

A Scope of Examination of National Interests: Case Studies of Italy and Spain

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Abstracts: *National interest (raison d'état in French) is one of the fundamental terms in the realistic school of the theory of international relations. The realists believe that states in their interaction and their competition for power assert their objectives and ambitions, which is what in a particular situation they regard as being of the greatest advantage to them – their interest, the national interest. The article will show how national interests are understood in Italy and in Spain.*

Key words: *National interest, Spain, Italy, European Union*

In history, the first thinker who used the conception of asserting the interests of the state or its rulers for their own benefit was Niccolo Machiavelli. Political scientists believe that the first practical example of pushing through national interest was the engagement of Catholic France on the Protestant side in the Thirty Years' War, with the aim of weakening the Holy Empire of the German Nation. Yet this claim is controversial since there were many earlier cases in history. In defense of the primacy of that event as evidence of enforcement of national interests and actually a full-scale war it was argued with the fact of the acceptance of sovereign states as decisive agents in international politics. Over the next centuries, states hesitated less and less in starting wars in order to enforce their own interests, though they may have used other reasons. The realistic theory, including the concept of enforcement of national interests, reached its peak at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, which led to the development of a system of balance of power between the five great European powers. In those days international relations, for the first time in history, were based on the division of spheres of influence and interests of European powers instead of on religion and other traditional links.

Although the First World War abolished the *realistic* division of the world and for a time replaced it with the idealistic conception of collective security, each State broke this principle and continued to enforce its own will, acting in its national interest, as long as the country felt strong enough (e.g., Italy and Germany). The events of the Second World War brought back the realistic view of international relations, now sometimes called neo-realism, though the main “neo-realistic” studies were only published in the 1970s (e.g., Waltz 1979). The weakness and low effectiveness of the *idealistic* League of Nations was thought to have been the reason why a world war could not be avoided because the League ignored the changed roles, powers and strengths of each State in global dimensions.

As stated above, from the theoretical aspect national interest is a concept based on the *realistic* approach and interpretation of international relations. For realists the principal question in international relations is the issue of power and its distribution in the system. The most important agents of international relations are the individual states, which define their objectives in terms of power and national interests (Drulák 2003: 55).

The first modern representative of the realistic theory was Edward Hallet Carr with his book *The Twenty Years Crisis 1919–1939. An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*. (Carr 1939) He arrived with the concept of realism in contrast to utopianism, which contributed to the European crisis after the First World War. Carr denies that states could have “permanent common interests”. In his view, this idealistic approach only masks the interests of each power (USA, France, Great Britain) which profited from the Versailles arrangement, while the powers disadvantaged by the Versailles Treaty regarded it as unjust and in conflict with their own interests (Drulák 2003: 55n)

The main representative of realism was Hans J. Morgenthau and his noted book *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (Morgenthau 1948: 4–15). Morgenthau formulates six principles of political realism, e.g., that states rationally define their power interests, the definition of which depends on the circumstances, while the most vital interest of each state is its survival. The most important source of power of each state is military strength, which of course depends on the geographical position, industrial performance, population size, natural resources, etc. National interest is seen as an objective phenomenon, and the rational striving for its attainment is seen as a prerequisite for the success of the state. International relations are a battlefield of various national interests and an increase in the power of one state means a decrease in the power of the rest of the states. To prevent continuous fighting during the enforcement of conflicting interests, alliances are made which stabilize the international system by means of a balance of power, thus easing the tension between the states – and their interests.

The founder of neo-realism, Kenneth Waltz, referred to above, takes over the idea of the violent character of international relations, in which there is no superior and therefore a balance of power must be achieved in order to prevent the worst. Still, neo-realists do not examine the issue of the intentions of agents very much in international relations, and rather focus on their capabilities of power, assuming that states will use them in their own interest, at the expense of the other states (Drulák 2003: 141). Emphasis is put on the international environment created by the individual agents (states), though they are influenced by it too.

In contrast to realists, the liberal-idealistic tradition of the theory of international relations puts doubt on the exclusive role of the state as an agent of international relations and instead puts emphasis on interdependence, i.e., the mutual dependence of the states. This may take the form of commercial cooperation, which helps to prevent conflicts from breaking out. The authors of this stream use the arguments of the interdependence and interaction of all agents in the international system so that it is in their interest to cooperate rather than conquer. Among the founders of the theory of dependence are Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, who in the second half of the 1970s responded to the oil crisis and the breakdown of the Brettonwood system and mainly stressed the economic interlinking of states. Later they shifted this theory still further when they found the key role of supranational corporations or international non-governmental organizations, which again maintain the interdependence of countries, e.g., in issues of security, the environment, culture and social aspects.

When national states come into existence, their internal as well as foreign policy depend on the power interests of the ruling nation, which tries to enforce all its interests as national interests. National unity is emphasized as a difference from the others, whose interests could be harmful (Woyke 2000: 149). Obviously, many definitions of national interest could be found but in general it is possible to apply the simple thesis that '*...national interest is what the ruling élite at the particular moment perceives as necessary for the wellbeing and the future of the country.*' (Sergio 2002). National interest can be classified according to several criteria, but the most frequent ones are these two. First, the time aspect is used, and we speak of long-term, medium-term and short-term interests. Second, the classification is based on importance so that in the Anglo-Saxon tradition it includes: a) principal or existential interests connected with self-preservation and defense of security, territorial unity, and unity of state; b) supporting interests; c) democratic ideas which link national interests with international politics. (Valenta 1992: 12).

The principal condition for the formulation of national interests is the existence of independent states, which influence each other in international relations and try to enforce specific requirements, be it in the sphere of economy, military strength, security, culture, and the like.

The most important interests of each state that can be regarded as objective, existing independently from the will of the state representatives, are the survival of the state and the security of its citizens, the expansion or at least maintenance of power, sovereignty and unity of the state, growth in national wealth. At the same time, an objective interest can be seen in the inner stability of the state because a state weakened inside will find it difficult to enforce its will outside the state. The other national interests are then a sum of individual or group interests of the citizens, as they develop in the particular political setting.

Last but not least, one more factor should be mentioned, because it concerns the problem. Considerable influence on the formulation of interests comes from the exterior environment, such as the system of world politics and international relations, the balance of power, interests of neighboring or other states, or various organizations. Historical experience can also serve for the delimitation of national interests. Thus it is far from easy to decide what is and what is not in the national interest. In addition to what was listed above, there is the prevailing ideological environment of the state, the distribution of its élites and their specific

interests, the political process and the mass media involved in the public discussion of national interests. All these factors play a decisive role in the formulation of national interests in relation to the European Union.

Nor can the effect of economic subjects be ignored, both in general and in their influence on political élites, as well as the present processes of political or economic integration. That is why it is hard to distinguish a national interest from an interest involving the whole society (the whole union). Still it is difficult to envision a situation where national interests play no role at all. (Hacke)

As for the criticism of the concept of national interest, it can be said that national interest is a sector of mankind's general interest (e.g., global peace) and as such it is heading towards it. The critics say that the national interest can be selfish, general, and vague, can disregard the growth of importance of supranational institutions, and does not count with the modern conception of human rights. And the principal issue that cannot be ignored is: which interest is national: that of the political élite or of the citizens? Still it should be noted that the concept of national interest lays objective foundations for the foreign policy of each state.

The following two case studies will show how national interests are understood in Italy and in Spain.

Italy

In the discussion of national interests it is possible to agree with Sergio Romano, who claims that '*national interest is one of the most abused terms in the political vocabulary*' (Romano 2001). In the case of Italy we meet a controversial perception of the term itself – in any serious debate, "national interest" was for a long time dispatched to "semantic exile." Its modest share in public discussions brings difficulties in communication. '*What always surprises me when in a discussion or analysis I read of national interests is the absolute self-confidence with which the term is applied. The author generally uses it to condemn what appears to him as its contrast, one should say foreign policy inspired by idealistic fears or ideological motivation. 'National interest' thus becomes a category so obvious or clear that it is unnecessary to explain its meaning. It is a synonym for realism, pragmatism, 'holy egoism' or even justified cynicism. The discussion thus shifts from the content to the motivations... In the Italian political context, 'national interest' in general is used to condemn ambiguity, reluctance, pacifism and humaneness of Italian foreign policy. The person who believes in 'national interest', thinks that Italy should have larger military forces and be ready to use them, or to defend its own sovereignty against the edicts coming from Brussels. Of course discussions about the nature and core of the problem are both few and superficial.*' (Romano 2001).

A certain perplexity over the term 'national interest' or its long-term "tabooization" is based, Giuseppe Cucchi believes, in the Italian historical experience, the coexistence of Italy and Vatican, the power which '*...was never inspired by national optics but always thought of in terms of universalism...*' (Cucchi 2006: 164) as well as in the specificity of the regime of the First Italian Republic during the Cold War and the bipolar division of the world. 'National

interest' was most frequently and vociferously appealed to in the days of fascist dictatorship. Mussolini's strong rhetoric appealing to the national interest introduced him to the public and to public discussions (Cucchi 2006: 162–1265). Coming to terms with the past after the fall of the regime did not mean overcoming of the negative content of the term. In the postwar period, Lorenzo Ornaghi speaks of the '*neutralization*' of the national interest with regard to some maintenance of the frail balance between the two main rivals in parties and ideologies – Christian Democrats and Communists, both carriers of different international strategies. (Ornaghi 1997: 96–99). Under the First Italian Republic, this interior '*ideological contraposition*' prevented the country from holding an open and explicit debate on foreign policy (Jean 1997: 48). Thus, except for the period immediately after the war, when fundamental decisions were made about the placing of the country in the international context, in the first place its participation in European integration and the country's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance, the formulation of Italian national interests remained for the entire duration of the Cold War rather implicit (Jean 1997: 47). The lack of ability to develop the '*culture of national interest*' was underlined by the preferential interest of the Italian political élite in domestic rather than in foreign policy (Fabbrini, Piatoni 2004: 151).

Italy under the leadership of Alcide De Gasperi became one of the founding countries of European integration, when the European Community and NATO were the two main pillars in postwar Italian foreign policy. The Italian choice started partly from the effort for restoration and strengthening of the international position of Italy defeated in war and partly to safeguard the interior democratic development, faced by an anti-system element – mainly the Italian Communist Party (Partito comunista italiano Pci) (Bull, Newel 2005: 211). Among other factors defining the nature of Italian Europeanism are, say Martin Bull and James Newel, the economic benefits from the modernization and growth of the Italian economy, especially from the early 1960s, when economic advantages of the membership positively effected the Italian attitude toward integration, advantages on the level of *policy-making*, where participation and membership represent a certain *vincolo esterno*, i.e., an external bond. According to this thesis there is a deeply rooted pessimistic view of the inability of the country to overcome its imperfectness and solve its problems so that reforming efforts and the will toward them must be assisted by a pressure coming from outside. Support of political parties as well as of public opinion for the processes of European integrity was always among the highest in the European community (Bull, Newell 2005: 211–212). The strongly pro-integration and pro-European attitudes of the Italian public opinion and the wide social consensus in this issue is explained partly by the discontent of Italians with the operation of their state and political system and partly by the hope that a well-functioning united Europe will help to solve the problems, perhaps even by removing part of the power from national politicians, incapable or not willing to deal with them (Pasquino 2002: 2256–228). In the attitudes of political parties to the processes of European integration there was a discrepancy between the ruling coalition parties with Christian Democrats at the head (Democrazia cristiana DC) and Alcide De Gasperi, the permanent representatives of the European camp, and the anti-European opposition led by the Communist Party and the pro-fascist Italian Social Movement (Movimento sociale italiano MSI) (Conti, Verzichelli 2005: 66). The position of the Italian Communist Party toward Europe, however, began to change during the 1970s

after the revision of the party strategy under Enrico Berlinguer. 1 Part of the conversion of the PCI in the subsequent period was its attempt to use the European card as an instrument of its own legitimization. This Communist reversal resulted in the support for integration becoming nearly unanimous in Italy (Conti, Verzichelli 2005: 74).

The relation between Italy and the EU has several specific features. During the whole postwar period Italy was a consistent and basically maximalist supporter of European integration but at the same time it was and still is regarded in this process as a secondary, passive member, whose influence on European *decision-making* is limited (Fabbrini, Piattoni 2004: 150). Italy functions as a large member state among small ones, but incapable of taking its place among the big ones in the Union. Though Italian political élites always expressed their dedication to integration, they did little to influence the course of the integration. The passive Europeanism without an integrated European policy, which would favor Italian interests, brought satisfaction for the ruling political élite from the mere participation in the integration. Italy was not absent from any major stages of development, always taking the pro-integration, supranational line (Pasquino 1994: 649). Although the lax approach of the ruling élites to the formulation of European policy did not remain completely unchanged, and in the 1980s, with the intensification of integration, one can see a pro-active shift in the relation of Italy to the EU 2, it is not reflected in the general picture of Italy and in its perception by the European partners. The credibility of Italy on European level was greatly harmed by its inability to implement the European legal norms and carry out European policy. Although European integration represented for Italy a primary strategic choice and often met with an enthusiastic support, Italy remained inconsistent in the responses of domestic policy to concrete results.

The 1980s are an important milestone for Italy. The political and party system of the country underwent fundamental changes and Italy was at the same time forced, in order to prevent its marginalization, to respond to the proceeding integration following after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. In harmony with its traditional pro-European approach, Italy was one of the great supporters of European Monetary Union (EMU), but simultaneously met only one of the five convergence criteria for the acceptance of uniform currency. (Bull, Newell 2005: 220–221). Joining of the Eurozone, finally achieved by the government of Romano Prodi (1996–1998) after carrying through certain strict measures 2, was followed by an intensive internal political discussion. In its more or less coherent pro-European frame, there emerged a different, more ‘Eurosceptical’ attitude of the new political power of Romano Prodi, in 1994 coming to power for the first time and for only a short period.

Italy’s foreign policy, freed from the cold-war logic, Martin Bull and James Newell believe, shows increased activity in European politics, which reflects ‘...a more consistent identification and action in the issue of Italian national interests in Europe, especially from the second half of the 1990s (Bull, Newell 2004: 225). The traditional unconditionally pro-European line of the ruling élites was disturbed and “distancing oneself from Europe,” unprecedented in the Italian context, started after Silvio Berlusconi came to power for the second time, at the head of the central-rightist coalition House of Freedoms 4 (2001–2006). Berlusconi found himself several times in conflict with his European partners, and ‘he did not hesitate

to stick to his attitude although it meant isolation, which is a relatively new phenomenon in Italian European policy' (Bull, Newell 2004: 225). The most marked shift is seen in Berlusconi's government abandoning the support of the France-Germany axis. Soon, after several months in office, the pro-European minister of foreign affairs, Renato Ruggiero, resigned because he did not agree with the views of his colleagues in the Cabinet and found himself under steady pressure there. In 2002 this office was taken by Silvio Berlusconi himself, who chose for Italy the Atlantic road and support for the Administration of George Bush, within the framework of the European triangle London-Madrid-Rome (Ignazi 2006: 755). In the second half of 2003, Italy became the chairing country. The Italian performance, however, was regarded as a failure, moreover accompanied by several diplomatic excesses of Berlusconi 5 (Pistelli, Fiore 2004). Although the seriousness of some of Berlusconi's activities was harmed by the fact that from the beginning he was regarded by his European partners as a controversial politician, the return of the former chairman of the Commission of Romano Prodi to the head of the Italian government after the elections in April 2006 was met in Brussels with relief (Ignazi 2006: 758).

Spain

The year 1986, when Spain joined the European Union, is thought to have been one of the major milestones in modern Spanish history. This 'return to Europe' meant a definitive end to the diplomatic isolation into which Spain was put by Franco's regime, and enabled Spain to finish the process of democratic transformation. The involvement of the country in European structures received unambiguous support from the whole Spanish society, from all relevant political parties 6 and major social and political agents. EU membership contributed greatly to the consolidation of the democratic political system and accelerated economic development and modernization of public administration (Lloréns 2003).

Immediately after Spain entered the EU, it took a very positive attitude toward intensified integration, thus reversing the existing practice of latecomers (the countries who joined later) 7 rejecting any supranational tendencies leading towards a political union. Spain for instance became a reliable supporter of the development of European political cooperation (EPC), which brought the much-needed increase in international prestige of the country and dispelled the fear of member states about the different orientation of Spanish foreign policy (Barbé 200: 46). This period of 'idealistic' view of European integration was mainly motivated by the effort at overcoming the syndrome of francoism, and if we turn to still earlier history, also the consequences of the 'national trauma' dating back to 1898. 8 Spain was in great need of restoration and strengthening of the lost 'national confidence' and Europe was to provide the solution. Thus the emphasis on traditionally good relations of Spain and the Arab countries 9 and Latin America (including Cuba) temporarily receded into the background.

The pro-integration stage culminated in the first half of 1989, in the period of the first Spanish chairmanship in the Council of Ministers. The six months at the head of the EU

was a great challenge for the Socialist government of Felipe Gonzáles. Among its priorities was raising Spain into the ranks of the principal European powers, the creation of a clear strategy for EPC, and in domestic politics making good use of the prestige ensuing from the chairmanship. 10 The Spanish government also defended the decisions made by a well-qualified majority about common EU activities (jointly with France, Germany and Belgium) and unambiguously supported the gradual transformation of EPC to bring to the stage of the common foreign security policy (CFSP).

The changes in the international situation in the early 1990s brought along a shift in the orientation of the EU, especially for Central and Eastern Europe. While before 1990 the priorities in Spanish foreign policy and EPC more or less agreed, now Spain fully realized the threat to its interests. The Mediterranean and Latin America definitely were beyond the principal issues in the European agenda and Spain was obliged to treat European politics in a somewhat more pragmatic way. In this period it took up the position of the so-called middle power, or a state, which develops its diplomatic activities more, defends its interests with greater emphasis and tries to 'push' them onto the European agenda. 11 This shift toward 'realistic Europeanism' was clearly expressed in 1990 by the then Spanish Foreign Minister Fernández Ordoñez: 'We are now less naive in the matter of Europe' (Barbé 1996: 110).

The change in the Spanish attitude manifested itself in the support for the intergovernmental conception of the CFSP, defined in the Maastricht Treaty. In the negotiations of this treaty, Spanish hyperactivity was noticed. The numerous proposals made by the Spanish delegation were motivated especially by the effort at achieving an equal position with France and Germany and gaining a more significant position inside the Union. Some Spanish diplomats interpreted the meetings of Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Spain in October 1991 (with no participation of the Netherlands, the chairing country), aiming at unblocking the process of the creation of the SZBP, as an expression of the Spanish position of the 'main agent' (Barbé 2000: 46).

Spain was no less active during the 1990s in pushing for conferences to be held on the Mediterranean and Latin America. 12 During its second chairmanship (1995), Spain succeeded in accomplishing the Barcelona conference, which launched the Euro-Mediterranean partnership project. 13 The greatest achievement of Spain in Mediterranean policy was the acceptance of the EU's common strategy for the Mediterranean, in June 2000. 14 Spain thus managed to fully 'europeize' one of its priority national interests, which in a major way strengthened its position in the EU and enabled it to step out of the shadow of France and Germany. At the same time fears were dispelled that Spain could be pushed into the new periphery of Europe, a problem troubling Spanish politics and Spanish people since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The third Spanish chairmanship (2002) took place in the spirit of the slogan 'Más Europa' (More of Europe) and mainly focussed on the development of cooperation inside Euro-Atlantic relations, with a special emphasis on the struggle against terrorism. In the issues of European defense and security, Spain joined the so-called free riders, which, depending on the momentous interests and priorities, either inclined toward the 'atlanticists' (Great Britain, the Netherlands) or the 'europeansists' (France). The government of the Popular Party (PP), headed by Prime Minister José M. Aznar, 15 oriented Spain unambiguously in the Atlantic

direction and simultaneously enforced the 'Gaullist' vision of 'European homeland', that is the intergovernmental conception of integration, which will fully respect the primary position of sovereign national states (Closa 2001: 23). This approach, among other things, was manifested in a sharp criticism and rejection of the European constitution.

The terrorist attacks in Madrid in March 2004 brought a change of government and with it a marked weakening of the Atlantic bonds. The arrival of the Socialists (PSOE) to power brought the withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq as well as a return to a stronger pro-integration policy, mainly directed toward cooperation with the team France-Germany. The 'realistic' strategy of Spain as a 'middle power' was preserved, however, and Zapatero's government continues in the active defense of Spanish national interests in the European agenda.

When we want to summarize the development of Spanish 'European policy', radical changes can only be registered in the different priorities of the EU and Spain in foreign policy. In economic and internal matters all Spanish governments have been fairly consistent and concentrated primarily on the entry of Spain in EMU and keeping Spain's income from the Cohesion Fund. Among fundamental issues was the sensitive problem of farming and fishing as well as illegal immigration. In these matters Spain always found 'common language' with many other member countries. In foreign policy, Spanish national interests depart most from the interests of Europe. Although Spain managed to put into the common agenda its traditional orientation toward the Mediterranean, which indisputably is one of the strategic regions even for the EU, Latin America for most countries in Europe is without any major strategic or economic importance. Here Spain must develop its policy mainly on the bilateral level and defend its interests against the 'main stream' in the EU.

Conclusion

We presented the main features of national interests and the ways of approach to them. The two case studies show how the national interests are defined in Italy and Spain and in what way, depending on the political representation and external circumstances, they change. When the principal criterion of national interests is applied, i.e., safeguarding the country's existence, only minor shifts are noticeable. Naturally, the states respond in a much more flexible way in the sphere of their partial interests, when within several years they manage to make radical shifts in their priorities. This can be seen particularly in the sphere of political security or in the degree of orientation toward Euro-Atlantic cooperation (the relations with the USA).

Notes

- ¹ Analysis of pre-election documents of PCI and DC from the 1870s and their comparison shows, in relation to the general program, even greater support from PCI. (Conti, Verzichelli 2005: 68)
- ² The government under the socialist Bettino Craxi (1983–1986) with Giulio Andreotti as Foreign Minister, is more dynamic in foreign policy in the sphere of European politics. The issue of European institutional reform enters the agenda also thanks to Italian initiatives and culminates with the signature of the Uniform European Act. For details see Cavarto, Fois 2005: 305–325.
- ³ Prodi's government introduced European tax (eurotassa), then was accused by the central-rightist opposition of trying to introduce 'fiscal dictatorship'. For greater detail see Bufacchi, Burgess 2004: 246.
- ⁴ Berlusconi's Forza Italia's skeptical attitudes to the EU are shared by its two greatest coalition partners, National Alliance (Alleanza nazionale AN) of Gianfranco Finino and The League of the North (Lega Nord LN) of Umberto Bossi, which went euro-skeptical only after 1998 (the LN position toward EU is discussed in greater detail in Chari, Iltanen. Kritzing 2004). On the other hand, this attitude in the central-rightist coalition was not quite compact, as shown for instance by the support for the pro-European course by Gianfranco Fini during the negotiations at the Convent on the Future of Europe. For more details see Fabbrini 2004.
- ⁵ Among the best-known appearances of Berlusconi is that in the Parliament of Europe during the inauguration session in Strassbourg, on July 2, 2003. After Berlusconi's speech, a German deputy, Martin Schulz, in the discussion irritated Berlusconi by reminding him that in his team was Umberto Bossi, a politician with racist tendencies, and also pointed out Berlusconi's problems with justice. Berlusconi reacted in a quite inadequate way: 'Mr. Schulz, I know one Italian producer who is now making a film about Nazi concentration camps. I propose you for the role of the Capo. You would be perfect in it.' Lapo Pistelli and Guelfo Fiore described this event like this: 'The auditorium went into uproar. The pale chairman of the Parliament, Pat Cox, had difficulties in keeping the calm. Romano Prodi turned into a salt pillar and Gianfranco Fini left his seat next to the Prime Minister. Rocco Buttiglione, Minister for European Policy, looked like a person wishing to disappear.' (Pistelli, Fiore 2004: 28).
- ⁶ The leftist coalition of Izquierda Unida (IU) and several nationalist-regional political parties (e.g. Bloque Nacionalista Galego), as well as a few individual members of the rightist Partido Popular (Llórens 2003) only rejected membership in the EU.
- ⁷ Great Britain, Denmark and Greece.
- ⁸ In that year Spain was defeated in the war with the U.S.A. and lost large territories (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Philippines). The colonial power thus suddenly turned into a 'small' country with outdated economy.
- ⁹ Spain, e.g., actively promoted the solution of the Palestinian issue and recognized the existence of Israel only after joining the EU (Barbé 1996: 109).
- ¹⁰ In October 1989 parliamentary elections were held in Spain.
- ¹¹ The first major resistance of Spain against the 'European majority' was the vote jointly with Latin American countries (in December 1989) after a resolution of the UNO, which denounced the American invasion in Panama (Barbé 1996: 110).
- ¹² Spain, e.g., enforced the holding of a conference on the Middle East, which took place in Madrid in 1991 (Barbé 1996: 124).
- ¹³ This project focusing mainly on cooperation in economy, security and culture, was accepted by 15 member countries of the EU, 22 Mediterranean countries, and deputies of the Palestinian self-government. In addition to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, the Euro-Maghreb dialogue 5 + 5 has been developing since the early

- 1990s. From Europe, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and Malta (since 1991) take part, from the Maghreb Union Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, and Mauritania (Lister 1997: 88).
- ¹⁴ Common Strategy of the European Council of 19 June 2000 on the Mediterranean region (2000/458/CFSP). <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/mediEN.pdf> (18 Dec. 2006)
- ¹⁵ The Popular Party won the elections in 1996 and remained in power until March 2004.

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