Toward a new governance of religion? The ambivalent relationship between religion and immigration in Spain.

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Introduction

Immigration\(^1\) constitutes a mirror for both the departure and host societies (Sayad, 1999). The political treatment of immigration puts under scrutiny the national and transnational identities, patterns of integration, including the religious dimension. At EU level, Casanova regards the question of immigration, in addition to other issues such as Poland’s accession to the EU, the debate about Turkey's possible admission into the EU, or the mentioning of religion in the Constitutional Treaty, as one of the key factors for contemporary restructuring of the relations between religion and politics in Europe (Casanova, 2006). From a religious perspective migratory flows – South-North and East-West – have had two main consequences. First it has changed the religious landscape of the host societies. The level of religiosity of some immigrant groups has altered the local paradigms of secularisation and the institutional arrangements that stemmed from them. Second, immigration has also been an opportunity for religious actors to strengthen their position in the public arena. This has notably been the case of the Catholic church in its efforts to welcome and support immigrants in Southern Europe. In Italy, Spain or Portugal, Catholic associations have been among the most active groups working with immigrants, thus acquiring true expertise in that domain. Such activism has led to ambivalent relations between the religious actors and the political and administrative authorities, ranging from competition to subsidiarity. Needless to say that this situation is specific neither to Southern Europe nor to the Catholic church. Menjívar (2006) has insisted on the fact that the religious actors not only help migrants but are also led to take positions publicly on that issue. Religion thus interferes with politics but in a rather original way on account of the social urgency to find solutions to the immigration problem. Immigration can therefore be seen as a new opportunity for the major transnational religions in their desire to acquire the status of major players in global civil society (Casanova, 1997).

\(^1\) Thanks to Jean-François Allafort who helped us with the translation of this paper.
A lot of research has been made on the effects of immigration on the transnational, national and local religious “markets” and on church-state relations. Great attention was devoted to Islam, both at national and EU-levels (Dassetto, Ferrari & Maréchal, 2007; Silvestri, 2007), and, to a lesser extent, to other “minority religions”, such as Eastern Orthodoxy or different Evangelical traditions. Paradoxically, not so much has been said about the attitude of the formerly majoritarian religions in the host countries, already confronted with the phenomena of secularisation, and which have to face immigration as a new opportunity and constraint. For the Catholic church, faith-based assistance to contemporary immigrants – frequently anticipating the states- goes with a worry about the emergence of new competitors on religious markets. Claire de Galembert (1994) has emphasized the tension existing within the French Catholic church between “compassion” for the excluded, and fear of the religious rival. Rosenberger et al. (2008) have investigated how, in Austria, immigration and concerns about immigrants’ integration are changing the established modes of cooperation between church and state by strengthening the political role of faith-based organizations. In such a context, religious organizations are gradually assuming the function of political entrepreneurs who speak in the name of the entire immigrant community, and take part in political consultation (Rosenberger and al., 2008).

We aim at transferring very close questions to the Spanish case, a country deeply marked by Catholicism and which has experimented a rapid process of secularization since the 1970s. This paper will give particular attention to the attitude and behaviour of the Catholic church in the new context of politicization of immigration in Spain. Politicization here refers to (a) the way immigration generates changes in public policies (here: religious policies); (b) the role played by immigration in political discourses and representations. In the last 30 years, immigration became a political stake, both in terms of government policies and domestic political rivalries (Ritaine, 2005).

From a theoretical standpoint, we consider the Catholic church as an institution, in the sense given by Lagroye (1997). An institution can therefore be considered as “a system of mutual expectation whose stability is guaranteed by rules and regulations, and/or by mechanisms of location (“repérage”) and classification”(Lagroye, 1997: 151). An institution is a set of practices, of particular tasks, rituals and rules, and a set of beliefs or representations, that concern and justify the practices. The Catholic church is an institution among others, except that its sets of rules and regulations that reinforce the orthodoxy of the believers are particularly precise and minutely detailed. Treating the Church as an institution means giving special attention to: (a) what has been objectivized (practices, knowledges and roles); (b) the various forms of belonging; (c) the internal conflicts (Lagroye, 2006). This perspective, insists on the internal debates of the Church2 and the role played by representations, aims at completing (rather than contesting) a purely strategic approach that would consider the church first as an interest group. Warner (2000) argues, from a rational choice perspective, that “the Catholic church is an interest group whose actions can be modelled as if it were a firm in a market seeking a supplier of goods.” (Warner, 2000: 4). Such an approach is functional to address the strategies of the Church in the competition generated by immigration on three “markets”: political, religious and the Third sector. However, as Warner argues (2000: 7), the Catholic church is an atypical interest group in several respects:

2 Lagroye applies this perspective to the current crisis experimented by the French Catholicism. The crisis originates in the internal conflict between two irreconcilable “regimes of truth”: some may give priority to the transmission of religious and moral certitudes as enacted by the institutional leadership; while others will ask the hierarchy to explain the meaning of an event, but the hierarchy’s position will be considered as a proposal directed towards free human beings, able to exert a critical appraisal on it (Lagroye, 2006).
“It claims that its principles are universally applicable, including its moral authority, and in contrast to trade unions and environmental groups, for example, the Church is (usually) regarded by its followers (‘members’) as being the ultimate moral authority. (...) Because the Church has been unwilling to relinquish control over individuals’ consciences, and democratic states haven hesitant to allow the Churches to retain that control, the Church’s interaction with democratic, secular political systems has been troublesome.” (Warner, 2000: 7).

This tension between corporate interests and universalistic ambitions gives its specificity to the religious perspective on politics. Like the Church of England analyzed by Grant (1989), the Spanish Catholic church is an ambivalent pressure group. It is a sectional group insofar as it mainly represents the interests of the Catholic institution in its dealings with political authorities, whereas it is a cause group whose fight for various causes – as immigration – rests on beliefs and principles. As a sectional group, its participation is limited but much more open when acting as a cause group. It is, thus, essential to apprehend the permanent interweaving of these two levels to understand what is at stake in the interaction between the church and political power. More, as C. Warner argues (2000: 8), the Catholic church distinguishes itself from the other interest groups by its conception of democracy, irreducible to a purely majoritarian approach:

« Whereas the essence of democracy is compromise, many of Church’s demands are not negotiable. Its primary principles cannot be placed on a continuum: it cannot agree that some of its tenets are valid and others not; that some people may divorce while others cannot; or that some religions have equal standing with it, but others do not; or that secular education is acceptable for some negotiable segment of the population.” (Warner, 2000 : 8).

Such a conception of democracy is sensitive on ethical issues, which are considered by the church as moral issues that put at stakes irreconcilable positions (Barreiro, 2001). Christians are thus confronted with the task of surmounting the contradiction between the logic of democratic public deliberation – laws are made from the collective will of the citizens – and the absolute primacy of the binding religious law for everybody, whether they adhere to it or not (Hervieu-Léger, 1996: 367). To use Lagroye’s language, the Catholic church will always interpret democracy thanks to its own « régimes de vérité ». Thus, it has developed an ambivalent relation to immigration. On one side, the new religious situation provoked by immigration generated changes in the political regulation of religions, that had consequences on the relations between the Catholic church, the state and the other denominations. On the other hand, the Church developed faith-based assistance to contemporary immigrants, updating its traditional “repertoire of hospitality”. In order to go further into this – apparent – ambivalence, the paper will first develop an approach centred on the political regulation of religions at the Spanish level. The new immigration has contributed to challenge the Spanish model of public regulation of religions which emerged during the democratic transition. However, the national perspective remains insufficient to examine such questions, granted the variety of Spanish regional configurations, the paper will then focus on the case of Andalusia, an Autonomous Community characterised by the presence of many immigrants and by a strong third sector. The second perspective is thus to be centred on the religious regulations of politics observed in Andalusia, with a special attention to the strategies developed by actors belonging to the Catholic sphere.

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3 For an introduction to the interreligious dialogue in Catalonia, see (Burchianti & Itcaina, 2007). For more deepened analysis, see (Moreras, 2005) (Garreta Bochaga, 2000) (Zapata Barrero, 2002).
4 This paper draws on a) on a fieldwork carried out by F. Burchianti in April 2005, June 2006 and 2007 in the main cities of Andalusia (interviews with Catholic and secular NGOs working with immigrants, local and
1. The effects of immigration on the political regulation of religions: a changing Spanish model

The Catholic activism on the issue of immigration has to be understood in a broader context of a reconfiguration of the relations between religion, society and politics at the Spanish level. The paradoxical dimension of this new visibility of religion comes from the fact that it expresses itself in a highly secularized society, but where the debates over religion and politics are, maybe now more than ever, highly politicized. Both the changes in the religious market and the new politicization of religion are now challenging the pattern of religions-state relations of religion inherited from the democratic transition.

1.1. Changes in the new religious landscape: towards a new religious «market»?

According to Pérez-Agote (2007), the secularization process experimented by the Spanish society has to be explained by the encounter between three historical trends: the secularization of the consciences, that goes back to the 1970s and which finds its roots in the XIXth century; the process of secularization of the society and the state; and the recent breakdown of the Spanish cultural homogeneity due to the new immigration. The secularization of the Spanish society has gone through three historical stages (Pérez-Agote, 2007). The first goes back to the XIXth century until the Civil War (1936-1939). This period is characterized by the slow decline of religion in the Spaniards’ consciences, but with a very firm resistance of the Catholic church. As in other Catholic countries, the lack of internal secularization of the Church provoked radical mobilizations against religion. The second period of secularization started in the 1960s, during the late Francoism and the increase of mass-consumption. Hostility towards the Church turned into indifference and passivity. During this second period, Spain stops being a religiously Catholic country to become a culturally Catholic one5 (Pérez-Agote, 2007: 74). During the third period, notably since the 1990s, the self-definition (among young people) as Catholic churchgoers kept on decreasing, the number of non practising Catholics got stabilised, and the number of agnostics, indifferent, atheists and non believers increased strongly. This process was particularly relevant in Catalonia, but also in formerly very Catholic regions, such as Madrid and the Basque Country. The phenomenon was less pronounced in Andalusia6, Castilla y León, Galicia and Valencia, where non practising Catholics were still in majority7.

5 “Catholic culture” is thus defined by: the social – more than religious – importance of Catholic rituals; the relatively high levels of beliefs in God and the Holy Virgin; the weakening and disappearance of some beliefs (miracles, Holy Spirit, hell, devil, purgatory, …), religious magisterium or teaching authority are not crucial any more in various aspects of life (sexuality, politics, work); the popular religion remains vigorous; the impact of religion on civilisation remains important (influence of religion on the conception of family, even if the magisterium of the Church is not accepted) (Pérez-Agote, 2007: 74).

6 For instance, this are 2005 data concerning young people (aged 15-24) in Andalusia: practising Catholics: 12%; non practising Catholics: 48%; Indifferent and agnostics: 21%; atheists:15%; other religion: 2% (Pérez-Agote, 2006: 76).

7 A 2002 CIS survey confirms this change. Highest rates of self-declared Catholics are to be found in Extremadura and Castilla La Mancha, while the lowest rates are in Madrid, Catalonia and the Basque Country . “Revelan cifras sobre convicciones y prácticas religiosas en España”, www.aciprensa.com, Madrid, 4 de febrero 2004.
As a result, most observers of the Spanish religious panorama agree on the progressive secularisation of Spanish society, at least from the viewpoint of the traditional indicators of religious observance (Requena 2005). However, Catholic domination in the declaration of religious affiliation is still a reality, measured by a 2006 survey of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS):

Table 1: declaration of religious affiliation in Spain, January 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>(N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>77,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practising another religion</td>
<td>1,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-believer</td>
<td>13,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>6,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>1,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of those practising a religion other than Catholicism (1,7%) is still very small in relation to non-believers and atheists. These findings should be moderated immediately in the light of the rate of practice: the same survey states that almost half (46,6%) of believers (Catholics and other religions) “never or hardly never” practise their religion.

The 2006 CIS survey also provides information about religious practice:

Table 2: religious practice in Spain (January 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>(N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>46,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times a year</td>
<td>17,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a month</td>
<td>13,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost every Sunday and feast day</td>
<td>17,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times a week</td>
<td>2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although it is difficult to obtain reliable estimates regarding denominations other than Catholicism, various sources, particularly those supplied by the major denominational federations, make it possible to arrive at an order of magnitude. The Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities estimates the number of Protestants in Spain in 2006 to be about

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9 Questionnaire confined to Catholics and those practising another religion (CIS, 2006).
1,200,000\(^{10}\). Of these, 400,000 are faithful followers, the great majority of them Spanish, who meet regularly in Evangelical churches (about half of them are regular churchgoers, the other half being in the Protestant “area of influence”). Immigrants from the EU (particularly from Germany) and from non-EU countries (Latin America in particular) account for 800,000 of the total number of the Protestants. An increase in conversions to Evangelism among Spanish Gipsy population\(^{11}\) was also observed. The Federation of Jewish Communities in Spain estimates that the Jewish population of Spain is somewhere between 40,000 and 48,000\(^{12}\). Orthodox Christians come above all from Central and East European countries (Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine) and are concentrated particularly in Aragon and Valencia. The lack of comprehensive information is even more obvious with regards to Islam. Estimates of the number of Muslims fluctuate between 500,000 and a million, i.e. variation of as much as 100\(^{13}\). Most of the Muslims are Moroccan immigrants, but there are also Algerians, Pakistanis, converts and individuals from other Muslim countries. The two largest cities in the country, Madrid and Barcelona, also have the greatest number of religious denominations. The largest communities of immigrants from Muslim countries are to be found in the Autonomous communities of Catalonia, Andalusia, Madrid, Valencia and Murcia, and in the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. Lastly the 9,000 practising Buddhists should be mentioned.

Another method of approximating the religious profile of immigrants is to take into consideration a classification of the immigrants according to the majority religion of their country of origin. Pérez-Agote (2007: 80), relying on (Comas, 2006) provides the following data:

**Table 3: Classification of the immigrants according to the majority religion in their country of origin (2005)**\(^{14}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic countries</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim countries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Orthodox countries</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Protestant countries</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian mixed countries</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Asian religions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{10}\) Federación de Entidades Religiosas Evangélicas de España (http://www.federe.org/general.php?pag=estad), consultado on 19th October, 2006.

\(^{11}\) The anthropologist C. Pasqualino has analysed how a new competition emerged among gitanos in Extremadura between the Catholic associative networks and the Evangelical church of Philadelphia, on the occasion of religious rituals and pilgrimages (Pasqualino, 2002).

\(^{12}\) http://www.fcje.org, consulted on 16\(^{15}\) October 2006. In 2000, Rozenberg estimated that there were about 15,000 Jews in thirteen communities in Spain. The Jews of Spain “took a long time contemplating settling in the Peninsula (according to a report by the World Jewish Congress, in 1974, only 40% had Spanish nationality). At present the vast majority are Spanish – including second and third generations” (Rozenberg, 2000: 45).

\(^{13}\) Taking statistics from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as a basis, Joan Lacomba arrives at a total of 512,706 persons from predominantly Muslim countries. Adding immigrants from countries in which Islam is not predominant, Muslim immigrants who have acquired Spanish nationality, Spanish Muslims from Ceuta y Melilla and Spanish converts brings the total estimate close to 700,000 (Lacomba, 2005). (Pérez-Agote, 2007: 80) brings the estimate to one million of Muslims.
In such a context, trying to make an overall assessment of the broad structure of the present-day « religious market » - the economic metaphor itself should be treated with care – is tricky. By sticking to individual declarations of religious adherence, we doom ourselvess to overestimating the religious affiliation that this implies, and in particular the relationship to the institutions that are its legitimate mouthpieces. However, a few concluding remarks might be done. First, sociological data converge to give the image of a secularized Spanish society, but where the Catholic identification remains important. Second, immigration is modifying this religious landscape. The proportion of foreigners which constituted 1.37% of the Spanish population in 1996 passed to 8.46% in 2005, and the level of religiosity of the newcomers – as exemplified by Latin American Catholics- seems to be higher than one of the host society (Pérez-Agote, 2007: 79-80).

Religion, politics and the State: the two stages in the political regulation of religion

- 1975-1992: reframing the model in the context of democratization

The formation of a new pluralist religious structure was one of the most significant issues in the political transition after the Franco regime in 1975. Similarly, there has been ample coverage of the fact that winning over the Catholic church and its most influential leaders contributed to acceptance of the new democratic regime by sectors of society that were still resisting (Brassloff 2003) (Pérez-Diaz 1993) (Anderson 2003). Some of the most conservative Catholics, including sectors of the Army, were reassured by the inauguration of a parliamentary monarchy and by the democratic conversion of the Catholic church. It also illustrated the radical estrangement of the Church from political power in the last years of the authoritarian regime (Pérez-Díaz, 1993). The reforming of the links between Catholic church and State did not mean the end of politicisation of religion. Thirty years later, Spain’s final alignment with the other major European democracies can even be seen in fresh interweaving between politics and religion. Far from dilution into privatisation, religion is taking centre stage again in Spanish politics, and in a way very different from what happened during the transition, on one hand because the religious landscape itself has changed, and on the other, because relations between religion, State and more broadly public authorities have had to adjust to new conditions in the religious “market” by revising the institutional organisation of the “living together” (convivencia), established on a quasi-consensual basis on emerging from the dictatorship. This reforming of the links between religion and politics has had a dual aspect, one unobstrusive, the re-ordering of methods for political regulation of religion, the other, controversies thrusting religion into the centre of public debate.

The revision, between 1976 and 1979, of the Concordat of 1953 that dated back to General Franco’s regime (1939-1975) has limited the institutional clout of the Church while offering it new freedom. It has been obliged to adjust its praxis to the new political and democratic regime and to the rapid secularization of Spanish society. This new arrangement did not mean that the Church had disappeared from the public sphere, quite the opposite. The religious regulation of politics has been at work in the Church’s attempt at moralizing in the public sphere in the new democratic Spain, especially on ethical questions and on ethnoterritorial debates considered as ethical and moral issues (Itçaina, 2007, 2009). The source of the present-day organisation of the Spanish State’s relations with religions is first and foremost the 1978 Constitution. Article 16 proclaims the neutrality of the State and freedom of religion with no limitation other than the protection of law and order, while referring specifically to
the Catholic church. According to (Proetschel 2003), this reference to the Catholic church – which was supported by the Communist Party during the constitutional debate – far from amounting to disguised denominationalism, is on the contrary a search for compromise characteristic of the transition. Juan Linz recalls attempts to “depoliticize the Church” in the transition from Francoism, to avoid having a fixation about the splits of the past (Linz 1993).

The system established at that time, while making a fundamental break with the State denominationalism, is not the same as French-style secularism. Danielle Rozenberg refers to “secularism under construction” in Spain: some aspects of the fact that this separation goes hand in hand with a recognition of religion – in the Constitution itself – is instead redolent of Swiss or German secularism (Rozenberg 1996). The 1980 Organic Law of Religious Freedom develops Art. 16 of the Constitution by providing that Churches, Denominations and Religious Communities may acquire legal personality subject to registration with the Register of Religious Entities (Mantecón 2003). The law provides that the State shall enter into cooperation agreements and conventions with Churches, denominations and religious communities which, being entered on the Register, are recognised as having significant roots in Spain by virtues of their size and number of believers.

Two major challenges have faced the architects of this radical institutional reform of religion. The first was the renegotiation of the institutional effects of the denominational system with the Catholic church: a series of agreements between the Spanish State and the Holy See between 1976 and 1979 established the new framework for these relations. Apart from ending the denominational nature of the State and State control over the appointment of bishops, the agreements set up an endowment for the Church by the Spanish State and a system of subsidies for Catholic schools. This consensual climate, characteristic of the transition period, did not last long: the accession of the socialist party to power in 1982 started with reforms conflicting the interests and causes defended by the Catholic church (education, abortion, financing of the Church). All these raised the “Catholic question” anew in a Spain still affected by the memory of the divisions of the 1936 civil war. During the transition, the split between the “two Spains” was compounded by the territorial question, Basque and Catalan in particular, whose repercussions were felt in the very bosom of the Catholic organisations.

The second challenge for the religious policy of the Spanish State concerned the regulation of the so-called minority religions. In formal terms, the three cooperation agreements by the Spanish State with Protestants, Muslims and Jewish federations in 1992 granted recognition of minority religions in a manner quite unprecedented in Western Europe. The effect of the injunction to join together was above all to persuade religious organisations to federate so that they could speak with one voice in dealing with the State administration. In the case of Islam, this “institutionalisation from above” became a sort of a balance between the two main Islamic federations of Spain (Moreras 2005). However, the strong disagreement between the two entities that signed the Cooperation Agreement with the State in 1992 was often given by the authorities as an explanation of the low rate of application of the main provisions of that agreement.

- 2004-2008: in search of a new framework?

Though relatively stable within an institutional framework that is quite widely shared, the general pattern of relations between religions and the State in Spain has seen distinct phases of politicisation. The period beginning on 13th March 2004 with the accession to power of the Spanish Socialist Party after two Popular Party governments (1996-2004) seems to mark start of a new phase. Debates on the place of religions in the public space inevitably involve in
return a discussion about institutional regulation of religion. The tragic context of the changeover of power in the wake of the Madrid bombings of 11th March 2004 would tend to shift attention towards the organised forms of Islam, both at national and local level (Burchianti and Itçaina 2007). However, the return of a left-wing majority also meant an increase in tensions between the State and the Catholic church. These tensions focus on two sets of issues. The first relates directly to the sectional interests of the Church, namely the reform of religious education in public schools and the debate about the method of financing the Church, while the second relates to new social policies, with certain symbolic measures rousing Catholic circles to anger: the easing of legislation on divorce in June 2005 and the Decree of the Council of Ministers of 29th October 2004 authorising research on embryo stem cells. More recently, in March 2009, the government’s will to reform the abortion law provoked mass demonstrations in Madrid, which were supported by the Catholic church. But it was above all the Law of 29th June 2005 on the marriage of persons of the same sex that mobilised Catholics, the Spanish Church going so far as to ask Catholic mayors not to celebrate homosexual marriages and to invoke the conscience clause against the legal constraint.

This will to reform is intended to adapt the institutional edifice that emerged from the democratic transition to the new political, social and religious conditions. The debate in 2005-2006 about the financing of the Catholic church speaks volumes in this respect (Burchianti, Itçaina, 2006: 109-110). However, negotiating a redefinition of the institutional positions of a centralised and hierarchical religion, as Catholicism, that is both traditional and shrinking is one thing. Outlining a new pattern of state regulation for a religion lacking unified representation, deeply split by internationalised networks and under heavy fire from the media, is another. Present-day State relations with Islam bear the traces of this uncertainty. How can public officials manage the contradiction between promoting a stronger message on tolerance and the benevolent neutrality of the State towards the liberal and democratic components of Islam and keeping a closer watch on potential centres of Islamic radicalism? At the same time, a few token gestures assume great significance and reveal as much the unity as the fragmentation of the Muslim community. Unity prevails when extremism is rejected. On the State’s part, there was the establishment in October 2004 of the Pluralism and Co-existence Foundation (Pluralismo y convivencia) chaired by the Minister of Justice and aimed at promoting inter-religious dialogue that seeks to restore the balance. The aim of this foundation is to help in implementing cultural, educational and social integration programmes.

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14 See (Burchianti, Itçaina, 2007) about the local controversies over interreligious relations in Catalonia.
17 In theory, the present system is based on the 1979 agreements between the Spanish state and the Holy See reforming the Concordat of 1953, and providing that the state should make an annual appropriation to the Catholic church, nudated in line with the consumer price index. In this connection, Felipe Gonzales’ socialist government made a transitional provision in 1988 allocating to the Church the 0.52% of personal income tax that taxpayers had chose to allocate to the Church. Since it came to power the Zapatero government has wavered between an a minima position that the government would go no further in financing the Church and a willingness to reform the system. The agreement reached in September 2006 between the Bishops’ Conference and the government aims to put an end to this uncertainty by a compromise. The appropriation from income tax to the Catholic church goes from 0.52% to 0.7% but the annual budgetary supplement will no longer be paid by the state, and the Bishops’ Conference will have to account every year for the use to which the appropriation is put. Lastly, the agreement puts an end to the VAT exemption, thus meeting the European requirement. For details, see (Burchianti, Itçaina, 2007: 109-111). Tamayo (2007:171) considers the 2006 agreement as a concession to the Church.
for minority religious denominations that have entered into cooperation agreements with the State or demonstrably have significant roots in Spain, and to develop the full exercise of religious freedom. This refocusing on ‘socio-cultural’ activities excludes support for any activity linked to actual worship\(^{18}\). Some have seen in this the germ of a funding system for minority religions, aiming at making up for the Catholic church’s built-in advantage. The fatwa declared by the Islamic Commission of Spain against Al Qaida on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Madrid bombings was also a strong signal from the Muslim partners of the State\(^{19}\).

The outward show of unity cannot conceal the many forms of mobilisation. Á. Ramirez and L. Mijares (2005) see the bombings on 11\(^{th}\) March, 2004 as the opening of a new phase characterised in particular by the mobilisation of new players on the question of regulation of religion. The new dramatisation of Islam and its representativeness is generating initiatives from players a priori remote from the religious issues, but who have gained greatly in legitimacy through their work with migrants. As a result, the opposition between the religious and pro-migrant mobilisation, valid in 1992, is tending to give way to new and competing views on the management of Islam. In April 2004, ATIME, the association of Moroccan workers, proposed to the government the creation of a Council of Muslims in Spain whose functions, inter alia, would be to regulate Muslim religious practices and rituals in close collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and to channel and co-ordinate the official recognition of Islamic associations and mosques, accredit imams put forward by the communities of the faithful, organise teaching on Islam, combat anti-Muslim prejudices and facilitate inter-religious dialogue\(^{20}\). This proposal stemmed in particular from the recognition that the existing representative organisations were poorly integrated (Aierbe, 2004). Doubtless, the substantial increase in workers of Moroccan origin together with and on the top of the new situation generated by 11\(^{th}\) March is encouraging the association to intervene in an area that is new to it. This positioning by an immigrants’ association is unprecedented and paradoxical in that it asks for more State intervention in the control of religious activities, and it is out of step with an Islamic Commission that considers itself to be the sole legitimate body (Ramírez, Mijares, 2005: 95). The ATIME proposal also stresses that the Commission is not fully representative among the Muslim community itself. Mohamed Chaib, a Catalan Socialist Party member of the Catalan parliament and as such the first Muslim elected to the parliament of an autonomous community, said more or less the same thing when he proposed that the leaders of the Islamic Council should be elected and not appointed by the government\(^{21}\). All of these analyses demonstrate that Spanish Islam in 2005 is not the same as in 1992. The picture of Spanish Islam that is emerging is that of an incomplete, composite and fragmented body that does not facilitate the task of a State administration in search of a partner. Increasing internal splits in the Islamic Commission\(^{22}\), new religious interventionism by


\(^{21}\) « Un diputado musulmán del PSC pide que las urnas, no el Gobierno, elijan el Consejo Islámico », Webislam, 26th September 2005 (http://webislam.com).

\(^{22}\) The shifts in the balance at the very heart of the two major federations making up the Islamic Commission testify to this instability. In January 2006, for example, a “heterogeneous alliance of Spanish converts, pro-Moroccan leaders and representatives of Saudi influence in Spain” became the majority in the governing bodies of the FEERI, isolating historical leaders such as Mansur Escudero (Luis Gómez, “Crece el poder de los líderes prosaudíes y promarroquíes en la comunidad islámica”, El País, 5\(^{th}\) February 2006).
migrants’ associations and international politicisation, the blurring or confusion of aims issues is doubtless the new hallmark of present-day politicisation of this aspect of religion in Spain.

Recent transformations of the religious landscape and the new politicization of religion urged the need for changes in the multilevel Spanish political regulation of religion. The Catalan government, then controlled by a leftist coalition, approved in November 2007 a new law on the centres of cult, which was sent for discussion to the Catalan Parliament by the end of 2007. The reform aimed at putting an end to the conflicts between the neighbours about the opening of new Muslim prayer rooms. The law guarantees the right to free exercise of religion and establishes technical measures on hygiene and security in order to avoid nuisances. Solutions are to be found, according to the new Catalan normative, in urban planning, thus reinforcing the power of municipalities in that matter. The project prompted contrasted reactions in religious and political milieus. The Catholic church complained about the equivalence that was stated between Catholicism and the other religions. The conservative Popular Party (PP), already engaged in local controversies about the opening of new mosques (as in Badalona or Lleida) criticized the large latitude given to the municipal authorities (notably concerning the attribution of licence for the exercise of the cult and meetings with religious ends). The Catalan nationalists of CiU (Convergencia I Unió) saw in the power given to municipalities a potential attempt to the religious freedom. The Catalan project influenced at the national level a governmental project of reform of the 1980 Organic Law on Religious Freedom, announced in December 2008. The governmental project has four main objectives: a) update the 1980 law by incorporating the jurisprudence of the Constitutional Tribunal on freedom of conscience; b) regulate the conflicts between religious freedom and other fundamental rights (life, education, work); c) take into consideration the “new collectives of citizens” who were not there in 1980, and whose religious profile has to be taken into account; d) re-assert the secular and neutral nature of the state. The project was received with scepticism by the PP and by the Catholic church. It generated a debate, which will probably amplify in 2009, on the pattern of laïcité Spain will try to stabilise in the next decades.

1.3. The Catholic church and immigration: the repertoire of hospitality

Far from limiting its perception of immigration to their religious consequences, the Catholic church has also developed a repertoire of hospitality that put the emphasis on the integration and the socio-economical and political rights of the migrants. This commitment of the Church took two forms: a) an intense lobbying on public authorities concerning the lawmaking process; b) a constant social commitment with migrants.

   a) Catholic lobbying and the definition of the norm

The politicization process of the immigration issue first implies that norms regarding immigration and immigrants be defined by the states. The study of the immigration problem makes it possible to reassess the role of religion in public policy-making, a field of research not much documented so far. Through its active commitment in the definition of these norms (representation, claims, decision), the Catholic church has strongly contributed to structuring the public debate (the forum) around immigration that emerged in Spain in the mid-1980s.

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23 By the end of 2008, the Spanish government asked for draft opinions to the Constitutional Commission in the Congress of Deputies and to the Council of State.
That does not mean that the Catholic church has systematically taken part in the decision-making process (the *arena*) (Jobert, 1995).

On this first point, the Catholic church may be regarded as a pressure group, as a nongovernmental structure that aims at influencing the drawing up and implementation of public immigration policies, whether these are politics of immigration control – whose objective is to select and regulate foreign citizen’s admission – and policies of immigration – which refer to the policies of cultural and civic integration of immigrants (Minkenberg, 2007). Pressure groups, and more particularly those with traditionally strong structures – the Catholic church and the trade unions – had called for the normative definition of immigration and immigrants since the early 1980s, thus, going beyond a purely political initiative. Catholic diocesan organisations (Caritas in particular) had already helped Spanish, Italian or Portuguese emigrants after World War II. The reversal of immigration trends has progressively changed the situation. When Caritas Spain set up a program for immigrants in 1984, it was first conceived as assistance for temporary Portuguese immigrants coming to Spain. But it was soon to be extended to extra-European immigrants. Pressure on government was paralleled by internal restructuring of the Catholic organisations, where programs for emigrants were progressively replaced in the 1980s by programs for immigrants.

In parallel with its own internal reorganization, the Catholic church acted as an agenda setter on the normative issue of immigration laws. Since the mid-1980s, the Spanish confederation of the diocesan Caritas has played a significant role as a pressure group on both members of Parliament and government in an attempt to modify the immigration laws in a more integrationist way. This interventionism took very different forms, from participation (expertise, amendments, draft proposals) to protest. The impact of this political interventionism has varied, according to the various political configurations of the time, but cannot be restricted to a mere left-right divide. Içaina (2006) has passed under scrutiny the positions (from support to criticism) of the Church officials with respect to the different legislations on immigration (*Ley orgánica 7/1985*, *Ley orgánica 4/2000*) to the enforcement of the 2003 laws (*Leyes orgánicas 11/2003 and 14/2003*) in December 2004 and the regularization procedures to immigrants workers in February 2005. The Catholic discourse of political expertise is legitimized by political circumstances that in turn valorise, exploit, or neutralize community mobilization. In the long run, it will be interesting to analyze the response of the associations to a new government policy that now seems more utilitarian and considers immigrants as demographic and economic resources.

\[b) \text{ The register of hospitality: the social action of the Catholic church}\]

These lobbying activities are the public counterparts of the church’s daily hospitality-based social aid to immigrants. The Church’s legitimacy in the public sphere stems from its social action with the immigrants themselves and its mediation between immigration, labour market, civil society organisations and public administration. It is often the Catholic church –but not exclusively – that offers a wide range of both religious and social services to the immigrants in their first steps toward their integration into the complex host society.

The Catholic church has developed an original approach based on hospitality that rests on four conceptions for the immigrant figure (Içaina, Dorangricchia, 2005) (Içaina, 2006). The first representation of the immigration – the *charitable approach* - is indeed that of a person in need, as some form of modern day substitute for the traditional object of Christian
solidarity. Relations with the state are here limited to the register of subsidiarity. State action rests on the sense of moral and social obligation and the state will intervene only if the intermediary bodies are unable to fulfill this role. However, as the immigration issue was becoming increasingly politicized, the church could no longer keep its purely charitable position, in Spain as elsewhere in Europe (Vincent, 1997). In the solidarity approach, immigrants came to be regarded as victims of a situation of social and political inequality. To their image of “brethren in Christ” was added that of “brothers in arms”. The principle of solidarity prevailed over subsidiarity. There was a new call for state intervention in social matters, no longer catered for by other social groups. In such a context, the church – or sections of the church – came to be closer to trade unions or secular associations than to purely charitable organizations. The solidarist representation insists on the figure of the immigrant as a citizen with, and aspiring to have, political rights. Catholic bodies such as Caritas, but also the Episcopal Committee on Migrations went through an evolution process and changed from a purely charitable approach to a more affirmative one, lobbying public authorities and calling for more responsibilities to be given to the immigrants themselves. In the utilitarian approach, immigrants are mainly regarded as workers. Catholic mediation is targeted at local companies and households. The Catholic logic meets – only partially – a functionalist approach to immigration. For the church, mediation between immigrants and employers has essentially been aimed at enhancing opportunities of stable social integration for immigrants. Finally, in the identity approach, the immigrant is apprehended as a modifying factor in terms of identity, both for the country and the church. In this respect, the Catholic Church reaffirms its religious dimension. The emergence of religious competition in the wake of the immigration flow may incite the church to revert to its fundamental values and specific identity, beyond its universalistic rhetoric. The identity approach may also implicitly contribute to orientate migrants of Catholic origins towards the Catholic associations (Aparicio, Tornos, 1999).

The tension between this repertoire of hospitality and the increasing religious competition gave birth to internal debates within the Spanish Catholic church, that we will not consider here. Such a complex relation to immigration is even more sensitive at the regional level, as exemplified here by Andalusia.

2. Religious Regulation of Politics: the Catholic church and Immigration in Andalusia

2.1. The Immigration Issue in Andalusia: Characteristics and Local Political Stakes

In Spain and Andalusia, the management of migrants with low economic capital – from Southern countries and new EU Member-States – has become a major political issue in terms of public action and regulation since the 1990s, and more particularly the early 2000s. At the EU level, measures have been taken to address the problem of legal and illegal immigration,
which has led to reinforcing the security and control of the southern border of the Union. As a consequence, Andalusia has acquired a strategic dimension within the framework of this plan of action.

Such a recent and sudden politicisation of the immigration issue in the early 21st century thus calls for a necessary reappraisal and redefinition of the role of the Catholic third sector in that domain.

a) Immigration in Andalusia: some typical features

Owing to its very location on the southern border of Europe, Andalusia has been affected by the massive flow of migration from the South. It has also had to implement various regulation measures in accordance with national and European agreements. This region is the southern gateway to Europe for migrants, even though there have been more temporary as well as pendular migrants – European pensioners coming from the north or traders to and from Morocco – than in the other European regions. The nature and structure of the job market may also account for the fact that Andalusia has welcomed an increasing number of migrant job-seekers.

Andalusia is the second largest and the most highly populated autonomous community in Spain. Foreign residents account for 7.6% of the total population, with 623,000 inhabitants. The proportion of foreigners in Andalusia is slightly lower than in the rest of Spain, with 11.4%, especially than in the regions of Madrid and Catalonia. However, there are significant differences among the provinces of Andalusia, as migrants tend to be more concentrated on the Mediterranean coast. The impact of immigration and political regulation measures thus depend on the specificities of the local environment. Just over 50% of foreigners are European nationals, 23% come from the American continent and 19.6% from Africa. The British represent the most numerous community, followed by Moroccans and Romanians.

Andalusia was for long a land of emigration because of the critical situation of the job market, mainly concentrated in agriculture. With the end of Francoism and the return of democracy, Andalusians from abroad began to come back home and there was a significant increase in the global number of in-coming migrants. While there had been historical links between Andalusia and neighbouring Morocco, which favoured pendular immigration boosted by trade between the two countries, the proportion of non-EU migrants remained relatively low, in quantitative terms, until the 1990s. This type of immigration has long been neglected and under-estimated by specialists for lack of any precise date as most immigrants were illegal workers. However, new economic and demographic needs in developing sectors of activity such as agriculture and the building sector have contributed to attracting an increasing number of North African immigrants who have settled permanently. From the early 2000s onwards, Moroccan workers have progressively been replaced by a new labour force from Eastern Europe, especially Romania, Ukraine or even Russia. More than any other region in Spain, Andalusia has also been characterised by flows of seasonal immigration, which has led to the emergence of large scale recruitment networks in Eastern European countries, but also in Morocco or Senegal, to a lesser extent. Tens of thousands of immigrant workers have thus periodically come to work in this region.

The specific social needs of these migrant workers with low economic capital and their precarious living conditions explain why the Catholic third sector, mainly concerned by its social mission, has played a specific role in the logic of political regulation in this matter.
b) Local Politicisation of the Immigration Issue in Andalusia: a Religious Perspective?

Considering the growing impact of migration flows in the region, immigration has only recently become a political issue in Andalusia. Indeed it was not until the late 1990s that public action at the local and national level addressed the problem of immigration, especially from non-EU countries. There are several reasons which may explain such a recent acknowledgement by public authorities. First most immigrants live in precarious conditions, often in hiding from public institutions. Secondly they often considered Andalusia only as a stopping-off place in their journey to other countries. Thirdly the economic interest of this abundant and cheap labour force in a strong underground economy may also account for the fact that the problem of citizenship and social rights has not readily appeared as a public concern, in sharp contrast with the action of some social organisations which started mobilisation movements in favour of immigrants’ rights as early as the 1980s.

In 2000, the immigration issue took on a significant political dimension in Andalusia. More generally speaking, the year 2000 may indeed be regarded as a turning point as regards the politicisation of the immigration issue in Spain (Zapata Barrero, 2002). Debates in the Spanish Parliament in 1999 and the voting of the Organic Law 4/2000 directly influenced local politics in the autonomous region. But it was mainly the impact of immigration on the specific local environment which gave this problem a political and conflicting turn. Two events contributed to making it a highly political question in Andalusia: the arrival of *pateras*, these small boats carrying illegally immigrants from Morocco, and the climate of xenophobic violence created by the situation of the migrant workers in Andalusian farms.

In the first case, the ever-increasing number of *pateras* landing on the coast of Andalusia in the 1990s contributed to politicising the immigration issue in two contradictory directions. People could clearly identify those “illegal immigrants” who were at the centre of political debates in Spain. In a sense, the *pateras* made more concretely perceptible the idea that “waves” of immigrants were “invading” the Spanish territory. Conversely they also conveyed the image of a humanitarian drama, in sharp contrast with the image of traffickers and smugglers frequently associated with the “illegals” before the 2000s. Humanitarian and religious organisations in Andalusia developed a rhetoric hinging on the necessity of welcoming illegal immigrants and more globally promoted an approach to the problem based on hospitality (Dorangricchia, Itçaina, 2005).

Xenophobic violence against foreigners, mainly Moroccans, reached a peak in early 2000, with the tragic events of El Ejido in the province of Almeria. Rioters destroyed several shops owned by foreigners, places associated with Islam – mosques, places of worship, Islamic butchers – as well as the premises of some local NGOs known for their action in favour of foreigners. For the first time NGOs’ expertise and know-how and Parliamentary debates

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26 These terms were frequently used by the press in Spain when referring to the arrival of immigrants by sea or the intrusion of other immigrants illegally forcing their way through the protection wall between Morocco and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. “El rumor sobre otro proceso de regularización trae una nueva avalancha de inmigrantes”, *El Mundo*, December 13th, 2000; “El Gobierno culpa a Marruecos de la incesante oleada de pateras”, *El País*, August 22nd, 2001; “Decenas de inmigrantes intentaron anoche un nuevo asalto a la valla fronteriza de Melilla”, *ABC*, September 6th, 2005; “La “segunda ciudad” de Rumania. Rumanos : La avalancha que no cesa”, *El Mundo*, December 2nd, 2007.

27 After the murder of a young girl by a mentally disturbed Moroccan, there were riots against foreigners living in El Ejido and the neighbouring region. These riots lasted several days.
over the adoption of legal measures were superseded by the irruption of the immigration issue in public opinion in both Andalusia and Spain.\(^2\)

Such events, which rapidly took on a national dimension, led to significant political cleavages (Terren, 2003). They brought to the fore the situation of spatial segregation against migrant workers (Checa, 2001). Racist violence also revealed social and ethnic segregation in Spain (Martinez Veiga, 2001). The Andalusian autonomous government, led by PSOE (the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party), accused the local elected representatives of the Popular Party and the Spanish government of exacerbating social unrest in their speeches. The Junta de Andalucia – the autonomous government of Andalusia – had started working on integration policies for immigrants in the late 1990s, in co-operation with some NGOs, and the first plan for the integration of immigrants was adopted less than one year after the El Ejido events (Junta de Andalucia, 2001). Conversely, these tragic events were also used by some to challenge the recently voted law 4/2000, deemed too lax, with a view to implementing more drastic security legislation in order to combat illegal immigration (Barbosa, 2005). Indeed, the Socialist president of the Andalusian government, Manuel Chaves, while condemning xenophobic violence, appealed to the Spanish state and the European Union for more police control against clandestine immigration on the Mediterranean coasts (Delmote, G, 2001). Some authors also developed arguments on the ethnic differences of the Moroccan immigrants which, in their views, made it impossible for some “cultures”, especially Islam, to fully integrate Spanish society. These ideas found a favourable echo among political milieus close to the Popular Party and among farm owners who progressively replaced their Moroccan labourers by European workers. The development of a unilateral immigration policy based on contracts signed in the countries of origin, spurred on by Andalusia from 2001 onwards, also led to favouring immigrants coming from Christian countries in Europe (Gualda Caballero, Ruiz Garcia, 2004; Burchianti, 2007).

In such a context, did religion play a significant role in the politicisation process of the immigration issue in Andalusia? The xenophobic bouts of violence of El Ejidio mainly targeted religious symbols associated with Islam, but it seems that they were more focused on places where Moroccans used to meet than on Islam as a religion per se, even if it was seen as a potential threat. Indeed, political controversies on the immigration issue were initially more centred on “ethnic” than purely religious considerations. However, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and the 11 March 2004 Madrid train bombings contributed to merging the ethnic and religious dimension of the problem. These events spurred on the re-emergence of the political debate on religious pluralism in Spain and Andalusia.

Though historiographers during the Monarchy and Franco’s regime had intimately associated Spanish identity with Catholicism (Pérès, 1999), the return of democracy was accompanied by the political desire to enhance the heritage of medieval Andalusia through the construction of the image of a province where Judaism, Christianity and Islam had cohabited peacefully. The rehabilitation of Arab-Andalusian monuments evidenced the fact that such a glorification of the past was meant to clearly break with the Franco era (Rozenberg, 1997). The rediscovery of Andalusia’s Islamic past was thus deeply associated with the spreading of the

\(^2\) After these tragic events, immigration became a prime concern for the Spanish population as evidenced by the results of an opinion poll conducted by CIS (Centre of Sociological Research)

\(^2\) These arguments, fuelled by a virulent refusal of multiculturalism, were developed in the scientific milieu by Giovanni Sartori and, most notably, by Mikel Azurmendi, an anthropologist. Azurmendi was appointed to the position of president of the national “Forum for the social integration of immigrants” by J. M. Aznar.

\(^3\) It should be noted that the employers’ rhetoric in fact masked a purely economic logic. Indeed Moroccan workers had started to get organised. They went on strike after the El Ejido riots, bringing to a halt agricultural production, in the critical harvesting period (Chattou, 2000).
democratic model in Spain. However, the problem of inter-religious cohabitation was only partially addressed and stereotypes attached to Moroccan immigrants were still deeply-rooted in Spain (Lopez Garcia, 2002). Catholicism remained the main religion and the question of the conspicuous lack of places of worship for the other religions was still acute, especially on account of the growing demographic weight of immigrants in the region. Believers, mainly from the Islamic community, started to ask local authorities for specific zones to bury their dead in the cemeteries of the main Spanish cities, as well as for plots of land to build mosques. These claims resulted in new political controversies, as exemplified by the nagging question of the erection of a mosque in Sevilla – a problem which has been going on for more than two years. The Catholic Church’s consensual approach to inter-religious dialogue and peaceful cohabitation was periodically shaken by internal rivalries spurred on by the emergence of minority religions. The increasingly competitive religious market meant that the Church was not immune from cleavages within its own ranks about the necessity to open up to other religions.

2.2. The Catholic third sector and immigration: religious regulation of politics in-between social action and advocacy

The growing politicisation process of the immigration issue in Spain, and more particularly in Andalusia, obliged the Church to reconsider its own line of action in favour of immigrants. While Catholic organisations could rely on a system of representation that enabled them, more than any other political and religious group, to address the problem of “poor” immigrants, the sudden emergence of the immigration issue in Spanish politics compelled the Church to make new choices in terms of social action and political expression, in spite of its unrivalled and acknowledged expertise in these matters.

a) The genesis of the Catholic third sector’s work with immigrants: a variety of trajectories and lines of action

Catholic organisations started to take special interest in the immigration issue even when there were still marginally few immigrants in Andalusia. However, the concentration of immigrant workers in some areas led to exacerbated social problems, which had a significant impact on the shaping of the local religious organisations’ action. In order to fully apprehend the pioneering work of these groups working with immigrants it is necessary to analyse the genesis of their social action. We can indeed notice various trajectories according to their respective specialisation on such matters within the broader context of the Church’s reflections on social exclusion, and depending on their relations with the Catholic institutions.

First, the Catholic Church could rely on Caritas, an organisation whose mission was to address the problem of exclusion and propose remedial social action. Caritas is an organisation working to provide assistance services to help people; it was thus not really specialised in immigration related issues. However, it had acquired experience and expertise

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31 For an analysis of the situation in Catalonia, see Jordi Garreta Bochaca’s research work (Jordi Garreta Bochaca, 2000).
32 There has been a long-lasting conflict between Junta Islámica, a Muslim organisation, supported by Andalusian left-wing parties, and the diocese of Cordua, supported by the Popular Party, over the “joint” use of the Mosque by Christians and Muslims. “La Junta Islámica reclama al Papa el uso conjunto de la Mezquita de Cordoba”, ABC, December 27th, 2006, “El Episcopado no ve motivos para que los musulmanes reclamen la Mezquita”, El Mundo, January 5th, 2007. There have also been controversies on similar problems between the Catholic Church and other minority Christian groups (the Orthodox Church or the Evangelical Church).
33 For an analysis of the French Catholic Church, see Claire de Galembert’s article (de Galembert, 1994).
through its contacts with immigrant populations. Its strong presence in dioceses, its know-how in matters of social assistance for poor people, its dense network and its financial means predisposed Caritas to having a major role in caring for immigrants’ specific social needs. Its action in favour of immigrants was favoured by the relations between the local Caritas organisations and the pastoral delegations working with immigrants in the Andalusian dioceses. With time, its action developed while specialising in the domain of general social action and assistance. Caritas Andalusia thus set up specific aid programmes for immigrants and managed many reception centres. Caritas is one of the few organisations which can put in place large scale programmes in critical periods. It can tackle specific humanitarian problems, such as the major issue of homelessness among immigrants in some areas and some periods of the year.

This first model of organisation in the domain of immigration is part of the Church’s more global mission of social service. However, some Catholic organisations specialised on immigration issues, as exemplified by ACCEM (Catholic Action Committee for Emigration and Immigration). Even though ACCEM proclaims not to be a denominational organisation to ward off any accusation that its action could be mainly targeted on Catholic immigrants, its links with the Catholic Church and the composition of its executive clearly shows it belongs to the Catholic third sector. It is an old organisation whose initial objective was to help Spanish emigrants. It then catered for the first Polish and Cuban political refugees who arrived in Spain. It took on a more general dimension and worked for immigrants, more generally speaking, in the 1980s before becoming a national organisation in 1991. This trajectory which closely mirrored the history of migration in Spain had a very specific echo in Andalusia which had long remained a region of out-going emigration. Today, ACCEM, whose links with the Church is evidenced by its very name, no longer wants to appear as an organisation intimately linked to the Church’s social action, as illustrated by the scarce references to religion and the Church in its declarations, and by its claims to be non-denominational.

In that respect, the progressive evolution of some organisations towards religious neutrality in their action in favour of immigrants is best exemplified by Andalucía Acoge. This organisation which claims in its founding principles that it is a secular entity cannot thus be easily related to the Catholic third sector. However, most of the various organisations which regroup within Andalucía Acoge came from the Catholic social movement and there was a significant number of priests in this federation. Its links with the Church are hardly perceptible today and the growing professionalisation of this organisation has led it to distance itself from the Church and opt for a specific line of action. Its ideological corpus should rather be related to a more global approach to intercultural action inspired on the model of the existing social assistance groups working with immigrants in Europe. We should note, however, that another major federation helping immigrants in Spain, CEPAIM, which has been joined by some of the founding organisations of Andalucía Acoge, appears to be more deeply marked by the influence of the Catholic Church. Indeed, Reyes Garcia de Castro, chairwoman of Sevilla Acoge, the first organisation created in Andalusia rooted in Catholicism and the experience of its founders in Africa, is today at the head of CEPAIM at the national level.

The different trajectories of these three organisations show how the Catholic Church has occupied a vantage position in the apprehension and treatment of the immigration issue, well ahead of the local and national authorities.
b) Catholic organisations as professional social workers with immigrants

The pioneering positions of the Catholic organisations in the domain of social action meant that their expertise was soon to become indispensable. Owing to the growing politicisation of the immigration issue in Andalusia, political authorities, notably the autonomous government, encouraged closer co-operation with the social organisations with a view to defining the type of social assistance that should be offered to immigrants. The devolution process of social competences made it imperative for the autonomous communities confronted with rising immigration to acquire appropriate means and tools in matters of social action. The incorporation of non-profit-making NGOs into the policy-making process was a general phenomenon in Europe (Rathbeg Smith, Lipsky, 1993). However, the co-operation between public authorities and organisations from the third sector or the private sector is one of the typical features of the Spanish welfare state (Rhodes, 1997). Spain is thus characterised by the activism of third sector organisations, and more particularly Catholic groups, in matters related to the management of immigration (Casey, 1998).

In Andalusia, these organisations were the matrix of a variety of assistance programmes which were to develop even further after the first comprehensive plan for the integration of immigrants was adopted by the autonomous community in 2002. Specific objectives were set and important financial means were allocated for the implementation of new measures. The various initiatives undertaken by the organisations progressively became more standardised, which evidenced the growing professionalisation of the Catholic third sector. Some of these initiatives were based on pre-existing programmes such as the assistance programmes for Andalusian out-going and in-coming immigrants in the early 1980s, for the “ethnic” gypsy minority, or, more basically, for all the poor and excluded populations. However, first-hand experience with immigrants led to the adoption of new practices and the development of new expertise, which hinged on social (emergency accommodation, free meals, …) and legal assistance supervised by social workers and specialised lawyers. This type of action was tailored to the needs of this new community of immigrants living in very precarious conditions. While these organisations had long been specialised in legal assistance for immigrants, it should also be noted that the development of inter-cultural mediation led them to incorporate a number of Moroccans and Eastern Europeans acting as intermediaries.

These social and legal assistance programmes, proved to be the most developed form of assistance for immigrants, with important resources from local and national public authorities (Aparicio, Tornos, 2002). However, the growing proportion of immigrants, notably jobseekers, in Andalusia led these organisations to increasingly play the role of mediators in the job market. This can be explained by several factors: the desire to highlight the significant role of these workers in the underground economy, the emergence of a new type of immigration, notably women and families, new focus on skilled migrant workers and the development of new resources, especially the EQUAL Initiative by the European Union for the promotion of “a better model for working life by fighting discrimination and exclusion”. Special job centres were created where potential employers could meet foreign jobseekers. The organisations collected job offers by canvassing businesses and individuals looking for migrant workers. They often acted as guarantors for the workers, were in charge of follow-up activities and made sure that employers offered good working conditions.

The second aspect of their action pertained to training programmes for the newly-arrived migrants who were low skilled workers in their vast majority. Training sessions were organised in co-operation with the social services of the local municipalities and the
autonomous region. Most jobs were in the sector of personal services and mainly catered for women. Lessons in the fields of hygiene, Spanish cooking, old and nursing homes, infant care and other social services were proposed. All these concerted programmes were clearly aimed to better integrate migrants in the job market.

Owing to the traditionally strong links between the private and public organisations in the management of the welfare state in Spain, joint programmes were rapidly set up in the domain of migrants’ professional integration. The non-profit-making organisations could rely on their expertise in immigration related issues. However, Caritas adopted an ambivalent position as regards the autonomous government’s approach to the management of the immigration flows, notably through the development of temporary legal immigration networks. While acting as an intermediary between migrant workers and employers, Caritas opposed such a utilitarian approach.

The example of Caritas shows the type of dilemma facing these third sector organisations which have become specialised and professional partners in the drafting and implementation of local immigration policies in co-operation with the public authorities.

c) The Catholic third sector’s advocacy on immigration in Andalusia

Enhanced expertise on such specific problems, growing professionalisation of the Catholic third sector and the politicisation of the immigration issue in Andalusia have significantly shaped different trajectories among the organisations, notably on the difficult and problematic question of their role in the implementation of social services for immigrants and the expression of an activist political will for the defence and promotion of immigrants’ rights in Spain (Casey, 1998). While all third sector organisations have been confronted to such a dilemma, it is particularly interesting to analyse the specificities of the Catholic organisations, precisely on account of their religious background. The social mission of Catholic organisations may be apprehended as a religious regulation “from below” of immigration. Indeed, through its action, the Church has gained new legitimacy as a valid interlocutor in the political field as well as enhanced authority in its positions on immigration.

The religious “bottom-up” regulation of immigration is also a significant marker of the Church’s political positions. In Andalusia, in spite of its long experience in its work with immigrants, the Church does not have any special relationship with the public authorities in charge of immigration. Indeed, Caritas is not a member of the “Andalusian Forum on Immigration” organised by the autonomous community - it only attends meetings of the provincial forum of Huelva - contrary to Andalucía Acoge federation and its various components, as well as CEPAIM. Conversely, the Church’s action for immigrants has been extensively relayed to the general public by the media, through articles highlighting the specific and concrete programmes of some local priests and parishes. The media have often insisted on the religious dimension of such individual initiatives, thus conveying the idea of the natural links between Christian ideals and hospitality offered to immigrants. For instance, in an article written on Christmas eve, an El Mundo journalist evokes the action of Friar Isidro Macias, named “padre pateras” (Brother pateras) or the “Apostle of the Strait”, in favour of immigrants landing on the coast of Cadix:

34 Another religious organisation, Benefico social Virgen de la Cabeza, is a member of the provincial forum of Grenada.
“Though there is no Christmas crib in his house, he knows that the land he walks on has become an immense biblical scenario where, tide after tide, the same apocalyptic scenes take place again and again: two continents separated by less than a few miles and united by the “pontificate”; waters as deadly as Herod, and a hospital, the *Punta Europa* in Algeciras, as a saving delivery room for fleeing Africans”35.

Though such biblical metaphors are not systematically used, they are not unusual in the Spanish press. In Andalusia, one of the major charismatic religious figures is undoubtedly José Chamizo, a priest who had been previously appointed as the Ombudsman for Andalusia (*Defensor del Pueblo*) in 1996. His personal and institutional commitments in favour of the migrants contributed widely to publicize the situation of the immigrants. The role of the Church as a moral authority is thus enhanced in a society which, though secularised, is still deeply marked by Catholicism. In other words, assistance programmes for immigrants has been a means for the Catholic Church to maintain shared social representations centred on its ideological corpus.

Media coverage of the action of the Church, which has contributed to giving a specifically Catholic reading to the immigration issue, has been paralleled by political activism, especially from Caritas which, alone or with other organisations, regularly challenge the Andalusian public authorities. Caritas can rely on its long experience with immigrants to further political claims adapted to the specificities of the situation. It often questions the autonomous government and the local municipalities on issues such as the precarious housing conditions or the social needs of the immigrants in Andalusia. The Catholic Church in Andalusia also relays solidarity initiatives for immigrants, as for example the International Day for Migrants’ Rights on December 18th, or the community front against the directive on the return of illegal immigrants - named the “Outrageous Directive” by these organisations - adopted by the European Parliament in June 2008. On these occasions, the Church has been able to make public its positions against the “utilitarian” management of the immigration issue and in favour of a more “solidarist” approach.

**Conclusion**

As exemplified by the Spanish and Andalusian cases, the “influence” of religion on immigration cannot be limited to the institutional changes in the religion-State relations or to merely listing the activities undertaken by the various religious institutions. The question of immigration reveals more global restructuring of the relations between religion and politics. A more systematic analysis of the role of Catholicism should address (a) the internal debates provoked by immigration within the Church - the competition between distinct “regimes of truth”, (b) the theological bases of distinct approaches to pastoral care and social justice action (Hagan, 2006), (c) the role played by transnational Catholic networks and hierarchies, (d) the process of “Europeanization from below” that may emerge between distinct national churches, distinct religions, religious and secular NGOs on this issue.

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