origins in landowning patterns that stretch back to Roman times; in grants of land made to the nobility, to the military orders, and to the church during the Reconquest (Reconquista); and in laws of the nineteenth century by which church and common lands were sold in large tracts to the urban middle class. The latifundio system is noted for two regressive characteristics: unproductive use of the land (agricultural production per capita in Andalusia was only 70 percent of that in Spain as a whole during the late 1980s) and unequal and absentee landownership patterns (1 percent of the agricultural population owned more than half of the land; the landed aristocracy made up no more than 0.3 percent of the population). The workers of this land, called jornaleros, were themselves landless; they did not even live on the land. Instead, they resided in what Spaniards refer to as pueblos, but with populations ranging as high as 30,000, these population centers were far

too large to be considered “villages” or “towns.” Anthropologists have coined the term “agro-towns” to describe such urban areas, because they served almost solely as a habitat for agricultural day-workers and had themselves declined in economic, cultural, and political significance.

5. The Gypsies The term “Gypsies” is used by outsiders to label an ethnic group the members of which refer to themselves as Rom and speak a language known as Romany. No one knows exactly how many Gypsies there are, either in general or in Spain in particular. Estimates of the Spanish Gypsy population range as low as 50,000 and as high as 450,000, and other estimates place the world Gypsy population at between 3 and 6 million.

Correct estimates are made difficult by the nomadic life-style followed by a portion of the group, by their cultural isolation, by the sense of mystery surrounding them and their origins, and by the division of the population into a number of distinctive subgroups. It is generally accepted that Gypsies migrated out of India into Europe as early as the eleventh century. There are records of their having arrived in Spain as early as 1425 and in Barcelona, in particular, by 1447. At first they were well received and were even accorded official protection by many local authorities. In 1492, however, when official persecution began against Moors and Jews to cleanse the peninsula of non-Christian groups, the Gypsies were included in the list of peoples to be assimilated or driven out. For about 300 years, Gypsies were subject to a number of laws and policies designed to eliminate them from Spain as an identifiable group: Gypsy settlements were broken up and the residents dispersed; Gypsies were required to marry non-Gypsies; they were denied

their language and rituals as well as well being excluded from public office and from guild membership.

By the time this period had drawn to a close, Gypsies had been driven into a permanently submerged underclass from which they had not escaped in the late 1980s. Spanish Gypsies are usually divided into two main groups: gitanos and hungaros (for Hungarians). The former, in turn, are divided into subgroups classified by both social class and cultural differences. In the late 1980s, the gitanos lived predominantly in southern and central Spain. Many of them took up a sedentary form of life, working as street vendors or entertainers. Although poor and largely illiterate, they were usually well integrated into Spanish society. The hungaros, however, are Kalderash, one of the divisions of the group from Central Europe (hence the name).

They were much poorer than the gitanos and lived an entirely nomadic lifestyle, usually in tents or shacks around the larger cities. They made their living by begging or stealing, and they were much more of a problem for Spanish authorities. Many gitanos denied the hungaros the status of being in their same ethnic group, but outsiders tend to regard them all as basically Gypsies. In any case, whatever common ethnic consciousness they possessed was not sufficient to make them a significant political force.

Business customs and practices Relationships & Communication The Spanish prefer to do business with those they know and trust. It is important that you spend sufficient time letting your business colleagues get to know you. Once you develop a relationship, it will prevail even if you switch companies, since your Spanish business colleagues allegiance will be to you rather than the company you represent.

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Face-to-face contact is preferred to written or telephone communication. The way you present yourself is of critical importance when dealing with Spaniards. It is best to display modesty when describing your achievements and accomplishments. Communication is formal and follows rules of protocol. Avoid confrontation if at all possible.

Spaniards do not like to publicly admit that they are incorrect. Trust and personal relationships are the cornerstone of business. Spaniards, like many societies, are concerned that they look good in the eyes of others and try to avoid looking foolish at all times. Business Negotiation Spaniards place great importance on the character of the person with whom they do business. Hierarchy and rank are important. You should deal with people of similar rank to your own. Decision-making is held at the top of the company, since this is a hierarchical country.

You may never actually meet the person who ultimately makes the decision. You may be interrupted while you are speaking. This is not an insult, it merely means the person is interested in what you are saying. Spaniards do not like to lose face, so they will not necessarily say that they do not understand something, particularly if you are not speaking Spanish.

You must be adept at discerning body language. Spaniards are very thorough. They will review every minute detail to make certain it is understood.

First you must reach an oral understanding. A formal contract will be drawn up at a later date. Spaniards expect both sides to strictly adhere to the terms of a contract. Business Meeting Etiquette Appointments are mandatory and <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-analysis-of-spain-analysis-paper-samples/>

should be made in advance, preferably by telephone or fax. Reconfirm in writing or by telephone the week before. You should try to arrive on time for meetings.

The first meeting is generally formal and is used to get to know each other. Do not be surprised if no business is actually conducted during the first meeting. Agendas are often used but not always needed to be followed too strict. Make sure all your printed material is available in both English and Spanish. Not all businesspeople speak English, so it is wise to check if you should hire an interpreter.

Several people may speak at once. You may be interrupted while you are speaking. Decisions are not reached at meetings. Meetings are for discussion and to exchange ideas. Most Spaniards do not give their opinion at meetings. Therefore, it is important to watch their non-verbal communication.

Dress Etiquette Business dress is stylish yet, conservative. Dress as you would in the rest of Europe. Elegant accessories are important for both men and women. **Business Cards** Present your business card to the receptionist upon arriving. Have one side of your card translated into Spanish.

Hand your card so the Spanish side faces the recipient. **Religion and aesthetics** Religion and other belief systems Orthodox doctrines and structures Spain, it has been observed, is a nation-state born out of religious struggle between Catholicism and, in turn, Islam, Judaism, and Protestantism. After centuries of the Reconquest, in which Christian Spaniards fought to drive Muslims from Europe, the Inquisition sought to complete the religious purification of the Iberian Peninsula by driving out

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Jews, Protestants, and other nonbelievers. The Inquisition was finally abolished only in the 1830s, and even after that religious freedom was denied in practice, if not in theory.

Catholicism became the state religion in 1851, when the Spanish government signed a Concordat with the Vatican that committed Madrid to pay the salaries of the clergy and to subsidize other expenses of the Roman Catholic Church. This pact was renounced in 1931, when the secular constitution of the Second Republic imposed a series of anticlerical measures that threatened the church's very existence in Spain and provoked its support for the Franco uprising five years later. The advent of the Franco regime saw the restoration of the church's privileges. During the Franco years, Roman Catholicism was the only religion to have legal status; other worship services could not be advertised, and only the Roman Catholic Church could own property or publish books. The government not only continued to pay priests salaries and to subsidize the church, but it also assisted in the reconstruction of church buildings damaged by the war.

Laws were passed abolishing divorce and banning the sale of contraceptives. Catholic religious instruction was mandatory, even in public schools. Franco secured in return the right to name Roman Catholic bishops in Spain, as well as veto power over appointments of clergy down to the parish priest level. In 1953 this close cooperation was formalized in a new Concordat with the Vatican that granted the church an extraordinary set of privileges: mandatory canonical marriages for all Catholics; exemption from government taxation; subsidies for new building construction; censorship of materials the church deemed offensive; the right to establish universities, to

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operate radio stations, and to publish newspapers and magazines; protection from police intrusion into church properties; and exemption of clergy from military service. Relationship with the peopleIt took the new 1978 Constitution to confirm the right of Spaniards to religious freedom and to begin the process of disestablishing Catholicism as the state religion. The drafters of the Constitution tried to deal with the intense controversy surrounding state support of the church, but they were not entirely successful. The initial draft of the Constitution did not even mention the church, which was included almost as an afterthought and only after intense pressure from the church's leadership. Article 16 disestablishes Roman Catholicism as the official religion and provides that religious liberty for non-Catholics is a state-protected legal right, thereby replacing the policy of limited toleration of non-Catholic religious practices.

The article further states, however, that " The public authorities shall take the religious beliefs of Spanish society into account and shall maintain the consequent relations of cooperation with the Catholic Church and the other confessions." In addition, Article 27 also aroused controversy by appearing to pledge continuing government subsidies for private, church-affiliated schools. These schools were sharply criticized by Spanish Socialists for having created and perpetuated a class-based, separate, and unequal school system. The Constitution, however, includes no affirmation that the majority of Spaniards are Catholics or that the state should take into account the teachings of Catholicism.

Which religions are prominentRoman Catholicism is the largest denomination of Christianity present in the country by far. According to a October 2010

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study by the Spanish Center of Sociological Research about 73% of Spaniards self-identify as Catholics, 2.2% other faith, and about 22% identify with no religion. Most Spaniards do not participate regularly in religious worship. This same study shows that of the Spaniards who identify themselves as religious, 56% goes to mass few times a year, 17% go to mass many times a year (varias veces al año), 9% some time per month and 15% every Sunday or multiple times per week. Although a majority of Spaniards are Catholics, most, especially those of the younger generation, ignore the Church's conservative moral doctrines on issues such as pre-marital sex, sexual orientation or contraception.

The total number of parish priests has shrunk from 24,300 in 1975 to 19,307 in 2005. Nuns also dropped 6.9% to 54,160 in the period 2000-2005.

Anyone visiting Spain must be constantly aware of the church's physical presence in buildings, museums, and religious celebrations. In a population of about 39 million, the number of non-Catholics was probably no more than 300,000. About 250,000 of these were of other Christian faiths, including several Protestant denominations, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Mormons. The number of Jews in Spain was estimated at about 13,000.

More than 19 out of every 20 Spaniards were baptized Catholics; about 60 percent of them attended Mass; about 30 percent of the baptized Catholics did so regularly, although this figure declined to about 20 percent in the larger cities. As of 1979, about 97 percent of all marriages were performed according to the Catholic religion. A 1982 report by the church claimed that 83 percent of all children born the preceding year had been baptized in the

church. Islam in Spain Islam in Spain has had a fundamental presence in the culture and history of the nation. The religion was present in modern Spanish soil from 711 until 1492 under the rule of the Arabs and Moors of al-Andalus.

As of 2007, an estimated over 1 million Muslims live in Spain, most of them recent immigrants from North Africa, Middle East, and South Asia; although there is a sizable number of converts numbering at 20, 000. The first Mosque in modern Spain was built after approximately 700 years. The status of Christians and Jews who lived in Spain during the period of Islamic rule has been a subject of controversy. Islamic religious doctrine from the onset clearly state that other monotheistic faiths had to be tolerated. In this period of history, tolerance was rare and invaders normally expelled or murdered existing populations without question. Even though some Islamic rulers did not always follow the dictates of their own religion, there is plenty of evidence to prove that overall the majority in the Iberian peninsula did so, the strongest is the persistence of large Jewish and Christian communities throughout the era of Islamic rule.

After the disintegration of the Caliphate, Islamic control of Spain was gradually eroded by the Spanish Reconquista. The Reconquista (Reconquest) was the process by which the Catholic Kingdoms of northern Spain eventually managed to succeed in defeating and conquering the southern Muslim states of the Iberian Peninsula. The first major city to fall to Catholic powers was Toledo in 1085, what prompted the intervention of Almoravids.

After the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, most of Al-Andalus fell under control of the Catholic kingdoms, the only exception being the Nasrid

dynasty Emirate of Granada. The Granada War (Guerra de Granada or First Rebellion of Alpujarras) of the Reconquista began in 1482 against the Emirate of Granada. It was not until 1492 that the Emirate of Granada with city of Granada and the Alhambra and Generalife Palaces, the last remaining Muslim territory in al-Andalus, fell in the Battle of Granada to forces of the Catholic Monarchs (los Reyes Catolicos), Queen Isabella I of Castile and her husband King Ferdinand II of Aragon. The conquest was accompanied by the Treaty of Granada signed by Emir Muhammad XII of Granada, allowing the Spanish crowns new Muslim subjects a large measure of religious toleration.

They were also allowed the continuing use of their own language, schools, laws and customs. But the interpretation of the royal edict was largely left to the local Catholic authorities. Hernando de Talavera, the first Archbishop of Granada after its Catholic conquest, took a fairly tolerant view. AestheticsThe culture of Spain is a European culture based on a variety of influences. These include the pre-Roman cultures, mainly the Celts and the Iberians cultures; but mainly in the period of Roman influences.

In the areas of language and religion, the Ancient Romans left a lasting legacy. The subsequent course of Spanish history also added elements to the country's cultural development. The Visigothic Kingdom left a sense of a united Christian Hispania that was going to be welded in the Reconquista. Muslim influences were strong during the period of 711 AD to the 15th century, especially with loan words. The Spanish language, derives directly from Vulgar Latin, and has minor influences from pre-Roman languages like Basque -mud-, Gothic guerra -war-, Arabic and Basque. Other minorities include the Jewish population in some cities, but after the defeat of the

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Muslims during the Christian “ Reconquista” (Reconquest) period between 1000 and 1492, Spain became an almost entirely Roman Catholic country. In addition, the history of the nation and its Mediterranean and Atlantic environment have played a significant role in shaping its culture. By the end of the 19th and 20th , the Spaniards made expressions of cultural diversity easier than it had been for the last seven centuries. This occurred at the same period that Spain became increasingly drawn into a diverse international culture.

Spain has the second highest number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the world, with a total of 42. Literature Spanish literature generally refers to literature (Spanish poetry, prose, and drama) written in the Spanish language within the territory that presently constitutes the state of Spain. Its development coincides and frequently intersects with that of other literary traditions from regions within the same territory, particularly Catalan literature, Galician literature, and more recently a formal Basque literature. In its earliest form, Spanish literature intersects as well with Latin, Jewish, and Arabic literary traditions of the Iberian peninsula. The literature of Spanish America is an important branch of Spanish literature, with its own particular characteristics dating back to the earliest years of Spain's conquest of the Americas. The Spanish Literature transformed through time and can be classified into the following periods: Middle Ages Literature: The earliest manifestations of a literary tradition that can be properly called Spanish reflect the rich cultural diversity of the Iberian Peninsula during medieval times.

From 711 to 1492 C. E. Christians, Muslims, and Jews coexisted in the peninsula's principal cultural centers, transmitting ideas across cultures and collaborating on intellectual projects.

Pre-Renaissance during the 15th century: Literary production increased very greatly. Some outstanding poets of this century are Juan de Mena and Inigo Lopez de Mendoza (Marquess of Santillana). The Spanish literature of the Middle Ages concludes with the work *La Celestina* by Fernando de Rojas.

Baroque during the 17th century: important topics are: the prose of Francisco de Quevedo and Baltasar Gracian; also the theater is remarkable (Lope de Vega, Pedro Calderon de la Barca, and Tirso de Molina), as well as the poetry