
GLOSSARY

aguantar: a verb meaning to endure, to stand it, to take it, to have stamina, to resist without complaining; it is often used to describe women's traditional role.

alpargatas: traditional rural shoes, especially in the dry parts of Spain; the soles are made of rope, the upper part of cloth.

ambiente: atmosphere, ambience, the type of "feeling" or "vibrations" present in a given context; the concept is usually used in a positive sense and has overtones of friendliness, joy, lots of people, noise, movement, liveliness.

aparar: in Elda, the technical word for sewing the upper pieces of a leather shoe together; the women who do it are called aparadoras.

asociaciones de mujeres vecinales: associations of neighborhood women, independent associations of women only, usually in close cooperation with the neighborhood association of their barrio, and usually covering the same territory.

barrio: ward, part of town, often but not necessarily peripheral, often but not necessarily working class.

bodega: a shop that sells wine and vinegar; the decoration is usually traditional with wine barrels on the walls from which wine is poured into the customers' own containers; a bodega usually functions as a bar, as well. Bodega can also mean wine factory.

cacique: traditionally a local informal leader, usually the richest man in a village or area. In anthropological terminology, a patron. Caciquismo is the Spanish term for patron-client-relationships, especially when they are spoken of as negative. (Cf. clientelismo.) Caciques were often authoritarian and powerful gatekeepers. The people in their areas could not circumvent them in their dealings with outsiders and authorities and were therefore dependent on their good will. The words cacique and caciquismo have connotations of humiliation, arbitrariness and political maneuvering.

calle: literally street; outdoors, urban space; often used as a metaphor for the public sphere, as opposed to casa.

carencia: lack, something missing; especially used about the elementary things that the poor barrios did not have and the early associations fought for: lack of schools, lack of health care, lack of running water, lack of asphalted streets...

casa: house, home, dwelling; often used as a metaphor for the private sphere as opposed to calle.

casa de vecindad: traditional urban working class dwelling, consisting of many rooms, one to a family, arranged around a courtyard where water and cleaning facilities are located. In Madrid such a building is called a corrala.

CDS: Centro Democrático y Social = the Democratic and Social Center, a small centrist party.
clientelismo: the custom or institution of patron-client-relationships. Today the word is usually used as an accusation, its meaning bordering on corruption or unfair practices of favoring kin and friends and the tendency of some leaders to surround themselves with closed circles of people who will support them in exchange for favors.

cofradía: literally fraternity or brotherhood, a cofradía is a grouping within a parish in charge of some part of some religious celebration, for instance of taking care of a certain saint's image and carry it in an annual procession. Cofradías are also called hermandades.

Comunidad, Comunidad autónoma: community, autonomous community. Strong centralism has been the guiding star of the rulers of Spain for centuries. One of the burning issues of the Transition was therefore how to satisfy regional ambitions and still keep the country together. After tense bargaining for several years, Spain embarked on the road towards something similar to timid federalism. The so-called historical nationalities (Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country) obtained a considerable degree of self-government. Other regions were given the opportunity to apply for similar arrangements, and all promptly did. Spain is now divided into seventeen autonomous communities with varying degrees of self-government. The official names vary. Elda and Valencia are situated in the Comunidad Valenciana, Linares and Cordova in Andalucía, Vigo in Galicia, Madrid in the Comunidad Autónoma de Madrid.

consigna: motto, slogan, catchword, instruction. In political contexts, the word denotes a political instruction to sympathizers to work in a certain way or with a certain theme or towards a certain goal. The consigna can be explicit or implicit, open or secret. The word is often used by non-party activists in the neighborhood movement to mean secret instructions from party leaders to party members to try to impose certain themes or structures on the movement, for party rather than movement reasons.

convivencia: being together, sociability; literally: (the experience of) living together. It can also refer to two or more persons living together in the same dwelling.

coordinadora: coordinating committee, a loose structure to ensure some communication and possibly ad hoc coordinated action among a number of associations; in grassroots political activity in Spain there is usually a strong reticence, even fear, of establishing rigid structures, so very often a federation or similar is avoided, but if some coordination is nevertheless desired, a coordinadora can be a solution; sometimes it is a mere question of terms, and in a federation, each association usually has autonomy anyway, but there may be some decisions or norms that are made binding for all; in a coordinadora that is not supposed to happen, and usually it is not meant to be permanent.

desarrollo: see progreso.

evolución: see progreso.

Falange: the usual abbreviation of the name of the one political party allowed during the Franco period. Its official name was much longer (Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS) since it had been formed by several small fascist parties founded in the 1930s.

feria: market or fair, e.g. an annual cattle fair. Very often combined with a fiesta. The annual feria of Cordova is the major city fiesta.

fiesta: party, festivity, holiday; especially, the annual local festivity of most Spanish villages, towns, and barrios.
hacer barrio: to make barrio, to work for ensuring that a barrio becomes or stays a social whole, a community.

hembrismo: a word invented by feminists in Cordova to avoid the common misunderstanding of feminism as female chauvinism. This interpretation is tempting in Spanish, due to the apparent parallel between machismo and feminismo. But macho means male animal, the female counterpart is hembra, so female chauvinism would better be called hembrismo, the Cordovan feminists taught. The word feminism would then mean the struggle for better conditions for women and/or equality and/or deemphasizing of gender as a social category.

IU: Izquierda Unida = the United Left, a coalition of communist and other leftist parties, presently the main political force to the left of PSOE.

machismo, machista: the word machismo has spread over the world as a feminist concept; in Spanish as in other languages it means the ideology and practice of men's domination over women. Machismo is the noun; machista is the adjective, ending in -a both in the masculine and the feminine form. The root is macho, which means male animal. The feminine equivalent, female animal, is hembra. This word is hardly ever used about human beings, except on birth certificates and the like, whereas macho is often used about human beings, especially in colloquial speech, and then usually in a very positive sense, meaning, strong, independent, proud, but sometimes also in an ideologically critical way, meaning old-fashioned, chauvinist, narrow-minded or ridiculously proud. Spanish men, especially young men, often use macho as a form of address or exclamation, much like Americans use "man".

madre mía: literally "my mother!" is a common exclamation of surprise, joy, fear or almost any other strong emotion.

mano izquierda: literally left hand, this is a common phrase to designate women's classic tactics of manipulation, pressure, blackmail, cheating, and seduction to obtain what they want against the will of someone who has the legitimate authority a woman lacks, i.e. usually the husband. This description may sound negative, and mano izquierda has lost some legitimacy, since women today think they should have the right to make their own decisions, but the phrase has mostly rather positive connotations of suave smartness and charming purposefulness.

MC: Movimiento Comunista = the Communist Movement, the principal one among the many small parties to the left of PCE during the transition, usually considered Maoist or Trotskyist, and absorbing over the years several other parties of such tendencies; it has not joined the IU.

movimiento asambleario: assembly movement, the local name for a series of protest meetings and political mobilizations in Elda in the early years of the transition.

OIC: one among the many small parties to the left of PCE during the transition. Cf. MC.

paella: a rice dish flavored with saffron and including some vegetables plus either chicken or seafood or both; it is cooked in a special wide flat pan also called a paella; it is a traditional and nowadays festive dish in the Valencia region, where collective festivities often center on giant paellas cooked over wood fires in pans several yards in diameter.

PCE: Partido Comunista de España = the Communist Party of Spain, the main communist party in Spain since the 1930's; it usually obtained between 4 and 12% of the votes in national elections between 1977 and 1983, and in the 1990s it was the main party in the leftist coalition Izquierda Unida, IU, which it joined in 1986.
peña, peñista: a peña is a group of friends, sometimes formalized into an association, sometimes a fan club of some sports star, etc. In Cordova, peñas are more institutionalized and have a special meaning, cf. chapter 12. Peñista is the adjective, denoting anything that pertains to a peña or to what is also called the peña way of life. It is also a noun, denoting a person who is a member of a peña.

peseta: the Spanish monetary unit until 2001; during the 1990s it had difficulties and was devalued several times. In 1994 there were about 130 pesetas to a US dollar. From January 1st, 2002, Spain forms part of the euro area. The exchange was set at 1.66 pesetas = one euro.

picareseca: a set of actions that break norms, usually even laws, in order to obtain personal advantage, but that are common enough and not considered very serious, even though the word is usually used as an accusation.

poder de convocatoria: power of attraction, usually used about the movement's capacity to make a lot of people, even non-members, respond to its campaigns or calls for action.

PP: Partido Popular = the Popular Party, the main conservative party, with very varying electoral results, under various names, since the transition; still struggling to free itself from Francoist personalities, ideological inheritances and images, it won the national elections in March 1996 by a very narrow margin, but then stayed in power until March 2004.

progreso: literally progress; this word is used as a general positive word by people who consider themselves progressive, progresistas. It was a key word in leftist and general anti-dictatorship discourses during the 1970's and early 1980's. Later it became much less popular, but it retains its basic connotations. It is connected to ideas of evolution, evolución, and development, desarrollo. The common view of these matters is that things will become better unless someone hinders it. Change for the better is a natural process, produced by the passing of time itself. This may seem contradictory for people who are struggling to improve things, but as they see it, it is rather proof that they are right, they are on the winning side, they have not let themselves be fooled by the obviously wrong, irrational, etc. ideas of conservative forces.

PSOE: Partido Socialista Obrero Español = the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, the traditional socialist or social democratic party of Spain, founded a century ago, re-launched in the early 1970's. It has been the largest party of the country since then, and it governed uninterruptedly and usually with comfortable majorities from 1982 to 1996. PSOE activists were seldom seen in the neighborhood movement before the mid-1980s but at the time of my fieldwork their presence was growing in a way that had many activists worried. In 2002 independents seemed to dominate once again.

PT: Partido del Trabajo, one among the many small parties to the left of PCE during the transition. Cf. MC.

reivindicación: claim, struggle, goal, issue; especially used about each concrete concern or improvement or long-term goal of an association or party program or similar; the adjective reivindicativo is used about a person or an association with a strong fighting spirit, as opposed to a sociable or merely reformist spirit.

retraso, retrasado: backwardness, being behind the times. Common word for what people consider old-fashioned, traditional and wrong. It is not usually used by people who defend traditions, but it can be, e.g. "I think a lot of old things are beautiful, but naturally I don't mean the retrasado things, but..." Cf. progreso.
romería: religious outing, often to some saint's image in a chapel outside the village, usually with a picnic.

salón: the best room in a dwelling; sometimes it is the living room in the sense that the family uses it as its common room, but often it is rather a room that is seldom used except for special visits and occasions.

señorito: diminutive of señor, so it can mean a young man (especially as term of address from a servant), but usually it refers to a man of any age of the upper classes. It refers especially, in the plural, los señoritos, to the Andalusian landowning upper class.

sevillanas: one kind of flamenco music and dance, originally from Seville.

transición: transition, the usual label for the period of change from the Franco dictatorship to something else, hopefully a democracy; it is usually considered to have begun soon but not immediately after Franco's death in November 1975 (for instance in July 1976, when Adolfo Suárez was appointed prime minister, or in fall 1976 when Suárez made the Francoist parliament vote itself out of existence, or December 1976 when there was a referendum with semi-democratic methods on political change, or April 1977 when the Communist party, as the last of the major political forces, was legalized, or June 1977 when the first reasonably democratic general elections were held), and to have ended a few years later (for instance in 1978 when the new Constitution was approved, or in 1979 when the last Franco-appointed executives were replaced, or in 1982 when the country proved to itself that it could change government without violence, and even the Army accepted a socialist government, or in 1986 when Spain was accepted into the European Common Market, or in 1996 when the government changed again, this time in the conservative direction, and the party that won the elections seemed to have managed to wash off most of the stigma of its relationship to the dictatorship).

vecino: the word means both neighbor (living near) and inhabitant (living in a certain place). In the neighborhood movement, the two meanings are inextricably mixed and color each other. Perhaps inhabitant would be the best translation most of the time, in a strictly denotative sense, but I translate it throughout this book as neighbor to convey some of its connotations of closeness and solidarity.

vecinal: adjective derived from vecino: "of the neighbors" or "of the neighborhood". Cf. also asociaciones de mujeres vecinales.

vocalía: the word means approximately committee; it is used to designate the small working groups of an association that do most of the practical work between board meetings; usually it consists of two or three board members, but it can also have members who are not on the board, and a vocalía could consist of only one person; most neighborhood associations have 4–8 vocalías, commonly of women, of urban planning, of cultural activities, of sports, of youth, etc. Demonstrations, campaigns and festivities are more often handled by temporary ad hoc committees.

voluntariado: an organization of volunteers for community service; or the people working as volunteers; a fashionable word, as goal or identification, in certain sectors of the neighborhood movement in 1994

zapato: shoe; shoe-makers are called zapateros, zapateras (but cf. aparar)