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THE SPANISH CONTEXT

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JOSÉ LUIS RODRÍGUEZ ZAPATERO, prime minister of Spain,² has affirmed on several occasions that he endorses and is inspired by the political philosophy of civic republicanism, and specifically by the work of Philip Pettit. As Zapatero has stated: “this modern political philosophy called republicanism ... is very important nourishment to what we want for our country” (Prego 2001, 166). Consequently, both civic republicanism and Pettit’s name have been present in the Spanish media and debates in recent years, being widely and critically discussed by both the Left and the Right. José Andrés Torres Mora, one of Zapatero’s closest advisers, who is also a sociologist and deputy in the Spanish Congress, describes Pettit’s influence in these terms: “Philip Pettit provided us with the appropriate grammar to furnish our political intuitions, to express the kind of proposals and dreams we had in mind for Spain. Pettit’s republicanism has been our north star” (Torres Mora 2008).

This is the first time in recent history, to my knowledge, that any political leader has unambiguously embraced civic republicanism. Some obvious questions raised then are: Why did Zapatero commit himself to such a political philosophy just after his 2000 election as Secretary General of the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español or PSOE)? Why did Zapatero feel the need to engage a concrete political philosophy? And why has Pettit’s theory been considered “important nourishment,” “the appropriate grammar,” and the “north star” for Zapatero’s poli-

cies in Spain? These are some of the questions I am going to address in the present chapter, as I rehearse the main events in the history of Zapatero's Spain relative to his endorsement of such a political philosophy.³ The chapter will set the scene for the rest of the book, particularly for chapters 3 and 4.

Zapatero's commitment might be surprising to many people—as surprising as it was in Spain in 2000. Yet it made sense in the context of the new millennium. After three decades of neoliberal dominance and the random mixing of neoliberal ideas with more traditional social democratic commitments, as in the case of Tony Blair's Third Way, social democracy was faced with an ideological crisis. In this impoverished context, civic republicanism (or civicism, as Pettit has also called it) has obvious attractions as a way of grounding social democracy. It is based on the value of freedom, offering a normative philosophy that challenges neoliberalism or libertarianism in its own preferred terms.⁴ In endorsing civic republicanism, Zapatero opposed libertarianism and right-wing liberalism more generally, as well as the Third Way and other philosophical ways of rethinking social democracy. He opted for a modest but powerful new foundation for the Left.

In what follows I shall speak frequently of the civic republican ideal of freedom as nondomination. The notion is fully explained in chapter 2, but it may be useful to offer a brief characterization here. Freedom as nondomination is contrasted, in Pettit's work, with freedom as noninterference. Two points explain the contrast. First, you may enjoy freedom as nondomination and yet suffer some interference, such as the interference of coercive law. That sort of interference will not reduce your freedom to the extent that the law is under your control as a member of the citizenry and does not impose an alien will: it is nonarbitrary, to use a favorite republican phrase. But, as you may suffer interference without being dominated so, to go to the second point of contrast, you may be dominated—you may be subject to the will of others—without suffering any actual interference. This will happen to the extent that others can impose their will, should they take against your pattern of choice, but do not do so because of being content with

your choices. What you choose in such a situation, you choose by their leave. It may be sheer luck that you do not attract their interference, and that you enjoy their leave to choose as you do, or it may be the product of a self-censoring strategy; you may shape your choices so as to keep them sweet.

Subjection to the arbitrary will of others is exemplified in Roman tradition by the position of the servant or *servus* in relation to the master or *dominus*; hence the talk of freedom as nondomination. The ideal of freedom as nondomination raises a dual challenge for the state. The state should provide protection against the private forms of domination that people may suffer as a result of disadvantage in any resources, legal, educational, financial, contractual, or cultural. Yet at the same time the state should be nondominating in how it relates to its people, giving them constitutionally and democratically mediated control over the policies and initiatives it adopts. It will have to interfere in their economic and other affairs in order to provide protection against domination, but the interference should be subject to popular control in a way that makes it nonarbitrary.

This ideal had strong appeal for Mr. Zapatero, as the interview in chapter 4 makes clear. It means that freedom is deeply connected with equality on the one hand, and with democracy on the other. As we shall see, Mr. Zapatero makes frequent reference to this ideal of freedom, presenting it not as something that thrives in the absence of government, but as an ideal that requires both the engagement of government in people's lives, and people's active contestation and vigilance. One particular aspect of the civic republican tradition that obviously caught Mr. Zapatero's attention was the eyeball test to which Pettit had drawn attention in his book (1997, 166; see also chapter 2 in this volume). According to this test you enjoy freedom in relation to others—to a particular other or to others as represented in a group or in a government—only insofar as you can look them in the eye, without fear or deference, with a shared consciousness of this equal status. You can command the respect of others and enjoy the dignity of an equal among equals.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Spain has had two different socialist prime ministers in its recent democratic history: Felipe González and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero,⁵ both from the Partido Socialista Obrero Español.⁶ Felipe González led the country for almost fourteen years, from 1982 to 1996, following a classic social democratic ideology, at least during his first three terms.⁷ His popularity and charisma made it possible for him to win four consecutive elections.⁸ Among his achievements, the most noteworthy are the consolidation of democracy, his contribution to the development of a nascent welfare state in Spain,⁹ the modernization of the country, and Spain's entry to the European Economic Community (now the European Union) in 1986 and to NATO in 1988. His excellent connections with European leaders, especially with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the President of the French Republic François Mitterrand, aided in positioning Spain on the international forefront, making it more respected and better known around the world. But not all was well and good. A number of serious grievances contributed to an unpleasant and bitter end to González' political life. There was harsh opposition from Spanish labor unions, giving rise to several general strikes, some serious episodes of institutional corruption which came to light mainly during his last term, a public charge of collusion or even complicity with state terrorism directed mainly against the ETA (the Basque terrorist group),¹⁰ and a highly controversial privatization of the major public industrial and energy companies.

In 1996, in his fifth election since he was elected in 1982 (his seventh election in total), González was defeated by José María Aznar, who had brought new life to the Partido Popular (PP), the main center-right party in Spain.¹¹ However, because González still maintained a certain degree of popularity, the PP was able to capture only 39% of the votes, just one point ahead of the PSOE, giving Aznar, once elected, a tiny majority in the Congress of Deputies. This obliged him to negotiate in order to reach agreements with other parliamentary groups, mainly the Basque and Catalan nationalist parties, to be elected as prime minister and to pass the

government's legislative initiatives.¹² This situation probably explains why Aznar's first term was a period of slight reform and smooth transition. But Aznar led the PP to a second and much greater victory in 2000, winning 44% of the votes, ten points ahead of the PSOE, and obtaining an (absolute) majority of deputies. This strengthened his government and allowed him to rule freely and implement his agenda.

Helped by the creation of the main right-wing think tank in Spain, FAES, the PP in the Aznar era held two basic ideological allegiances: libertarianism and Catholic conservatism.¹³ On the one hand, Aznar openly admired the way Ronald Reagan's and Margaret Thatcher's governments had applied neoliberal or libertarian ideas, deregulating markets and abstaining from intervention in a manner favored by the right-wing liberals in his party. On the other hand, Aznar maintained strong ties to conservative Spanish circles and identified with the American neoconservative movement connected with George W. Bush; indeed he became one of Bush's closest international friends and allies. As I will explain later, one of Aznar's most contested political decisions during his second term was to engage Spain in the second war in Iraq.¹⁴ The most applauded achievements were the good macroeconomic indicators—a much lower unemployment rate, a zero budget deficit, very low inflation—the privatization of the last large state-owned companies, and the introduction of several tax cuts.

All this background is relevant because, as I will explain soon, one of Zapatero's first priorities was to differentiate himself from both González and Aznar. The PSOE was suffering a serious crisis in the post-González years, basically due to a lack of clear and unitary leadership.¹⁵ There were several internal divisions in the party that finally crystallized after the PSOE's huge electoral defeat on March 12, 2000.¹⁶ A few months later, at the thirty-fifth PSOE conference, the party had to elect a new secretary general, and there was a common perception that a complete renewal was required. Different groups in the party presented their own candidates: namely, José Bono, representing the traditional *aparato* still influenced by González; Matilde Fernández, representing the *reformista* sector; Rosa Díez, then a deputy in the European Par-

liament and a very well-known Basque politician; and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, supported by a recently constituted minority group “Nueva Vía” (“New Way”), formed by young members of the PSOE who had not taken part in any of González’ governments.¹⁷ Zapatero had been a deputy in congress since 1989—when he was only 26—and had been very active there, but he was practically unknown at that time to Spaniards, and even to his own party. Despite his outsider status in the race, however, he won the election.¹⁸

Once elected as secretary general on July 23, 2000, Zapatero gave his first address to the party conference, expressing some hopeful substantive commitments and previewing his personal style; both things would characterize his political performance later. For this reason, the speech deserves some attention here. The substantive commitments endorsed can be reduced to the values of freedom and democracy, and they were complemented by a personal style that emphasized the virtues of dialogue and a “good mood or disposition.” But perhaps the most important idea underlying the whole address was the necessity of change: change for the party itself and change for Spanish society as a whole.¹⁹ Zapatero, as the new socialist leader, needed to differentiate himself from González and from an administration that had left a legacy of corruption scandals, suspicions of connivance with state terrorism, high unemployment rates, and economic crisis.

In this context Zapatero flew solo: “beyond today, we have a lot of things to do, a lot of things to live. The best part of our lives is not in our *backpack*, in our *past*; the best day in our lives is still to come” (Rodríguez Zapatero 2000).²⁰ There was to be change, then, but not abrupt and disruptive change: “you have clearly demanded a change and I am decisively committing myself to make it possible. But don’t forget, don’t ever forget, that it must always be a *tempered change*” (Rodríguez Zapatero 2000).²¹

The two substantive fundamental values expressed in this speech were participatory, deliberative democracy and freedom, and in his view they were related to each other as well as to solidarity. This meant a departure from the usual ideological discourse in

González' PSOE, which had focused more centrally on equality. The new departure was present in Zapatero's view, even before he had explicitly endorsed civic republicanism:

We are going to deepen democracy: more participation, more transparency, but also more responsibility because democracy is precisely the free reflection of the people's will.... We want, therefore, an active and cohesive democracy ... a democracy that has recovered the value of the citizenry and strengthens the commitment of all. This is what defines us [the socialists], this is what distinguishes us: our passion for solidarity and the realization of freedoms. (Rodríguez Zapatero 2000)²²

The "value of the citizenry" and the ideals of "political participation" and "responsibility," according to Zapatero, were intertwined with the value of dialogue and deliberation, as they were with the ideal of freedom: "this *is* the socialist tradition, and even the socialist instinct: to fix problems through discussion of ideas, and then, at the end, enjoy freedoms" (Rodríguez Zapatero 2000). The emphasis on political dialogue was expressive of a more general but characteristic style, associated with attitudes of respect and tolerance.²³ The essence of this style can be found in the popular motto Zapatero constantly applied to himself for many years when confronting the Right: *el talante* (the *good mood* or *disposition*). In this vein, he proposed that his opposition to Aznar's government was to be "loyal, constructive and useful," a tempered and respectful style in stark contrast to the rude and, at times, somewhat harsh style of Aznar and of many members of Aznar's government; a new style ultimately characterized by what has been called his "endemic optimism" and a promise of hope.²⁴

Only four years after the electoral defeat of Felipe González, in the midst of a deep crisis in his own party, and immediately after Aznar's huge electoral victory, Zapatero sought in these statements to differentiate himself from both González' legacy and Aznar's style. He proposed a tempered change, based on solid new substantive ideas of freedom and democracy in order to renovate and modernize Spanish social democracy, and a new *talante* for re-

spectful dialogue and democratic deliberation. To finish this quick overview of the political background surrounding Zapatero's endorsement of civic republicanism, let me now turn briefly to the general ideological moment of the Left in Europe.

European social democracy, based on a Keynesian welfarist view and virtually hegemonic since the end of the Second World War, was perceived as being in crisis or at least as requiring a deep renewal, as was Spanish social democracy, which traditionally mirrored the European model. Among the factors contributing to the widespread perception of failure of this model, we find the great influence of Ronald Reagan's and Margaret Thatcher's neoliberalism during the 1980s, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Iron Curtain at the end of that decade, along with the subsequent loss of an ideological point of reference,²⁵ and the economic crisis of welfare states in Europe at the beginning of the 1990s. This perception was so extensive that Margaret Thatcher coined a famous phrase, which became her mantra, the acronym for which was TINA: "There is no alternative."²⁶ She maintained that whatever the problems and imperfections of the free market and the state's abstention from intervention, there was no alternative to neoliberalism or libertarianism: no alternative, in effect, to widespread deregulation and the minimal state. This simple yet influential idea undermined the ideological basis of the welfare state and offered a powerful conservative philosophy that characterized most right-wing governments in Europe in the early 1990s and influenced many of their left-wing opponents; it was a philosophy associated with economists and thinkers such as Milton Friedman, Friedrich Hayek, and Robert Nozick.

But in the late 1990s a number of social democratic leaders took office in several European countries. To mention only the most important: in 1997 Tony Blair and Lionel Jospin were elected prime ministers of the United Kingdom and France, respectively; and in 1998 Gerhard Schroeder was elected chancellor of Germany.²⁷ All of them found a world dominated by neoliberalism and faced the necessity to rethink social democracy and reform the traditional welfare state as a response to the right-liberal challenges.²⁸ In those years, the aim of "modernizing the Left" became

a strict requirement for any progressive leader in Europe. The best-known response to this requirement was Tony Blair's Third Way, a doctrine designed by the distinguished sociologist Anthony Giddens (1994, 1998).

As its very name points out, this doctrine was presented as a sort of midway point between right-liberalism and social democracy. According to Blair, the Third Way was not intended to split the difference between Right and Left, but claimed to be a "modernized social democracy ... founded on the values which have guided progressive politics for more than a century—democracy, liberty, justice, mutual obligation and internationalism."²⁹ One of this new doctrine's central aims was to generate widespread social agreement between the private and the public sectors, between the Right and the Left, between employers and employees. The object of such agreement was to create a "positive welfare system" granting some of the traditional protection to the disadvantaged, but avoiding free-rider abuses and encouraging autonomy and private initiative (Giddens 1998, 128). To make possible such an agreement with the Right, and in addition to the alleged values mentioned above, the Third Way was an unashamedly pragmatist doctrine; that is, it was an approach to public management whose agenda was "output driven," not "ideologically driven" (Temple 2000), not excessively committed to principles. It tried to respond to popular demands rather than to put a previous ideology-driven agenda into practice.³⁰ And it supported totally contextual arrangements that might be viewed as simply opportunistic and not easy to export to other countries or generalize to other situations. This commitment was certainly successful in its objective of being compatible with the Right, to the extent that it was even endorsed by the extreme right-wing Austrian leader Jörg Haider. But the question was whether it entailed any social democratic principle at all, or was "no more than election rhetoric, a marketing ploy with little substance," as some have argued (Vincent 1998, 48–58). Some even accused it of being an abdication to neoliberalism, "framed by and moving on terrain defined by Thatcherism" (Hall 1998). This feeling was captured by the historian Eric Hobsbawm in saying that Blair was no more than "Thatcher in trousers."³¹

THE ENDORSEMENT OF CIVIC REPUBLICANISM

Because the Third Way became the most prominent attempt to renew social democracy in the 1990s, it was natural for the supporters of Nueva Vía to look in that direction when they began to organize Zapatero's PSOE internal election campaign for secretary general in 2000. They were also proposing an ideological renovation of social democracy, and actually began to use some of the Third Way's ideas in shaping their program, particularly the claim for the center position in politics and the emphasis on the responsibility of the citizenry. Even the group's name resembled that of the British doctrine. Nevertheless, these figures soon realized that the Third Way was not the kind of philosophical grounding they required for Spain; and this for two reasons. The first reason for discontent was that the Third Way did not sufficiently differentiate them from González.³² As the would-be deputy prime minister in Zapatero's government, María Teresa Fernández de la Vega, declared: "The Third Way in Spain was already done by González. And then we find the new way, the modernizing impulse, or whatever expression you prefer; 21st-century socialism: Zapatero's one" (de Toro 2007, 59).³³ As acknowledged by Zapatero, in the interview reproduced in chapter 4: "we were asked if we were going to follow Blair's way. We were the next generation of Spanish socialists, and were obliged to go beyond Felipe [González]" (see chapter 4). The second reason for discontent with the Third Way was that Zapatero and Nueva Vía were looking for a more refined and principled approach to social democracy—a solid ground for their political intuitions—and an approach that would connect with the writings and ideas of the first socialists in Spain, from whom they had drawn inspiration. The Third Way's pragmatism and ambiguity over neoliberalism made it unsatisfactory for these purposes.³⁴

On October 19, 2000, shortly after his election as secretary general of the PSOE, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero gave a lecture at the Club Siglo XXI, a prestigious intellectual forum in Madrid, with the aim of delineating the content of his "new socialism." There was a great deal of uncertainty and anticipation, in both

the media and the civil society, a completely understandable reaction since, as pointed out above, Zapatero was a virtual unknown and he was facing the enormous challenge of renewing the PSOE. He and the Nueva Vía group were proposing an ideological transformation of social democracy in Spain. Thus, one of the most important aspects expected of Zapatero's speech was to clarify his ideological grounds, or to give at least a clue as to the direction that this transformation would take.

Along lines similar to those followed in his first address to the PSOE three months earlier, he advocated political aims such as the following: modernizing Spain; renewing social democracy; introducing a new style in politics based on respect and dialogue; ensuring authentic equality of opportunity to everyone; attending primarily to the most disadvantaged; and giving priority to public education as the most appropriate means to ensure the rectification of social inequalities and promote the autonomy of individuals. Zapatero also emphasized the idea that the twenty-first century "must be the beginning of an era of sovereign individuals, of a truly empowered citizenry, able to choose and build its own destiny," in a context of more democracy and more respect for freedom (quoted by Papell 2008, 32). These two values—freedom and democracy—were again at the center of his discourse; the goal of empowering the citizenry appeared for the first time. Zapatero seemed to be completely conscious of the sort of values he wanted to pursue if he won the election, and the whole speech was built around them.

But there was still a problem: he had yet to find an adequate and articulated philosophy for grounding such values. And perhaps for that reason he used a very ambiguous and polemic label for referring to his ideological stance, and by doing so caused considerable concern in Spain. His leadership in the PSOE, he asserted, was going to be "deeply and authentically liberal or, if you prefer, libertarian (*libertario*), and radically promoting individuals' equality" (quoted by Papell 2008, 32).³⁵ The adjective *libertario* in Spanish can mean two very different things, both of them quite alarming in a speech by the new social democratic leader in Spain, when referring to his proposed ideological renewal of Spanish social de-

mocracy. These two meanings are “anarchist” and far-right “libertarian.”³⁶ Thus, the consequent polemic generated in the Spanish media increased the pressure on Zapatero to find a new philosophical basis for his ideas about the future of social democracy.

This was the context in which José Andrés Torres Mora, a sociologist and member of Nueva Vía, and someone very close to Zapatero, encouraged him to read Philip Pettit’s book *Republicanism*. The republican tradition, he thought, could offer Spanish social democracy a solid philosophical basis. Zapatero read the book and was soon convinced that this doctrine was a good fit with his own principles and intuitions about freedom and democracy. In the words already quoted from Torres Mora (2008), “Philip Pettit provided us with the appropriate grammar to furnish our political intuitions, to express the kind of proposals and dreams we had in mind for Spain. Pettit’s republicanism has been our north star.” It is not that Zapatero and his colleagues were suddenly persuaded to be republican. They already cherished, at least broadly speaking, the values promoted by republicanism—freedom, equality, democracy, and the empowerment of the citizenry—as the rhetoric of Zapatero’s first speeches shows. But their objectives were not sufficiently articulated. What they lacked was precisely the sort of philosophical elaboration and consistency that Pettit’s book offered them. And contrary to some criticisms, as I will argue later in this chapter, civic republicanism was not a strange doctrine unconnected to Spain’s own political or intellectual tradition. In Zapatero’s own terms, Pettit’s book “clearly and systematically presents an old tradition of thought that is not foreign to us. Moreover, it has a practical side to it that I find extraordinarily useful for political work” (chapter 4).³⁷

A few weeks after the lecture at the Club Siglo XXI, Zapatero publicly endorsed civic republicanism and acknowledged the influence of Pettit’s work on him. Some time afterward, in an interesting interview with *El Mundo*, one of the most important newspapers in Spain with a right-wing orientation, Zapatero dug deeper into this idea, trying to differentiate his civic republicanism from other competing social democratic doctrines, such as Blair’s Third Way and Jospin’s new socialism³⁸:

The modern political philosophy called republicanism ... is very important nourishment to what we want for our country. I think that socialism must make an intellectual effort to think about the politics for the 21st century: the varieties of political organization, the structure of the political system, the channels for participation and for fostering something truly republican: the civic virtues manifested in political behavior and public debate, an attitude of great tolerance for individual autonomy, about new ways of living together, about now emergent values; and a strong defense of politics as a real instrument for changing people's lives, not to offer them an abstract new world, but to make everyone's world better and better, and to allow them to participate in defining it. (Prego 2001)

The interviewer highlighted Zapatero's defense of freedom as a central value and then asked him how in his view freedom could be reconciled with the Left, since promoting it seemed to produce social inequalities. This was Zapatero's reply:

The pursuit of freedom, of the human beings' capacity of choice in their own lives, is the ultimate end of the best progressive ideology. But to make this possible the value of equality must play its own role. For people to be politically free, they must be equal under the law. I see equality as an instrument for people's freedom.

Equality is always presumed to be a value of the Left; it is our essence ... [but] I am trying to recover the recognition of socialism's best origins: a progressive thought that values freedom as well as equality, and one that does not propose uniformity, but recognition of diversity. This is what it means to be republican. (Prego 2001)

What Zapatero was trying to emphasize is that freedom is neither alien to the socialist tradition, nor needs to be at odds with equality. This idea was actually captured by a simple and traditional dictum in Spanish socialism that he emphatically employed: "socialism is freedom" (de Toro 2007, 210). According to Zapatero, freedom is closely connected not only with equality, but also with democracy and with the empowerment of the citizenry. To have "good democratic patterns," for him, is to have "good patterns of freedom in any place of the community," to give freedom

to women, to those “who do not share the sexual orientation of the majority,” and so on. This is why he takes freedom to be “the most creative idea” in politics (de Toro 2007, 211), as the best way for “citizens to combat public and private despotism” (Campillo 2004, 301).³⁹

Armed with this particular philosophy, Zapatero acted as the leader of the PSOE, in opposition to Aznar’s government, for that entire term (2000–4) of the Congress of Deputies. These years were devoted to the tasks of reconstructing the party, consolidating the new philosophy adopted by the PSOE, raising a new style in the opposition, open to dialogue and agreement, and preparing for the election in 2004.⁴⁰ His performance in the debates on the state of nation⁴¹ confirmed his commitment to this particular interpretation of freedom and democracy, and gave him the opportunity to gain confidence and assertiveness. Spaniards, according to polls, considered Zapatero the winner in some of these debates, even though Aznar’s popularity was still very high. As I said earlier, Aznar’s government was achieving excellent macroeconomic indicators at that time. Probably the most difficult issue for the PP government was the massive popular rejection of Spain’s participation in the Iraq War. A number of demonstrations were held in several Spanish cities, protesting against what was considered a war contrary to international law. The most massive ones were on February 15, 2003, with three million participants in Madrid and Barcelona alone.⁴² These demonstrations contributed to a wide rejection of Aznar’s administration in some sectors of the citizenry, though he remained very popular in others. As the election approached, his successor as the PP candidate for Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, was still ahead in the polls.⁴³

On March 11, 2004, three days before the election, Madrid suffered an Al-Qaeda terrorist attack where 191 people were killed and 1,858 injured. It was the worst terrorist attack in the entire history of Spain. Al Qaeda claimed it to be a response to the Spanish participation in the invasion of Iraq. The management of the crisis by the government was, according to many analysts, obscure and manipulative. The government’s spokesman, Miguel Ángel Acebes, continually reiterated the hypothesis that it was an ETA

attack, concealing the first evidence which had clearly pointed to Al Qaeda.⁴⁴ Very soon the international press (CNN, *The Times*, Radio France International, the *New York Times*) began to announce that Al Qaeda was responsible for the attack, provoking outrage and spontaneous protests by many sectors in Spain against the government's management and representation of the crisis.⁴⁵ It is widely accepted by analysts that this terrorist attack and the response of the government shifted the outcome of the election: the polls beforehand had showed a slight majority in favor of the Partido Popular, but the PSOE finally won the election with 43% of the votes, obtaining 164 seats in Congress, while the PP won 38% of votes and 148 seats.⁴⁶ With these results, the PSOE became the largest party in the Congress of Deputies, and was able to present José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero as a candidate for prime minister through the congressional investiture or nomination process.

NOMINATION PROCESS AND FIRST CONTACTS WITH PETTIT

On April 16, 2004, Zapatero was elected prime minister by the Spanish Congress of Deputies with 183 votes (out of 350), having the support of his own party as well as five smaller parties represented in the chamber.⁴⁷ His *discurso de investidura*—the speech opening the investiture or nomination process in the congress—contained an abundance of philosophical references, achieving a level of abstraction that is not usual in the Spanish chamber.⁴⁸ This nomination speech is usually of political interest since it possesses an important symbolic dimension: it contains the candidate's public declaration of his political goals for governing the country for the next four years. But for the first time in the Spanish chamber, a candidate for prime minister was articulating a program based on the values of freedom as nondomination and deliberative democracy, in a solemn representation of his commitment to civic republicanism.

In the first part of the speech (April 8), Zapatero introduced his idea of a “decent country,” one “which redistributes the wealth it

generates in a balanced way; decent because its citizens act with solidarity with those who need it most.”⁴⁹ Furthermore, he highlighted the two most important features of “our democracy”: “individual freedom and social solidarity” (Rodríguez Zapatero 2004b, 7). In the following sessions of the speech (April 9 and 15), five crucial axes of his program were developed: “the renovation of the public life; a European and Europeanist foreign policy; economic development based on education, research, and innovation, thus creating stable jobs; new social policies oriented to the new necessities of persons and families; and the development and extension of civil and political rights, and of the value of equality to live together in an advanced way” (Rodríguez Zapatero 2004c, 18).

The first of these axes was presented as an absolute hallmark of his future government. It stressed the significance of having a new political style based on democratic dialogue, of “revitalizing Parliament,” of practicing “political pedagogy,” of regulating public mass media, of ensuring transparency and citizen access to institutional information, and so on.⁵⁰ The other axes were related to republican values as well; namely, the need to improve and strengthen education (including civic education for citizens), the development and extension of individual rights, and the goal of ensuring equality (between men and women, between heterosexuals and homosexuals) (Rodríguez Zapatero 2004c, 16–23). The idea of freedom as nondomination played a central role in the speech. And Zapatero was fully aware that this kind of freedom is only possible in a civic democracy with active and critical citizens, characterized by pluralism and respect; one in which such citizens are able to be involved in “constant democratic deliberation” and to participate in politics every day.⁵¹ The speech concluded with these eloquent words:

Your Honors, I promised a tempered change for a time of citizens. To this end, if I obtain your trust, I will rule with resoluteness in the principles, through dialogue and for hope.... The laws I am going to promote will pursue the aim of no one living under *arbitrary domination*. In Cervantes’ words, a government of “mar-

row and substance,” a government that accompanies its citizens in their problems and dreams because some utopias deserve to be dreamt. Perhaps we will not attain them completely, but they will be the signposts on the path we have to walk. (Rodríguez Zapatero 2004c, 24)⁵²

Zapatero took office in the Moncloa, the residence and office of the Spanish prime minister, on April 17, 2004. His first, well-known decision, as widely promised during the campaign, was to withdraw the peacekeeping troops from Iraq, abandoning a war that he had denounced as unjust and in breach of international laws; he did this, it must be remembered, at the cost of jeopardizing the relationship with the United States, or at least with the people leading its government.⁵³ Not so well known was another move: he invited Philip Pettit, his mentor (as he was called by the Spanish media), to come to Spain. In July 2004, Pettit participated in several workshops in Madrid and afterward in Barcelona.⁵⁴ He lectured on the republican principles of government, explaining the content and implications of the central principle of freedom as nondomination, as well as its general requirements in terms of constitutionalism, self-government, rule of law, and civic virtue and engagement.

In one of these lectures, organized and funded by the Vodafone Foundation in the beautiful *Círculo de Bellas Artes*, a solemn cultural institution in Madrid, Pettit was hosted by Zapatero himself (this was their first personal meeting).⁵⁵ In this and other appearances, Pettit introduced the term “civicism” in order to avoid a general misunderstanding in Spain concerning the word “republicanism.”⁵⁶ This term was subsequently translated into Spanish differently depending on the medium or the speaker: the alternatives used were *civismo*, *ciudadanismo*, or *civicismo*.⁵⁷ Pettit also suggested an important and powerful metaphor for explaining to the people the point of republicanism or civicism: the eyeball test. The goal of this political philosophy is to ensure that “everyone can look the others in the eye,” without fear or deference, and with a shared consciousness of equal status. This is, in the end, what to be undominated means. A free citizen, in that sense, is able to require

respect from others and to feel equal to them, to enjoy the same dignity and status, independent of economic, cultural, or personal differences (Pettit 1997, 166).

Pettit reminded Zapatero that the government's first obligation is to keep some individuals from being subjected to the will of other individuals, that is, to protect against private domination. But a second obligation, he argued, is no less important: to avoid public domination in the exercise of public power by government. Not only must government pursue progressive goals in the campaign against domination; it must also foster and recognize public controls and checks on its own performance.

Pettit expressed some skepticism about the possibility for a prime minister to remain true to republican principles, when all the pressures and incentives of politics were liable to push in another direction.⁵⁸ But Zapatero reiterated in public, in reply to that lecture, that he would not shrink from following where the approach led. And, as proof of this, he invited Pettit to review his government's performance at the end of the political term, to determine how far he had been faithful to the republican tradition.⁵⁹

This was the origin of the relationship between the philosopher and the Prime minister.⁶⁰ The first version of Pettit's review came in the form of a lecture in June 2007, held first at the Centro de Estudios Constitucionales in Madrid, and then at the Instituto de Estudios Sociales Avanzados in Córdoba.⁶¹ Afterward, the text of this lecture, supplemented with other material, including an interview with Zapatero, was published in book form in Spanish under the title *Examen a Zapatero*.⁶²

A PRINCIPLED POLITICS FOR ZAPATERO'S FIRST POLITICAL TERM

Zapatero has claimed to be a principled political leader committed to the philosophy of civic republicanism and to a republican agenda. To judge whether that claim is sound is not my task here, since it is covered by Pettit in chapter 3.⁶³ But I want to offer three different examples of how Zapatero justified his major political

decisions on the basis of his claim for a principled politics, one particularly oriented to the goal of reducing domination. I take these examples to show not that Zapatero is *really* a principled political leader, nor that he *sincerely* believes in civic republicanism (something that as a matter of fact I have no reasons to doubt), but at least that he *frequently uses* republican arguments to justify his major policies.⁶⁴ But before turning to these three examples, let me say a few words about the general political context at that time.

Zapatero's first term was not a peaceful or easy period of Spanish politics. It began with the immediate consequences of the worst terrorist attack ever suffered in Spain, on March 11, 2004. He also had to deal, among other things, with a ceasefire (March 23, 2005) and the following negotiation with ETA,⁶⁵ which was broken by a huge bombing in Madrid's airport, killing two people and destroying part of a new terminal (December 30, 2006). However, the main source of political tension and polarization was undoubtedly the Partido Popular's harsh and aggressive style of opposition. This is what has been called in Spain the politics of *crispación* (or harshening).⁶⁶ Perhaps inspired, as many analysts have stated, by the belligerent and openly hostile but successful opposition made by Aznar to González in his last term (1993–96), Mariano Rajoy, then leader of the PP, adopted a policy of making harsh accusations against the government, and of refusing to reach agreement with it on any issue. The PP was particularly aggressive on two fronts: the government's management of the ETA ceasefire and its sponsorship of territorial decentralization in Spain.⁶⁷

Once ETA had announced a ceasefire and declared its willingness to reach some agreement for peace, Zapatero asked Congress to authorize the opening of negotiations with them, and was quite optimistic about the possibility of reaching a negotiated solution.⁶⁸ But the PP categorically rejected any sort of negotiation with terrorists—which was actually surprising, since Aznar himself had held his own conversations with the group when he was in office.⁶⁹ As this rejection hardened, the PP became ever more hostile, or even aggressive, in criticizing the government's decisions and policies. According to them, the government was offending the victims of the ETA's terrorist attacks with its attempt to achieve a negoti-

ated solution to this problem. Some PP leaders frequently accused the government of “helping the terrorists” and even suggested that they were guilty of active connivance. Unlike the other political parties who all supported the negotiations, the PP was solely responsible for creating a general climate of tension and division that was hardly conducive to the success of the enterprise. Despite Zapatero’s optimism, the ETA broke the ceasefire, as mentioned, in December 2006.

On the territorial as distinct from the terrorist issue, the PP protested that Zapatero was promoting a general program of reform in existing *Estatutos de Autonomía* (Statutes of Autonomy), the goal being to return more power to the Autonomous Communities.⁷⁰ But this project of significantly increasing the political autonomy of the communities was, according to the PP and other impartial analysts, dubiously constitutional. The new Statutes of Autonomy were certainly pushing territorial decentralization in Spain to its constitutional limits—and perhaps beyond them.⁷¹ Even though the reforms were not initiated by the government itself, they were designed and supported by the PSOE or its affiliated parties, with the Catalan Socialist Party playing a special role in the process in Catalonia. Zapatero and the government, in any case, clearly admitted that they were pursuing a federalist agenda for Spain. All this provoked a long, general, and very aggressive PP campaign to try to stop the process.⁷² Its central claim was that Zapatero’s complicity with nationalists was breaking the country apart: “balkanizing” it, in a favorite phrase, and threatening an end thereby to the unity, by some accounts the existence, of the Spanish state.

In this atmosphere of parliamentary aggression and tension, Zapatero argued for a principled politics based on civic republicanism. His republicanism supported the dialogue that he pursued with ETA and the decentralization of power that increased regional autonomy would provide. But I choose three other examples to illustrate the republican direction of his thinking; it was not Zapatero’s government, after all, that initiated dialogue with ETA or regional decentralization and neither was an essential part

of his electoral program.⁷³ I pick two examples related to his social agenda, and a third in the area of foreign policy. Each policy to be illustrated was a part of Zapatero's political program, each was developed in his first period of government, and each carried a serious electoral risk. Together, then, they provide good evidence of a principled politics.⁷⁴

The first case I want to highlight is the June 2005 reform of the civil code to include and regulate same-sex marriage in exactly the same way as different-sex marriage. This was, of course, a very controversial initiative, both socially and politically. The surprising fact is that when Zapatero announced his desire to carry out this reform in his election campaign, the issue had not previously been on the agenda. Nobody was expecting him to pursue permitting same-sex marriage, at least not in his first term.⁷⁵ Introducing this initiative later, under more favorable conditions, would have had no political cost for him. It is remarkable, then, that instead of avoiding a potentially troublesome topic, Zapatero actively pursued it, even in the face of very strong and united criticism. The Spanish Catholic Church,⁷⁶ the whole Right, and even part of his own party on the Left were fiercely opposed to it.⁷⁷ Furthermore, almost everybody, including some of those on the Left who in principle favored the measure, questioned the urgency of such a divisive initiative. But Zapatero went ahead with it, presenting the initiative as a means of enlarging rights, protecting freedom equally for all, and defending human dignity. In his defense of the initiative in congress on June 30, 2005 he declared:

After us will come many other countries, your honors, moved by two unstoppable forces: freedom and equality ... we are building a more *decent country* because a decent society is one that does not humiliate its members... . Today Spanish society is responding to people who have been humiliated, to people whose rights have been ignored, their identity denied, and their freedom repressed. Today Spanish society gives them back the respect they deserve, recognizing their rights, restoring their dignity, affirming their identity and restoring their freedom. It is true that they are only a minority, but

their victory is the victory for all. It is a victory even for those who oppose this reform, even when they are not aware of it. Their victory makes all of us better; it makes our society better. (Rodríguez Zapatero 2005, 5228, emphasis added)

The second example I want to mention is one of Zapatero's major initiatives regarding the welfare state: the design and approval of the Dependency Act in November 2006. This was intended to provide economic and personal assistance to those people with high degrees of dependency on others, for instance the dependency that can derive from physical or mental impairment. The Spanish welfare state traditionally left the kind of care and assistance that these people needed in the hands of their families or friends, placing an unfair burden on them and at the same time giving rise to dependency and facilitating domination. The Dependency Act was intended to produce a new pillar of the welfare state, aimed at those people with physical or mental handicaps.⁷⁸ It would grant new rights to citizens, not as an act of mercy or benevolence, but with the explicit goal of reducing the domination of a significant part of the Spanish citizenry.⁷⁹ The Dependency Act involved a major reform of the Spanish welfare state, one that was expensive and continues to be controversial.⁸⁰ Although there was no very significant pressure for developing it,⁸¹ Zapatero embraced the reform as an essential part of a republican program.⁸²

My third example concerns Zapatero's foreign policy and more concretely his foundation of the Alliance of Civilizations. From the very beginning of his first term as prime minister, Zapatero had to differentiate his foreign policy from Aznar's. As mentioned, his first decision as prime minister was to withdraw the Spanish troops sent to Iraq by Aznar in support of the American invasion, a war considered by him as illegal under international legal standards and as lacking the authorization of the United Nations.⁸³ However, despite vast popular support, his decision was strongly opposed by the Right in Spain, and it caused an openly tense personal relationship with George Bush and Tony Blair, which in turn affected Spain's foreign policy with some of its immedi-

ate allies. In this scenario, the most important international initiative made by Zapatero's government, leaving aside his participation in several European Union processes and initiatives, was the creation of an international Alliance of Civilizations (AoC) under the auspices of the United Nations. This multilateral project works to bring different cultures and sensibilities together, with an explicit emphasis on bridging the gaps between Western and Islamic countries.⁸⁴

The idea was personally launched by Zapatero in the United Nations' fifty-ninth General Assembly on September 21, 2004. The AoC's three main objectives are (1) to "develop a network of partnerships with States, international organizations, civil society groups, and private sector entities that share the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations, to reinforce their interaction and coordination with the United Nations' system," (2) to develop, support and highlight projects that promote understanding among cultures," primarily regarding "youth, education, media and migration," and (3) to establish relations and facilitate dialogue among groups that can act as a force of moderation during times of heightened cross-cultural tensions."⁸⁵ With these goals, the alliance aims to be the seed of an international framework of dialogue for promoting the values of democracy, tolerance, and freedom in the international sphere. Zapatero's proposal sought to create an international space in which there might be a viable concept of an international public interest—a global common good. The idea was to combat the tendency for international action and policy to reflect only particular, sectional interests.

These three examples illustrate the role that civic republicanism played in Zapatero's public justification of his policies and initiatives. This still leaves open the question of whether these initiatives can be considered as truly republican—a question that will be faced in chapter 3. Before concluding this chapter, however, let me deal with two issues that have been postponed in previous sections: first, the connection between civic republicanism and the Spanish political tradition; and second, the impact of Zapatero's endorsement of republicanism on Spanish public debate.

CIVIC REPUBLICANISM IN THE SPANISH POLITICAL TRADITION

In his conversations with the Spanish writer Suso de Toro, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero declared: “Spain, for me, is democracy. The axis of my vision of Spain is a democratic conception of the political community. The Spain which succeeded in the past and will succeed in the future is the Spain of living together with tolerance and respect” (de Toro 2007, 160). He added: “The socialist tradition that I prefer is the tradition of democratic thinking, of civic republicanism, of all that is related to the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*.... If I have to define myself using only a couple of political terms, I would say I am a ‘social democrat’; and absolutely proud of being a socialist” (de Toro 2007, 210). As mentioned above, Zapatero and his advisors in *Nueva Vía* found in Pettit’s civic republicanism the appropriate grammar for reinterpreting socialism and expressing their own political intuitions and principles concerning freedom and democracy. And, importantly, they did not see such doctrine as unconnected with, or alien to, their own Spanish political tradition. Rather, it was the heir to important historical precedents in the Spanish socialist political tradition, as well as connected to what many contemporary scholars were advocating in Spain.

Zapatero finds the historical origins of his particular, republican way of relating freedom as nondomination, equality, and democracy with one another in the social and cultural movement of the 1920s and 1930s in Spain⁸⁶ that was organized around the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*. This was rooted in the formation of Spanish socialist thinking in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by authors like Pablo Iglesias, Francisco Giner de los Ríos, Indalecio Prieto, and Julián Besteiro.⁸⁷ According to Zapatero, “the republicans, the socialism of that time, the democratic thinking, includes the theory which assumes that all common order for living together aspires to make sure that no one feels dominated.”⁸⁸ These first socialist thinkers emphasized the compatibility between socialism and the value of freedom, or what they took at that time to be liberalism.⁸⁹

The connection between socialism and a republican understanding of freedom should not be surprising. One of the reasons why the republican tradition was not present as such in the second half of the nineteenth century and a good part of the twentieth is that socialism was leading in the defense of freedom as nondomination and democracy. This can be tracked in the works of major social democratic thinkers like Eduard Bernstein (1850–1932), one of the editors of the influential German magazine *Sozialdemokrat* and one of the authors of the Erfurt Program in 1891. His idea of an evolutionary socialism (1899), for instance, contained much of a defense of freedom and democracy as the proper socialist values which contribute to emancipation (Bernstein 1909, part III). The works of Eduard Bernstein, not well known today in the United States or Spain, were very important during that time and arrived in Spain through the influence of Krausism, a determinant doctrine for the formation of Spanish socialist thinking.⁹⁰ Relevant figures such as Gumersindo de Azcárate, Joaquín Costa, Manuel Sales i Ferré, and above all Adolfo Posada (1860–1944) defended freedom while opposing liberalism and gave it a social perspective connected to democracy which was central for building Spanish socialism.⁹¹

One of the effects of Krausism's influence in Spain was the creation, by Azcárate and Giner de los Ríos among others, of the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*, in Madrid in 1876. This was an educational institution characterized by a great freedom in choosing the contents of the courses received by students and by being open to outside influence. It was the most important center for renovating ideas in Spain, having a great impact on the whole society prior to the Civil War in 1936. Among the first graduates, for instance, are many of the relevant figures of the Spanish thinking of that time, like Leopoldo Alas Clarín, Julián Besteiro, Joaquín Costa, Manuel Batolomé Cossío, Fernando de los Ríos, José Ortega y Gasset, Gregorio Marañón, and Adolfo Posada. Also worth mentioning is the distinguished list of poets, writers, and artists who studied there: Juan Ramón Jiménez, Federico García Lorca, Antonio Machado, Luis Buñuel, and Salvador Dalí were among the most prominent. This center articulated a rich vein of democratic thinking in the

Spanish Left which finally came to life in the short-lived Second Republic, providing a crucial counterbalance to the more radical trends existing in Marxism and anarchism.⁹²

Considering these important precedents in the Spanish left-wing tradition, it is not surprising that civic republicanism had a long history among Spanish scholars as well as important figures nowadays. Two different generations of sociologists, political theorists, and philosophers have proved to be deeply interested by civic republicanism, and have analyzed and defended its principles and values, producing a rich and ever-increasing body of literature on the topic. The list of contributors is long, and includes names such as Salvador Giner, Félix Ovejero, Fernando Vallespín, Andrés de Francisco, Victoria Camps, Adela Cortina, Antoni Doménech, Aurelio Arteta, Ramón Vargas-Machuca, José Rubio-Carracedo, David Cassassas, Francisco Herreros, Teresa Montagut, Helena Béjar, Dani Raventós, and Ramón Ruiz Ruiz. They all work in different disciplines and at different universities, frequently without much contact with each other, but they nonetheless form one of the most important groups of political thinkers in Spain, with frequent presence in Spanish journals, newspapers, and books. Many of these authors applauded Zapatero's commitment to republicanism and aided in explaining to the people the ideals contained in the republican tradition, thus enriching the public debate.

THE IMPACT OF ZAPATERO'S ENDORSEMENT ON SPANISH PUBLIC DEBATE

Zapatero's explicit endorsement of civic republicanism, as articulated by Philip Pettit, ensured that both the philosophy and the philosopher received considerable attention from both foes and allies in newspapers, radio, television, and other digital media. While the arguments made in the Spanish public sphere were not always deep or principled, there were some remarkable discussions inaugurated by journalists and scholars. I will not offer here a proper and comprehensive analysis of the impact that Zapatero's endorsement of civic republicanism had in the Spanish public debate, but I

will give some examples of the kind of arguments and discussions developed in mass media, especially in the most important newspapers, as proof of the interest generated in Spain around civic republicanism and Pettit's ideas.

As pointed out in the last section, Spain has a long and rich tradition of scholars advocating different versions of republicanism. Many of these scholars were already contributing to the public debate in newspapers and other media before Zapatero endorsed Pettit's brand of republicanism. These writers intensified their contributions once the word "republicanism" began to appear everywhere in the political sections of principal newspapers. Not all of them were satisfied with Zapatero's declared allegiances, of course: first, because they were still not totally sure about his sincerity; and second because not all were equally satisfied with the particular version of republicanism defended by Pettit. But, regardless of whether the ultimate end was to celebrate or to complain about Zapatero's endorsement, many left-wing intellectuals actually made an effort to explain to the Spanish public what civic republicanism meant.⁹³

Much of what appeared from the Right in this public debate amounted, as might be expected, to politics by other means. In a reflection of the tension in Spanish politics and the *crispación* practiced by the PP, Zapatero's political philosophy and even Pettit himself were exposed to tough and sometimes offensive criticism. If Zapatero was invoking a political philosophy on which to base his decisions and initiatives, the unsurprising priority of the opposition was to discredit or reject this approach. But notwithstanding these pressures, some journalists and right-wing intellectuals developed honest and thorough discussions of civic republicanism, opening debates with advocates of the approach, and generating an unusually sophisticated debate in the Spanish public sphere.

One of the earliest reactions to Zapatero's endorsement of civic republicanism was that of Álvaro Delgado-Gal in an article in *El País*, the leading daily newspaper in Spain and generally favorable to socialists. In this commentary republicanism was likened to a rabbit being pulled out of Zapatero's socialist hat (Delgado-Gal 2001).⁹⁴ The main point was to suggest a sort of dilemma for

Zapatero. Either he was being hypocritical in endorsing a doctrine that was designed just to win more votes, or he was ignorant of the commitment taken on; according to the author republicanism was plainly “a bad model” and an ineffective basis for criticizing liberalism.⁹⁵ This early article drew responses from some Spanish advocates of republicanism, discussing remarkably abstract issues like the appropriateness of Berlin’s distinction between positive and negative liberty, or whether there was room for a third conception of liberty, freedom as nondomination.⁹⁶ It is worth mentioning Delgado-Gal’s article because it foreshadowed a series of attacks from the Right, the target of which was sometimes Rodríguez Zapatero, sometimes civic republicanism, and sometimes Pettit himself.⁹⁷

Regarding Zapatero, the usual argument was to portray the prime minister as strategically hypocritical, as someone who by endorsing civic republicanism was only carrying out a marketing campaign, invoking an ancient, acclaimed philosophy for his own political benefit. This objection was no doubt prompted by the fact that it was very rare for a political leader in Spain—rare indeed for a political leader anywhere—to endorse a well-defined political philosophy. It must have been natural for many to think that this could not be a sincere move, only a self-serving public-relations strategy.⁹⁸

The second target in this debate was the political philosophy of civic republicanism itself. Even if Zapatero was sincere in his endorsement of this theory, according to this second line of attack, the theory itself was inappropriate. Once again a dilemma dominated the debate. Either the republican proposals were reasonable, emphasizing the rule of law and the protection of rights, and casting freedom as nondomination as just a variety of negative freedom, in which case they added nothing to liberalism, or civic republicanism differed substantially from liberalism, in which case it could not count as reasonable.⁹⁹

The third target of attack was Pettit himself. Even if Zapatero was being honest and civic republicanism was somehow appropriate, the version defended by Pettit was definitely not the right one.

Or, even worse, he was not a philosophically detached defender; by some accounts he was just a party hack.¹⁰⁰

In the midst of this offensive from the Right, there was an important journalist who paid considerable attention to this philosopher and his theory. Pedro J. Ramírez, editor in chief of the liberal right-wing newspaper *El Mundo*, devoted three extensive articles in his influential Sunday column to Pettit and his connection with Zapatero, as well as writing many other pieces in which Pettit figured marginally. Two of these long articles contained faithful explanations of some republican principles defended by Pettit, such as the rule of law, the conditions of a mixed constitution, and the very protection of freedom as nondomination, arguing that Zapatero's actions did not conform properly to them (Ramírez 2006a,b). The third article was of quite a different tenor. It was an open letter to Pettit addressing the content of his civic audit of the government, three weeks before the first public lecture. Ramírez had somehow obtained a copy of the text and attacked its claims, prior to the lecture itself (Ramírez 2007). The article argued that Pettit had not been informed or had been misinformed about what was truly going on in Spain. Ramírez offered his own description of the facts to be assessed, and finally challenged Pettit to take that description into account in his lectures and publications.¹⁰¹ Although there was a possible political motivation for these arguments, there was some value in the questions and objections raised. Pettit decided to respond to them in the book *Examen a Zapatero*; and the response is also included as an appendix to chapter 3 in the present book.

The endorsement by Prime Minister Rodríguez Zapatero of the political philosophy of civic republicanism—his adoption of civic republicanism as “an appropriate grammar” for developing his political initiatives—had a considerable impact on Spanish public debate. Perhaps, as the critics suggested, it had something to do with marketing, or with delivering a name, even a label, to rectify the mistake made in the lecture at the Club Siglo XXI. But whatever the real motivations Zapatero happened to have, what is important here is what he actually did, the decisions he made and the initiatives he pursued.. If a government claims to be republican,

the question is whether it operates in conformity to republican principles. And if it does operate in that way, then for all practical purposes—for all purposes that matter from our viewpoint in this book—it is republican. This opens the way for the review of Zapatero's performance in chapter 3. Before coming to that review, however, it will be useful to provide an overview of civic republican philosophy, and this is the topic of chapter 2.