
ANTONIO A. CABALLERO GÁLVEZ

Open University of Catalonia (UOC) and Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV)

The downfall of Spanish stereotypes: Andalusian, Basque and Catalan identities in ‘plurinational’ Spain

ABSTRACT

In a historically controversial moment for Spanish territorial politics, where the traditional regional system of the State and regional politics are constantly fluctuating – especially considering the referenda in the Basque Country and Catalonia –, the films Ocho apellidos vascos (Spanish Affair) directed by Martínez-Lázaro in 2014 and Ocho apellidos catalanes (Spanish Affair 2) in 2015 have become the most successful films in the history of Spanish cinema. In these films, the Andalusian, Basque and Catalan stereotypes are taken to the extreme, breaking down the negative stigma they have acquired by reducing all their possible meanings to a simple gag. Consequently, the overindulgence of these stereotypical representations has proposed their very deactivation as a legitimate category of representation. The study of stereotypes and prejudices reflects an interest in relationships between social groups. Therefore, if intergroup affairs focus their discussions on beliefs that describe

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actions such as violence, alliance, or negotiation, this means that perceptions, beliefs and attitudes must mediate all intergroup affairs. According to Fredric Jameson, in order for images not to unfold just their own stereotypes and confirm themselves as realities, a considerable distance should be kept between the contents and what they represent. The proposed goal of this study is to analyse both films from a critical discourse analysis (CDA) in relation to the stereotypes categorization defined by Jaakko Lehtonen. The announcement of the end of the armed struggle by the terrorist group ETA and the eccentric political fights in the last Catalan elections have allowed the production and success of these comedies. These films question the sense of the Basque, Catalan and Andalusian stereotypes, the latter being the primary internationally recognized Spanish stereotype, showing the 'plurinational' origin of the Spanish State.

HOW TO DEFINE CULTURAL STEREOTYPES: NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE CONNOTATIONS

The first meaning of the word 'stereotype' comes from old printing technology, where reproductions of a composed type were made by using pieces of papers as patterns for new printing dishes, replicating the original. As Jaakko Lehtonen says, 'the term stereotype, as allegedly used for the first time by Walter Lippman in 1922 is used today to mean an image of a given social group, usually based on rough, often negative generalizations' (2005: 63). Although nowadays some stereotypes can be positive, they are most often used as unreasonably based detrimental thoughts about certain social groups or communities.

The concept of the stereotype is used conventionally in different circumstances and the word stereotype is commonly used to refer to members of a collective. In the case of Spain, Basque men are courageous, Andalusians are simpleminded, Madrileños are noisy, and so forth. When someone makes deductions about a person or a social situation, they use their own experience to decrease the ambiguity in the person or situation. In Lehtonen's words 'the less one knows about the object, the more one uses stereotypical generalizations' (2005: 1).

Frequently, stereotypes are assumed to be harmful for intercultural communication and the rejection of stereotypes is supposed to be a requirement for any up-and-coming intercultural discussion. The study of stereotyping and prejudice reflects an interest in intergroup relationships.

While we recognize that a discussion of intergroup relationship may focus on behaviours describing actions such as confrontations, violence, wars, cooperation, alliance, negotiation or coordination, we also believe that each of these intergroup behaviours is mediated by perceptions, beliefs and attitudes (Bar-Tal 1989: 1).

In a certain way, stereotypes are necessary. Despite their negative connotations, eliminating stereotypes is quite impossible, or, if we try to reduce them, it would be detrimental to human cognition (Lehtonen 2005) even when 'a thoughtless reproduction of stereotypes is needed' (Tortajada et al. 2013). A cultural stereotype consigns typical characteristics to every part of a given social group, and operates as a reference point when we try to understand some experiences in social communications.

The less we know about the other, the more we hang on stereotypes (Lehtonen 2005: 71). Different kinds of singularities make the analysis

of cultural and/or national stereotypes inscrutable: some stereotypes are simultaneously mutable, hard-hitting and unrelated. Most of the features of a stereotype can be very ancient and persist constantly for centuries, though some of the descriptions given to a nation or cultural social group may mutate in a short time (Teichman 2016). Furthermore, the significance of the mechanisms of cultural stereotypes could change depending on the given period or circumstances.

According to Johnston and Macrae (1994), people tend to favour premises based on stereotypes even when they have an aim to question the legitimacy of the stereotype. Stereotypes do not change easily. Cultural and/or national stereotypes are both normative in nature. Regarding this fact, Fredric Jameson (1991) considers that images do not just unfold on their own stereotypes and confirm themselves as realities, but they keep a considerable distance between the contents and what they represent.

The media are a vehicle to consolidate, transmit and create new stereotyped conceptions. As Tortajada and Willem say: 'Generalizations used by the media cause the audience to have a distorted and stereotyped vision' (2009: 32), especially in our case, a preconceived vision of regional and cultural stereotypes. The media contributes to construct reality (Tuchman 1983), hierarchize human communications (Habermas 1987) and influence human agency (Giddens 1991, 1993).

In Cultural Studies, much of the focus has been placed on researching social inclusion and exclusion, specifically on the representation of stereotypes. Teun van Dijk (1997), for instance, argues that social and discourse structures are not directly related with the image of stereotypes, but they need the mediation of an interface. Considering that most of the authors in the field agree with the fact that those who are not part of the normative and dominant culture are represented by the media in negative stereotyping way (Hall 1997; van Dijk 1997; Tortajada and Willem 2009), this study will try to overcome this traditional binary opposition between negative and positive stereotypes, focusing on the idea of stereotype as sign of culture (Lehtonen 1995).

In addition to our goal to overcome the obsolete debate about negative and positive stereotypes, the aim of this research will be to determine whether the stereotypes reflected in these movies are based on prejudices or preconceived ideas; or on the contrary, if they define and build regional cultural identities (Lehtonen 2005; Hall 1997; Tortajada and Willem 2009). In fact, three of the most stereotyped cultures in the Spanish State are Andalusians, Catalans and Basques.

METHODOLOGY

Stereotypes of nations are unique characteristics ascribed to a country and its inhabitants by a certain group or groups of foreigners. A nation, like all collectives, is perceived by observers as an object that has its own character, manners and ways of reacting to diverse motivations. Opinions about a collective's distinctiveness are frequently called images. These involve statements about the appearances of the individual members of the group, such as an enterprise, a lifestyle collective – or a country. The pictures of a state may be made up of certain physical aspects possessed by the population, containing racial or facial characteristics, styling of hair and archetypal outfit, and personality aspects or character and behavioural peculiarities which are presumed to be

common to every inhabitant of this cultural community, only to name a few. The dialogues of each studied movie will provide the base for the analysis. As Habermas claims, dialogue analysis is necessary because 'language is also a medium of domination and social force. It serves to legitimize relations of organized power. Insofar as the legitimizations of power relations...are not articulated... language is also ideological' (Habermas, cited in Wodak and Meyer 2009: 10). Every different national or cultural stereotypical assumptions will be classified, including into the film narrative in every stereotyped category determined by Lehtonen (2005: 66):

- 1) Simple auto-stereotype: In our opinion we (my nationality) are...
- 2) Projected auto-stereotype: We think that they (inhabitants of the foreign country) consider us to be...
- 3) Projected hetero-stereotype: We feel that they (the inhabitant of the foreign country) think that they are...
- 4) Simple hetero-stereotype: We think that they are...

To complement this study, and according to van Dijk (2005), it will be necessary to consider the social and political context where these stereotypes are represented through a CDA. If the aim of this research is to investigate whether the cultural stereotypes represented in both films respond to prejudices or a new conception of stereotyping based on national identity, it will be crucial to establish a critical analysis of the socio-political relationships between the nations, which constitute the same political state. In sum, and according to van Dijk:

Critical discourse analysis should also not limit itself to a study of the relationship between discourse and social structure, such as racism and other forms of power abuse, but that language use always presupposes the intervening mental models, goals, and general social representations (knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms, values).

(2005: 89)

The study of discourse triangulates between society/culture/situation, cognition, and discourse language (Wodak and Meyer 2009).

PLURI-STEREOTYPES IN A PLURI-NATIONAL STATE

More than ten years of economic crisis and a series of corruption scandals in Spain have established assessments about a state apparently run by incompetent politicians, bunglers and speculators, and a population that is more concerned with bullfighting, popular television shows, and *siestas*, than in hard work.

As Tom Burns says in *Hispanomanía* (2000), the clichés that foreign authors and personalities who have visited Spain over the centuries have shaped, from Washington Irving to Gerald Brenan, tend to overlap: 'They were looking for adventure, and in many ways, Spain represented this' (Burns 2000: 127). Other travellers were not so optimistic as the Romantic writers; this is the case of George Orwell, whose *Homage to Catalonia* ([1938] 2011) is today the greatest reportage from the Spanish Civil War (1936–39).

Take the catchphrase ‘Spain is different’, adopted by the Spanish Tourism Ministry in the 1960s, but originally attributed to Richard Ford, this can be interpreted in two ways, as Burns says:

On the one hand, the landscape, beaches, bullfighting, flamenco, and a way of life that is very different to that in the rest of Europe; and on the other, a reference to a political system different to the democracies of its neighbours, which made the slogan a kind of shield.

(2000: 127)

In this same line, some authors propose a three-fold typology of films focusing on the ways in which they build the image of Spain: icon films, pastiche films, and tourist poster films (Mestre and Stanishevski 2008). Actually, *Ocho apellidos vascos* (*Spanish Affair*) and *Ocho apellidos catalanes* (*Spanish Affair 2*) could fit within the three film categories. In addition, both films have improved the Spanish imaginary and the typical Spanish stereotypes.

At the same time, other researchers, writers, and sociologists blame the Romantic authors’ categorization for the existence of uncountable clichés about Spain. It is not the case of Salvador Giner, author of *El origen de la moralidad* (*The Origins of Morality*) (2012), who considers that Spaniards have ‘developed’ a parallel universe for themselves that swipes between affinities towards exaggeration, tragedy and peacefulness.

Between the Romantic clichés and the contemporary stereotypes, these two movies, with 80 million dollars in the box-office (Belinchón and Koch 2014), are the highest-grossing films in the history of Spanish cinema. The same has happened with the movies on which these films are inspired: the French film production *Bienvenus chez les Ch’tis* (*Welcome to the Sticks*) (Boon, 2008) or the Italian movie *Benvenuti al Sud* (*Welcome to the South*) (Miniero, 2010). This New Wave is not a spur-of-the-moment; we consider that in the same way that social movements are transforming the political system in a convulsive earthquake, their claims are changing the representations of stereotypes within movies.

The following sections include the results derived from the CDA, connecting the dialogues where the stereotypes are reflected with the categories established by Lehtonen (2005).

OCHO APELLIDOS VASCOS (SPANISH AFFAIR): ARGUIÑANO, IGARTIBURU, ERETXUN, GABILONDO, URDANGARÍN, OTEGI, ZUBIZARRETA AND... CLEMENTE

In *Ocho apellidos vascos* (*Spanish Affair*), Rafa (Dani Rovira), a snobbish Andalusian moves from Seville in the south to the Basque Country in the north in hopes of seducing Amaia (Clara Lago), a strong-willed Basque girl whom he has fallen in love with. In Spain, Andalusians are perceived as outgoing, friendly and are noted for having a particular sense of style and dress. Rafa’s use of hair gel is a long running joke in the film. In contrast, the Basques are often viewed as bad-tempered, self-protective and highly nationalistic. Over the course of the film, Rafa changes everything from his style of dress to his manner of speaking in an attempt to appear Basque and to win the approval of Amaia’s father Koldo (Figure 1). His use of eight Basque surnames – henceforth the Spanish title of the film – is his ultimate attempt to claim Basque authenticity.



Figure 1: Captions of the films Ocho apellidos vascos (Spanish Affair), in which the main character Rafa (Dani Rovira) mocks a pro-independence Basque citizen.

The *simple auto-stereotype* is witnessed when the Andalusian Rafa defines himself in the following manner: 'I'm not Antxon, I'm Rafael Quirós! I'm a float bearer in the brotherhood of the Divine Creator and a member of Real Betis Football Club, number 14,430. I've got three photos with Gordillo, two signed and one dedicated'.¹ To Rafa, a proper Andalusian man is both religious and a hooligan.

Also found in this category is Koldo, representative of the quintessential Basque man. When he first meets Rafa, he boasts of his strength and valour:

Koldo: Do you think I'm fucking stupid? Look me in the eye, I'm talking to you! You don't fool me! You've never played ball! With those hands? Come off it!

Rafa: The league finished a few months ago.

Koldo: Look, this is what a 2,000 lb tuna does to you on the Ivory Coast when it gets the nylon line round your neck and...nearly weighed a ton, pulled for twenty minutes, and it couldn't beat me. You see what I'm getting at?

Rafa: I think it's a bit of a metaphor between the tuna and me.

Koldo: I don't know how the hell you tricked Amaia, but if you lie to me, I'll pull you in, tenderise you with my fists, and make a sailor's knot out of you. And those aren't 'mattyphors' or any of that shit.

With a focus on the *simple hetero-stereotype* categorization, one witnesses the Andalusian belief that Basques are an endogamous and primary society. This is illustrated at the beginning of the film when Rafa mocks Basque people by making two jokes. Joke number one: 'These two Basques meet and one says, 'Hey, Patxi, I hear your daughter's in bed with gonorrhoea', the other says 'I don't care! As long as she's Basque...'. This joke makes light of the unfounded reputation of the Basque as an endogamous social cultural. Joke number two: 'There are two men from Bilbao and the first man says, "Kepa, I hear you won 100 million on the lottery" and the second man replies "Just what I bet"'. This joke illustrates the perceived foolishness and stubbornness of the Basque. In addition to endogamy and stubbornness, Rafa also classifies the Basques as being without a sense of humour: 'You Basques might be great at some things, but you can't tell jokes. [...] They're not one bit funny'.

Rafa is not the only Andalusian to apply stereotypes to the Basque. After having spent the night with Amaia and while she is still sleeping, Rafa has a conversation with his flatmate Joaquín, who states his own stereotypical prejudices towards the Basque people:

Joaquín: She could be an ETA terrorist!

Rafa: An ETA terrorist? Are you nuts? Wasn't she wearing polka dots and ruffles? Wasn't she wearing polka dots and ruffles?

Joaquín: How else would she come here? With a balaclava and a Basque flag? I'll tell you something. I bet she's looking for a 'show house' in Seville.

Rafa: Don't you mean a 'piso franco' – safe house-?

1. Gordillo is a Spanish football player who played for the Real Betis Football Club in Seville.

2. Euskal Herria is the oldest documented Basque name for the area, dating to the sixteenth century and thus predates the emergence of Basque nationalism by at least two centuries. It comprises the Autonomous Communities of the Basque Country and Navarra in Spain and the Northern Basque Country in France.

Joaquín: Don't speak about Franco, they turn crazy! Don't give her any bottles. That lot make Molotov cocktails in a nanosecond.

The identification of Basques with the ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna) terrorist group – as well as the urban guerrilla known as 'kale borroka' in Euskal Herria² – is another constant throughout the film. For example, when Rafa visits Amaia in Argoitia (Guipuzkoa, Basque Country), he defines himself as the following: 'I'm the new Andalusian leader of the kale borroka'. In his first encounter with a local, Rafa yells: 'Fight, erentxu, erentxu, me too, eh'? Gora, and independence! Why are you running off? I'm one of yours. I was going to burn some Spanish ATMs'. As a result of his stereotypical pronouncements, he is arrested as a Basque pro-independence nationalist. In prison, he continues his charade as an ETA terrorist:

Prisoner: Are you in a terrorist cell or...?

Rafa: Well, I could be. I mean, yes, I am.

Despite her scepticism, Amaia tries to help Rafa in his Basque performance. In an attempt to protect him from her father's aversion to Spainards, she strips him of his quintessential Andalusian characteristics:

Amaia: And get rid of that necklace.

Rafa: No! This is the Virgin of the Macarena. It's the greatest.

Amaia: No, the greatest is the punch from my father if he finds out you're Andalusian.

Amaia: You look like a donkey chewed your hair. I mean your hair gel.

Rafa: No way. My hair gel? No, you can play around with my religion but you're not touching my hair gel!

It is important to note that during Franco's dictatorship, the Basque Country was one of the most repressed territories in Spain. Even the use of Euskera, the Basque language, was forbidden. This is one of the reasons why Basque people fiercely reject the figure of General Franco. Furthermore, Rafa and their friends, Joaquín and Curro, every time they refer to the Basque Country they call it 'las Vascongadas', which is the term used during Franco's dictatorship.

A common opinion in the Spanish State territory is that the Basque Country, along with Galicia and Catalonia, hold a deep animosity towards Andalusia. This is rooted in the assumption that on the international level Andalusians are considered to be quintessentially 'Spanish'.

Pedro: Don't take your car. I did my military service in Irún and mine was scratched 4 or 5 times. The Basques love that. It's a custom.

Rafa: I think it's a lot quieter up there now.

Joaquín: Another one who believes in that trick treaty.

Curro: The Basques can't stand the sight of Andalusians. They're taught that in baby Basque school. That and making Molotov cocktails.

In the case of Koldo, he does not hate Andalusians in particular, but rather he hates everything connected with Spaniards or non-Basques as he see them. We see this in his reaction upon waking up in Mertxe's house and realizing that her ex-husband was a *guardia civil* (Spanish military police). Furthermore, he is pained to see the house is decorated with Spanish flags and a picture of King Juan Carlos I.

The *projected auto-stereotype* is seen in both the Basque and Andalusian point of view: Andalusians consider the Basque to be uncouth and boorish while the Basque regard the Andalusians as lazy and unconcerned.

Amaia: Bunch of layabouts! You only get up from the *siesta* to go partying.

Rafa: Why don't you go home and lift some stones or whatever you Basques do to relax?

Amaia: Don't touch me, dago, I'll report you! *Gora Euskadi*, fuck you all!

Interestingly, Rafa as Basque continues the *projected auto-stereotype* when he complains about Andalusians: 'Not only do our taxes pay for their siestas but now they come here and screw our women!' Even if these patronizing ideas fit better with simple hetero-stereotype, it is a fact that all these thoughts are instilled in the Spanish imaginary, as well as in the regional political discourse (Caballero 2014).

Although limited in its observance, the *projected hetero-stereotype* is also illustrated in the film. The belief exists that Andalusians think that the Basque have a sense of superiority over the 'Spanish'. The example from the film is notable in its simplicity: at his first pro-independence rally Rafa shouts, 'We are better... than the Spanish. We are better...than the Spanish. We are better... than the Spanish'.

In addition to these four stereotype categories, it will be necessary to generate a new concept for the gender stereotypes which are presented in these movies, especially regarding the representation of Basque women. Andalusians consider them to be outside of the feminine normative, as Joaquín says, 'Basque women don't wear make-up'. Even Mertxe, from Cáceres (Extremadura) thinks the same: 'Do I say anything to you about that or the Romanian trucker haircut she has?' The rest of the chauvinist comments follow this trend, especially Rafa's: 'She really is acting tough. That's typical of Basque girls. That, and looking like they cut their fringe with an axe, right?'

OCHO APELLIDOS CATALANES (SPANISH AFFAIR 2): GUARDIOLA, ADRIÀ, SERRAT, PUJOL, CABALLÉ, COBI, MESSI AND...CODORNÍU

Ocho apellidos catalanes (Spanish Affair 2) is the sequel of *Ocho apellidos vascos (Spanish Affair)*, but in this case, Rafa pretends to be Catalan instead of Basque (Figure 2). In the sequel, Rafa and Amaia's father, Koldo, travel to Girona (Catalonia) to prevent Amaia from marrying her Catalan fiancé, Pau (Berto Romero). Thus, the focus on the Basque – Amaia and Koldo and Andalusians –Rafa, Joaquín and Curro, is maintained while at the same time we also take into consideration the Catalan collective – Pau and his grandmother, Roser (Rosa Maria Sardà) – and even Galicians – Judit (Belén Cuesta), a Galician girl who pretends to be Catalan, acting as Rafa's female alter ego.



Figure 2: Stills from the film Ocho apellidos catalanes (Spanish Affair 2), in which the main character Rafa (Dani Rovira) acts as a Catalan nationalist.

First, the *simple auto-stereotype* is reflected in the stubbornness of Koldo when he rejects to walk on Spanish land: 'There are things a Basque has to say face to face. Sit down. Imagine how important it must be! You know I'd go anywhere north of Euskadi: Newfoundland, Iceland...But south of Amurrio, not even to steal mushrooms'. Koldo embodies the narrow-minded attitude of Basque and their 'Spain allergy', especially with regards to the capital: 'A good Basque never sets foot in Madrid! I'm strictly forbidden to set foot in Madrid'. At the end of the film, Amaia is about to give birth at the border between Burgos (Castilla y León) and Vitoria (Basque Country). In order to avoid the birth of Aitor, his first grandson, in Castile, Koldo relocates the signpost noting the beginning of Basque Country: 'Aitor's not being born in Castile, but the Basque Country'.

The same sentiment follows in Koldo's melancholy for independence of the Basque Country. This is expressed when he arrives to Soronelles, the village that has been transformed temporarily to be an Independent Republic of Catalonia:

Koldo: If Lehendakari finds out, he'll send in the Ertzaintza and all hell will break loose.

Amaia: Aita, what's this about the Ertzaintza?

Koldo: When it comes to 'indepentalizing', we Basques got there first! [...] Who's going to believe that the Catalans 'indepentalized' first?

With this last question, the rivalry between the historical regions and the rest of the Spanish State, particularly with the Andalusians as the ideal Spaniard, is extended to the relationship between Basques and Catalans. In this sense, Roser delves deeper into this conflict:

Roser: I'll now continue in Spanish for those who haven't had the fortune of learning our beautiful language. You don't know how much I've longed to share with you the independence for which we've been waiting so long [...]. Imagine what it's like for a Basque to see a country gain its independence.

Mayor: Then we'll meet up in Roser's country house where we'll enjoy nibbles, with a boycott on Spanish products! Well, there will be Iberian ham and Rioja.

The *simple hetero-stereotype* in *Ocho apellidos catalanes* (*Spanish Affair 2*) focuses on the most conventional cultural stereotypes: Andalusians believe Basques are terrorists, Catalans believe Andalusians are beggars, and Andalusians and Basques are convinced that Catalans are mean.

As Andalusians, Joaquín and Curro persist in their belief that Basques are an organized terrorist group and that Catalans are a dangerous pro-independence group similar to the 'kale borroka'. Koldo still thinks Andalusians are a group of illiterates who are only interested in religion and football:

Rafa: Koldo, what are you doing here... in Spain?

Rafa: I don't get why Koldo couldn't tell me over the phone.

3. Pujol's case refers to the judicial case where Jordi Pujol, ex president of the Generalitat of Catalunya, and other members of his family are investigated.
4. Palau's case is essentially an embezzlement made by Fèlix Millet i Tusell, president of the patronage of the Fundació Orfeó Català-Palau de la Música.
5. The 3 per cent case was a scandal of alleged political corruption that aimed to charge a percentage of 3 per cent of the budget of public works awarded by the government to the Generalitat de Convergència i Unió.
6. The *silent majority* is an unspecified large group of people in a country or group who do not express their opinions publicly.

Curro: The Civil Guard taps the phones of all the Basques.

Joaquín: And there are no phone booths, they were all burnt down.

Rafa: What the hell are you doing here?

Koldo: I'm showing how much I love you and Al 'Andalux'. A Basque could lift this with his dick. [...] You guys are soft. Holy shit! I'll lift this, the Virgin of Betis, Christ or whatever.

Joaquín: You can't go to Catalonia with what's going on there. The Catalan 'troopers' will beat the living crap out of you.

Curro: They're like the kale 'Baroque' up there.

Joaquín: I've got a cousin in the Civil Guard there, and he says they'll be independent any day and they'll build a huge wall so nothing gets in or out...Except their money, which they'll send to Andorra.

Joaquín puts forward a complex issue for Catalonia: corruption. Catalonia has been one of the regions with the most corruption scandals. The 'Pujol case'³, the 'Palau case'⁴ and more recently the 'Three per cent case'⁵, are all currently in court. He also makes reference to Andorra, a country known as one of the few European fiscal paradises with its low tax rates.

One of the most popular depictions of Andalusians is the image of them as beggars and lazy people. This becomes evident when Pau says: 'I don't calculate what percentage Andalusia costs us in taxes. Between one and two-and-a-half per cent, I don't know. You'll never hear me call you lazy. And why? Because you're genetically inclined to work less'. Pau is referring to the idea of Andalusia as the region that receives more public money while paying less taxes than other regions. In the same comment, he reinforces the bias that Andalusians as lazy due to a genetic predisposition to work less.

An extended Catalan myth is that they are miser and addicted to money. This is shown when Judit tries to pacify the Spaniards, who do not want to participate in the pantomime of Soronelles:

Spaniard man: Look, miss, I'm not pretending to be Catalan, not for one minute. I'm Spanish, like all of you.

Judit: I put aside part of the budget to sort this out.

Spaniard woman: That'll work with Catalans, but you can't bribe a Spaniard.

Amaia is thinking in similar terms when she tells Roser: 'Sorry all the lights are on, I'll pay my part of the bill', a reference to the thrifty side of the Catalan stereotype.

The nationalist competition between Basques and Catalans is shown through the dialogue between Rafa and Koldo about the legitimization of the Catalan language:

Rafa: Don't let them hear us talking in Spanish. They'll answer in their language just to bust our balls.

Koldo: Catalan is a language? But you can understand it! Euskera is a proper language, totally fucking unintelligible. Or German, that's fucked up too. Languages with balls. The others are just silly.

Rafa: Yeah, is Catalan a language? It's an accent, it's bad Spanish. Like how we chop off the endings in Andalusia. It's easy.

After these comments, and some jokes about the Catalan accent and pronunciation, both of them have a conversation with a Catalan couple, who speak perfect Catalan, showing them that Catalan is a language with its own structure and specific vocabulary.

In addition to differences in personality and temperament of the different regions, the film also calls attention to the differences in physical appearance and dress. In particular the archetypal hair styling and fashion sense. Rafa and Judit consider Catalans as trendies. Judit states 'I was embarrassed to say I was from a small town in Galicia. They're more cosmopolitan here'. When Pau meets Rafa he still has in mind the picture of Andalusians as rich young men, 'You're not what I expected. I expected the typical posh Sevillian, hair gel, moccasins...'. and to Roser he states: 'Andalusians must be lovely people, but they're so common'.

Nevertheless, Amaia is still the bullseye of all the physical critical discourse with much focus on her masculine manners and her fringe. Roser says, 'I'm sorry, with that fringe I thought you were a boy. Don't worry, hair is always a good thing. Greek girls are very hairy and look how pretty they are'. She is not the only one, Rafa is also criticizes her masculine looks, 'Isn't that cleavage a bit low for a Basque girl?' asking her when she shows him her bridal dress. This is not the only aspect to question Amaia's strong character. Curro and Joaquín refer to Basque girls as frigid:

Joaquín: He's been back from the Basque Country for over a year and he's still haywire. She wasn't Basque; they take six months to get their bras off.

Curro: And after they're married?

However, it seems that not only Basque girls are emotionless in love affairs, as Mertxe says to Koldo: 'You Basques sure do keep your love on the inside, Koldo. But sometimes I need to be loved on the outside'. The opposite to Andalusians, who are supposed to be passionate and good-humoured, according to Koldo's description: 'The cherry on top! Aren't you Andalusian? Help me out. Fuck it, one line!', trying to finish a love poem dedicated to Mertxe.

The most important topic, the simple hetero-stereotype category, is how the Catalan independent movement is perceived by Andalusians. After an independent Catalan Republic has apparently been declared, it might not seem the optimal moment to release a comedy movie about a Catalan town. When Rafa arrives to Girona, Pau tells him that all his work belongs to a collection commissioned by the Generalitat to decorate future Catalan embassies around the world. Moreover, Pau explains: 'Independence is very important to many people, like my grandma', but he confess: 'Nobody's "indepentalized", it just has to look like it'. In that moment Rafa says: 'Yes, typical Catalonia, all a big pose'. His message implies a reference to the last referendum made in Catalonia without any legal or governmental recognition.

Curro, as one of the Andalusian stereotypes, looks at the possibility of independence as a threat: 'Imagine getting stuck there when they become independent. [...] No, don't you go! The Spanish Army should storm the

Ramblas with some tanks and restore order'. When he arrives to the village with Joaquín, both of them realize that the Catalan Republic is a fact:

Joaquín: I think they were already independent and they're bamboozling Spain with these referendums.

Curro: Look, look...

Joaquín: Currito, it's some kind of revolutionary folk dance.

Curro: It's a subversive dance and we're illegal aliens. We'll have to get a leaky boat back to Seville.

When they discover the bar, where Spaniards are hidden, they feel like they have to demonstrate their Spaniard status:

Spaniard man: If you want some ham, prove that you're Spanish.

Curro: Long live Spain, the King and law and order!

Everybody: Hurrah! Olé!

Joaquín: What are you up to in here?

Spaniard woman: All of the Spaniards in town are hiding out.

Curro: The bars have become ghettos!

The 'Spanish ghetto' in Soronelles is working as a metaphor of what some media have called *mayoría silenciosa*⁶ (silent majority), a term that refers to Catalan people who do not support the independence movement. At this moment, Joaquín decides to inform his cousin, a member of Civil Guard, what is going on in the Catalan village:

Joaquín: Relax, these people won't get away with it so easily. They're not leaving Spain just like that, trust me.

Curro: Call your cousin.

(Phone call)

Joaquín: Spain's falling apart. The Catalans are getting their own way.

Curro: Tell them to send tanks to the Ramblas.

Civil Guard: What the hell are you on about?

Joaquín: Soronelles is independent, with its own money, everything. They pay in *moronetes*.

Curro: Tanks on the Ramblas!

Civil Guard: They pay with what? Is this one of your jokes? He's a riot!

Joaquín: I swear to God! Joke all you like at the Fair, but never about Spain! Curro: Forget the tanks! We'll bomb it and make it part of Aragón.

Civil Guard: If what you're saying is true, we shouldn't talk on the phone.

Roser lives with the belief that Catalonia is independent and the idea of reuniting with Spain terrifies her: 'Before I had a nightmare that we became Spaniards again. Montserrat Caballé was singing "Paquito the Chocolate Man" out of tune. She's never sung out of tune'. Nevertheless, at the end of the film, Roser accepts with resignation: 'The Spanish state would boycott the first Catalan wedding. You'll forget me'. This last statement could be extrapolated to the current political affair between the Spanish Government and the Generalitat de Catalunya.

The only projected *auto-stereotype* expression found in the sequel is the image that Andalusians believe that Catalans have of them: 'Andalusians they are just cheap labour', says Joaquín, referring to how he thinks Catalans talked about Andalusians. In this movie, projected hetero-stereotype category is not represented, at least, not through the dialogue.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: BASQUES, CATALANS AND ANDALUSIANS SHOULD LAUGH TOGETHER

The previous analysis of the scripts of both films has tried to categorize every stereotype mentioned in each category defined by Lethonen (2005): *simple auto-stereotype*, *projected auto-stereotype*, *projected hetero-stereotype* or *simple hetero-stereotype*. A large number of examples of simple auto-stereotypes and simple hetero-stereotypes are found in both films, although the representation of projected auto-stereotype and projected hetero-stereotype remains unclear. For instance, simple auto-stereotype is witnessed when the Andalusian Rafa and Basque Koldo defines themselves as representative of the quintessential Andalusian – religious and hooligan – and Basque man – strong and rough – respectively, or Pau as Catalan man – cosmopolitan and sensitive. Focused on simple hetero-stereotypes, on the one hand, Andalusians believe that Basques are an endogamous and primary society and Basques consider Andalusians idler and fascist; On the other hand, Andalusians and Basques believe that Catalans are tight and trendy. The only remarkable example we found of projected auto-stereotype is that Andalusians consider that Basques see them as lazy and unconcerned, moreover Basques think that Andalusians consider them to be uncouth and boorish, we have not found any evidence of this category in the case of Catalans. The same happens with projected hetero-stereotype, where we have detected only one clear evidence as the belief that Andalusians think that the Basques have a sense of superiority over the 'Spanish'.

This first conclusion shows that the projection of the stereotypes is more complex than at first glance. Both films are a reflection of the simplest and most common Spanish stereotypes without questioning the reason of their existence, reproduction and survival.

Spain needs to laugh at itself, as Peter Buse and Nuria Triana Toribio affirm: 'Spain was able to laugh at the longest-lasting historical trauma that it had endured in the post-civil war era, and by all accounts Basque – and Catalan – audiences laughed along with the Spanish' (2015: 229). In this stage, the critical analysis of discourse reveals that both movies are using all the stereotypes as a result of two key factors: first, stereotypes are shown as a hyperbole of themselves. The exaggerations and excessive dramas around them remove the bases in which they are founded. Second and last, both movies diffuse the historical identities and their own controversial circumstances, turning violence into laughter.

Stereotypes are neither good nor bad, but they can influence intercultural interactions in different ways, as they tend to support information that is reliable with existing beliefs, and tend to reject information that is changeable with those stereotypes. According to Johnston and Macrae (1994), people tend to make assumptions based on stereotypes even when they have reason to question the legitimacy of the stereotype. The categories studied by Lehtonen (2005) and analysed in this article reveal that stereotypes are built upon some truth. The notion of the cultural stereotype is a more complex phenomenon than just a discernment of some other group of people shared by the members of a collective (Lehtonen 2005). Stereotypes are essential constituents of collective identity (Armstrong 1996): what we are and what we are not. This implies that society needs stereotypes in order to construct its own cultural identity. The negative connotations of the stereotypes are falling and disappearing as these movies have shown, something which has allowed for the emergence of a new stereotype conception, not based on negative or positive connotations, but founded on the capacity of identification and the cultural identity construction.

The main characters in both films reflect the generation gap in the Spanish State. While Koldo, Roser, Joaquín and Curro embody the more extreme stereotype according to each nationality, the younger Rafa, Amaia, Pau and Judit represent a more flexible model, with a certain margin for exchange and hybridization. In addition, the difference between cultural and gender stereotypes is remarkable. Cultural stereotypes are connected with political ideology and personality aspects, while the gender stereotypes are linked to physical aspects as the figure of Amaia shows.

Ultimately, both films have been conceived to keep everyone entertained. Spaniards cheerfully discover their prejudice thanks to the continuous jokes, which are essentially stereotype-based, while those inclined to a more ironic humour are pleased watching the fights of the unlucky but brave Rafa playing his role as a posh Andalusian from Seville's Triana neighbourhood. *Ocho apellidos vascos* (*Spanish Affair*) and *Ocho apellidos catalanes* (*Spanish Affair 2*) have not emerged in a vacuum but, in fact, 'in dialogue with comic traditions that run from Berlanga to contemporary Basque television and the current trend of "post-humor" in Spanish and Catalan popular culture, particularly as disseminated on the Internet' (Buse and Triana Toribio 2015: 229).

Assuming that the Andalusian stereotype has been used for so many reasons, and if Andalusians have been educated to laugh at themselves from birth, they are not going to get annoyed at watching a snobbish Andalusian becoming the front-runner of a radical Basque pro-independence group, or dressing up as a fundamentalist Catalan nationalist. When Rafa arrives to Argoitia there is a huge graffiti titled: *Libertad para Euskal Herria* ('Freedom for Euskal Herria'), while the main placard in Soronelles says: *Benviguts a la República de Catalunya – Welcome to the Republic of Catalonia*. Then, what is the demand claimed by Andalusians in the movie? None. Every identity represented in the movie appears extremely exaggerated, but the Andalusian character – Rafa – took the biggest part.

Both comedies *Ocho apellidos vascos* (*Spanish Affair*) and *Ocho apellidos catalanes* (*Spanish Affair 2*) would be unimaginable without the Andalusian counterbalance: the humour would not work, because any other national identity would clash rudely – the kindness and empathy would disappear. That is, the Andalusian succeeds in capturing the love of the Basque girl,

and in a sharp sarcastic twist, offers us the fake of the plot: the horse-drawn carriage serenaded by famous Sevillian celebrities Los del Río (singers of the famous song 'La Macarena') singing *Sevilla tiene un color especial* ('Seville has a Special Colour') that ends the movie and corroborates that Spaniards, particularly Andalusians, are truly capable of laughing at themselves. As Concha Caballero says: 'Whenever Spain needed to present a softer and more attractive image it took an Andalusian form' (2014).

This research shows that some of the most archaic cultural stereotypes in Spain have been overcome. This is one of the reasons why Spaniards, Catalans and Basques are able to laugh at them. However, these stereotypes coexist with other historical and complex cultural demands that are very much alive, such as independence claims from the historical regions. From a critical perspective, and connected with the panic created by the Spanish Government through different media (González 2010), every reference to independence is shown as an act of terrorism.

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CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Antonio A. Caballero Gálvez is lecturer in the Department of Communication Studies at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili (Tarragona, Spain) and Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. His research focuses on the cultural stereotypes in film representation through Spanish territorial politics. He is a member of the academic staff of the Permanent Inter-disciplinary Research Seminar on Gender, Aesthetics and Audiovisual Culture (GECA) at Universidad Complutense de Madrid. His lines of work focus on the representation of gender identities in contemporary visual culture, (new) masculinities and virtual identities.

Contact: Department of Communication Studies, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Avinguda de Catalunya, 35, 3.46, 43002 Tarragona, Spain.

E-mail: antonio.caballero@urv.cat

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