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SOMOS ESPAÑA: BUILDING A NEW SPANISH IDENTITY

Lakelyn Taylor

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The University of Southern Mississippi

SOMOS ESPAÑA: BUILDING A NEW SPANISH IDENTITY

by

Lakelyn Taylor

A Thesis
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in Partial Fulfillment
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Abstract

Establishing an identity is inherent to all individuals and communities. Sometimes creating an identity must be taken a step further by reconstructing a pre-existing identity in exchange for a more favorable one. Spain is currently undergoing a process to reconstruct part of their identity from being a nation with a lazy culture to one that is more progressive. Some Spanish rhetoricians perceive the best way to change Spain's identity is to eliminate the tradition of siesta time. This study examines the rhetoric that agents utilize in order to create an audience that will help to rhetorically construct Spain's new identity. By employing constitutive rhetoric as a theoretical lens, this study will analyze the existing rhetorical methods within the texts. The aim of this study is to show the appeals rhetoricians have used to conjure "the people" (the audience) to either challenge or maintain Spain's current identity in the wake of the larger "group" (the global community). Consequently, this study contributes to the fields of communication studies and Spanish studies by giving insight into how people desire to escape from undesirable stereotypes and the ways in which an audience can be called into action to establish or challenge an identity.

Key Words: Spain, Siesta Time, Rhetorical Criticism, The Theory of Constitutive Rhetoric, Identity, Argument, Rhetor

Dedication

This text is dedicated to the One who goes before me.

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Table of Contents

Chapter	
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Methods.....	2
3. Literature Review.....	7
4. Historical Context.....	10
5. Analysis.....	12
a. Productivity.....	13
b. Family.....	19
c. Tradition.....	24
d. Health.....	28
6. Discussion.....	34
References.....	37

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Brochures of fat, old, happy men cat napping in the sun; advertisements of a laid-back atmosphere of low stress and expectations; images of sun, sand, and relaxation. These images were the persuasive tools Spain used to entice tourists to visit the country. Now Spain has the opportunity to change that perception of their society which has led to a stereotype from which it is not easy to escape. Spain has cultural traditions that span back hundreds of centuries and have lasted through hundreds of years of glory, hardship, war, and globalization. Over the years, the nation has created for itself an identity through traditions such as “siesta time” or what Americans call Spain’s “nap time.” This rest period has been engrained into their society and has been a tourist highlight for years. However, the country is amid a debate about whether siesta time should remain a part of Spanish daily life. On one hand, supporters of siesta time claim it as a cultural norm that sets them apart from the rest of the world. On the other hand, opponents of siesta time argue that it promotes lethargic behavior thus garnering Spain’s poor economic standing. The debate over whether or not to eliminate siesta time is simply a smaller manifestation of a larger concern. The nation wishes to move away from the stereotypes of laziness and sluggish attitudes and desires to promote a new identity that is more in line with 21st century mentalities of progression and development. In trying to construct their national identity, the Spanish audience must fight against outside influences that are trying to maintain the status quo.

There are two opposing forces within this study. There are the agents that make up the Spanish audience that is in favor of eliminating siesta time. These agents include Spanish organizations and institutions, as well as several Spanish citizens themselves. On the other hand, there are agents that comprise the outside forces trying to maintain the status quo. These agents include tourists, “outsiders” to Spain, and a few larger businesses or organizations. Despite the

Spanish audience's efforts, outside forces have tried to undermine their rhetoric. These outside forces are trying to impel the Spanish audience to keep siesta time and consequently their stigma of being a laid-back society. There is a tug-of-war occurring within the country over how to determine Spain's identity as either conforming to the status quo or challenging it.

Chapter 2 – Methods

The task of analyzing this debate requires the completion of a rhetorical criticism which is “a qualitative research method that is designed for the systematic investigation and explanation of symbolic acts and artifacts for the purpose of understanding rhetorical processes” (Foss, 2009). Rhetorical criticism is used to not only discover what a certain artifact reveals about the rhetoric itself, but also seeks to enhance communication understanding within the public. Being able to understand and implement the process that yields these results is critical.

Campbell and Burkholder describe the process of rhetorical criticism in detail in their book *Contemporary Critiques in Rhetoric*. The authors mention that rhetorical criticism is comprised of different aspects of analysis; it is not a one-dimensional examination of the text at face value, but a multi-dimensional examination of the text, taking into consideration its historical and environmental contexts, its intended purpose, and its target audience. In rhetorical criticisms, a text is generally a speech or image that tries to convey a persuasive message and may or may not be part of a larger situation. Campbell and Burkholder have created steps for researchers to follow to ensure that they do a thorough rhetorical critic of each text: 1.) Descriptive analysis, 2.) Historical-Contextual Analysis, 3.) Selecting/Inventing a Critical Perspective, and 4.) Evaluation (*Critiques of Contemporary Rhetoric* 15).

The first step a researcher must go through is the descriptive analysis stage which is viewed in terms of seven elements: purpose, persona, audience, tone, structure, supporting, materials, and other strategies. First, a researcher needs to look at the purpose of the text and the persona of the rhetor. The purpose is better analyzed by looking specifically at the rhetoric the text uses. President Bush's 9/11 speeches, for instance, were meant to create unity and to give hope to the American people. At the beginning of his address to the American people following 9/11, President Bush asserted that:

These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed. Our country is strong. A great people has been moved to defend a great nation...None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world ("Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks").

By using the words "our," "us," and "we," President Bush affirmed the fact that each citizen had affiliation with one another and this country. Along with unity, President Bush's entire last sentence is meant to instill the American people with hope of a better and more just world. Through his speech, President Bush was able to convey that not only was America united under the terrorist attacks, but he also provided hope to a nation in despair. President Bush was also able to solidify his persona, or role. The element of persona in the descriptive analysis phase is concerned with the *ethos* or credibility of an author. The fact that President Bush gave the address from inside of the Oval Office surrounded by American flags emphasized his *ethos* as president of the nation as well as the authority and power we still had as a country (Campbell and Burkholder 20-21).

An examination of the text's intended audience as well as its tone, structure, and supporting material may follow. A researcher may understand a text's intended audience by looking to the channel through which the text was published and the people that may be most likely to be exposed to that channel. For example, *Seventeen Magazine* usually reaches an audience who range in age from 15-19. The tone and structure comes directly from the text itself. Authors may choose to use formal or informal language in their text. They may choose to be humorous, serious, or sarcastic. As far as structure is concerned, they may choose to structure their text using chronological order, problem-solution form, or cause-effect form. Both tone and structure are used by the rhetor for strategic purposes which may also go to affirm the author's credibility. The last specific element is supporting materials which is evidence, statistics, quotations, or any other outside information brought in to reinforce any claim that the author make during the text. In a way, by providing supporting material, the author's persona is confirmed (Campbell and Burkholder 21-25).

The other strategies that an author may use include any other artistic device that the rhetor may use to persuade their audience. Strategies may include repetition, refutation, description, or allusions. There are many other strategies that an author may use which do not necessarily need to be fully discussed here. The important part to remember is that these strategies are used to parallel and present the rhetor's arguments. Another important aspect of the descriptive analysis to remember is that this stage of examination is not generally evident. The descriptive analysis stage is primarily to help the researcher understand the texts more fully. Another way that a researcher tries to understand a text is by looking at its historical context (Campbell and Burkholder 26-27).

Stage two is the step a researcher must take to situate the text within the confines of the history surrounding it because it is important to understand what outside influences may have impacted the writing and/or perspective of the text. The historical context may reveal to the researcher “the particular events that motivated the rhetor to engage in rhetorical action” (Campbell and Burkholder 51). The historical context also provides information about the specific limitations, resources, and pressures that the rhetor may have been facing during the construction of their rhetorical text. However, neither the descriptive analysis stage nor the historical context stage truly tells the researcher how to interpret the text.

Thus, the researcher must move on to stage 3 which is where the researcher either selects or invents a critical perspective through which to examine a rhetorical text. The critical perspective is also known among researchers as the framework. Frameworks may come in the form of theories or models, but can also be a combination of the two. The framework derives itself from the text(s) itself. It is incorrect to try and choose the framework before analyzing the texts; the researcher must let the texts tell him or her what critical perspective to use. Once a framework becomes apparent, the researcher may then evaluate all of the texts through this perspective (Campbell and Burkholder 73-75).

The last stage is the evaluation stage. This stage comes in the form of a discussion or conclusion section of an academic paper or presentation. In this step, the researcher uses all of the information at his or her disposal to draw conclusions from the text. Specifically, the researcher may try to extrapolate the effects of the rhetoric. It will be impossible for a researcher to complete this stage successfully without first having gone through the first three stages (Campbell and Burkholder 109-110).

This study specifically looks at the siesta time controversy that is currently occurring in Spain, the rhetoric both sides of the controversy are using, and what role that rhetoric plays within the situation. It seeks to study the audience and the identity that are created through these persuasive arguments. To examine the rhetoric, texts such as legislation, campaigns, blog posts, social media posts, and opinion articles in newspapers had to be obtained. The gathering of these texts was accomplished by an internet search in both English and Spanish about the controversy using different search engines such as Google Scholar and the university library system. All potential texts were scanned for opinions or strong persuasive language that could contribute to the overarching rhetorical argument of the study. Potential texts that were more informative in nature or that lacked the persuasive language indicative of a rhetorical text were kept for contextual purposes only. All other texts were deemed rhetorical and then scanned for persuasive appeals and common “themes.”

To comprehensively examine the rhetorical appeals and the role rhetoric plays in this situation, a rhetorical analysis must be utilized in addition to the overarching framework of constitutive rhetoric. Therefore, this study will seek to examine the use of rhetoric in the controversy through the lens of constitutive rhetoric while taking into consideration the historical context, audience, and purpose of the rhetoric. Once the analysis has taken place, results will be drawn and a discussion made as to how this particular study has contributed to the greater good of rhetorical principles, the communication studies community, and the theory of constitutive rhetoric.

It is also important to conduct a rhetorical analysis to understand the changing cultural identity of the debate. Under this process, the texts are gathered together and then scrutinized. Rhetorical elements such as strategy, audience, and tone are examined to better understand the

message. A rhetorical analysis reveals that through the appeal of four main “themes” – productivity, family, tradition, and health – there are two potential identities that emerge. One identity is the status quo and the other embodies the ideals of progress. The Spanish audience must choose which one best follows along with their current state of values and then construct that identity.

An analysis of this sort is beneficial in multiple ways. First, it contributes to the theory of constitutive rhetoric and seeks to apply the theory on a globalized scale. Second, it enhances understanding as to the types of arguments agents make in order to persuade citizens of their position and creates a collective audience that will work together to construct an identity. Prior work has analyzed constitutive rhetoric in terms of the individual people who comprise a group and how these people work together to construct the identity of the group as a whole (See Omar, Charland, Zagacki). There have also been studies to show the exact ways authors have appealed to audiences in order to encourage their participation in identity construction. However, previous studies have yet to analyze constitutive rhetoric in terms of a nation as a “people” and the global community as the “group.” The research question then becomes how does a “people” (nation) construct its identity as a component of the “group” (the global community)? By analyzing the role of constitutive rhetoric in the siesta time debate occurring in Spain, it is possible to answer this question and thus expand upon the theory itself.

Chapter 3 – Literature Review

Constitutive rhetoric is rooted in the ideas surrounding the rhetoric itself. Aristotle, one of the earliest philosophers on rhetorical concepts, defines rhetoric as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (*Rhetoric*). Rhetoric is the process and the

tools an entity or agent utilizes to persuade an audience. Although rhetoric can work independently from any other factor, it can also be created for a specific audience in response to a certain urgency.

Bitzer argues that rhetoric is a response to the rhetorical situation which he defines as a “natural context of persons, events, objects, relations, and an exigence which strongly invite[s] utterance.” The idea of the rhetorical situation asserts that environments or events can create situations in which rhetoric is crucial and must meet the expectations of the audience to be successful. The audience itself is one factor within the rhetorical situation that must be examined to fully grasp the extent of a rhetorical message. The audience is not a static agent that is separate from the rhetorician. Instead it is a participant in the discourse through which the process of identification takes place and it holds a superior role to persuasive appeals (Burke). The process of identification occurs through the use of language and symbols and encourages participation from both agents. Through the theory of the second persona, the rhetor and the audience work in tandem to establish a shared identity based upon the common beliefs and values which are discovered through rhetoric (Black). The idea of an audience created on the basis of shared values is the backbone to constitutive rhetoric.

First coined by James Boyd White, his perception of constitutive rhetoric expanded upon Edwin Black’s idea of a common, collective identity. Constitutive rhetoric is rhetoric that forms an audience (Omar) and is ideological, “not merely because [it] provide[s] individuals with narratives to inhabit as subjects and motives to experience, but because [it] insert[s] ‘narratized’ subjects-as-agents into the world” (Charland 143). White suggests that constitutive rhetoric occurs within the parameters of mutual understanding and reflects the ideals of the community at large. Discourse can produce a collective audience, and consequently a collective identity, by

either utilizing persuasive tactics or deceit (White). Once within the constraint of mutual understanding, the audience must go through the process of interpellation which establishes them as a rhetorical subject (Charland). As an established subject in the interaction, the audience may choose, at that point, to be a passive or an aggressive force in the construction of the community identity. Through his analysis of Quebec and its quest for sovereignty, Maurice Charland asserts that the audience is an active and engaged subject in rhetorically constructing identity from the moment they obtain language. Charland also argues that constitutive rhetoric is “always there, usually implicitly, and sometimes explicitly articulated. It is more than a set of commonplaces, but is in the context, the pre-historic that is necessary to any successful interpellation” (147). Constitutive rhetoric is a theory that focuses on the audience and allowing that audience to be a part of the larger narrative of constituted identity.

Stemming from White and Charland’s work, later studies have sought to analyze constitutive rhetoric within different contexts and amongst different rhetorical agents. Constitutive rhetoric seeks to establish a collective identity which is borne from the target audience or “people.” These “people” may simply be rhetorical constructs (“Censorship as Constitutive Rhetoric”), but they are an important aspect of the rhetorical construction of identity. Thus, constitutive rhetoric arises out of a decentralized rhetoric that creates a community identity more generalizable to all individuals who would make up the audience (Omar). Audiences and the individuals who collectively create them may exist either between or among opposing narratives which the rhetoric discourse must address to successfully create an atmosphere that fosters the formation of a collective identity (Zagacki). The process of forming a collective identity never ends, however. It is an ongoing process because the individuals who make up an audience are flawed, imperfect people, and therefore, “the hopes of ‘the people’ are

unfinished, never constituted and yet always in the act of constituting” (Sweet & McCue-Enser 619-620). So too is the identity these unfinished “people” wish to construct. Yet, it is this imperfection coupled with constant change that allows for an identity construction that is entirely unique. And it is through the process of constitutive rhetoric “we create who we are as a nation....it is a powerful and important process to understanding our own nation” and through the process of rhetorical criticism “we can understand how we wield that weapon” (“Making American” 203). Essentially, the author is arguing that through constitutive rhetoric, citizens will undergo the process of interpellation so as to form a collective group more generalizable to the rest of Spain that will in turn create the identity for the nation. Through this process and the process of rhetorical criticism, a deeper understanding of Spanish values, as well as a deeper understanding of Spanish individuals, will be established.

Chapter 4 – Historical Context

Siesta time was first introduced by the Romans in 206 B.C. when the Romans conquered the Iberian Peninsula (Spain). From Spain, the idea of a siesta time traveled to other European countries such as Italy and Greece. The term “siesta time” comes from the Latin words *hora sexta*, which means “sixth hour.” Different nations, including Spain, began to add this “sixth hour” (around noon everyday) into their daily schedules as the time when citizens could stop working in order to escape the midday heat. These Spanish working hours were like those seen throughout the rest of Europe at the time, but changed when Spain entered into a civil war in the 1930s. The Spanish Civil War caused Spain’s working schedules to change to accommodate for the Spaniards who had to work two jobs and needed to eat lunch between them (Deschenaux). Despite these changes, siesta time remained in place until 2005 when Prime Minister Jose Luis

Rodriguez Zapatero decided to eliminate siesta time for public servants (Höfer). However, the actual timeframe for taking a siesta in Spain changed when the government decided in 1942 to realign its time zone to be more paralleled to that of their World War II allies in Germany and France. This change in time zone altered the culture of siesta time within Spain in such a way that the two events – the changing of siesta time and the changing of the Spanish time zone – have become interwoven elements.

Since that time, Spain has experienced numerous debates about whether to return to the way they were before 1942 and align their clocks to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) or to stick with the status quo and embrace siesta time as a channel of cultural identification (Deschenaux). Now, there is an increased desire to eliminate siesta time due to the current economic crisis that Spain faces which includes a growing unemployment rate of 25% (Gibbs). The year 2015 saw the cultivation of a reformation movement known as the Reform Horaria movement which has pushed for legislation to be written that would stop siesta time. The past year alone has also seen a Spanish governor write and pass legislation making siesta time an official and mandated period of time (Gibbs).

The events of the past year are all Spain's attempt to establish some kind of identity and standing in a global community. These goals, which are rooted in the very history of Spain, fundamentally comprise the basis for the controversy over what to do about Spain's siesta time in such a way that both sides feel threatened. Advocates in favor of siesta time feel as if their identity and culture are being threatened, whereas advocates against siesta time feel that Spain's economic and global standing are being threatened.

There are supporters on both sides that have helped shaped the debate and the rhetoric both sides use. An examination of the rhetoric leads to the conclusion that agencies such as

tourists and other outside forces are against any change to Spain's identity whereas Spanish agencies including corporations and governmental figures are trying to advocate for a new identity. The side in favor of siesta time is supported mainly by citizens of the global community with a few Spanish citizens also giving their support (See McCleve, Lindsley, Alter). Although there are more English-speaking, non-native advocates, the overwhelming amount of citizen support may seem to weigh the scales more heavily in favor of those in favor of siesta time.

On the other hand, the position in opposition of siesta time also has its fair share of support. Less popular amongst citizens – especially those of the global community – are those who are against siesta time such as large corporations, organizations, and governmental bodies (See Delgado, Canseco, Barone). Two of the most prevalent advocates in opposition to the practice of siesta time are Ignacio Buqueras y Bach, who is the president of the National Commission for the Rationalization of Spanish Times, and the Association of the Rationalization of Spanish Schedules (ARHOE). It is possible to argue that more weight is given to those against siesta time since their advocates hold more say in governmental processes than their civilian counterparts. However, each side is equal because the position in favor of siesta time has more civilian and global support, whereas the position in opposition of siesta time has more native business and governmental support. These differentiations have arisen from the historical setting of Spanish siesta time, in addition to how its practice has evolved, and the current crises the country now faces.

Chapter 5 – Analysis

Emerging from this controversy are two warring sides: those who want to keep their siesta time the same as it is now and those who want to modify it in some way. The latter side can also be split into three proposed solutions: eliminating siesta time completely, modifying it,

or switching back to the Greenwich Mountain Time zone. Despite the tension between both sides of the debate, the themes that emerge from a reading of the rhetoric surrounding the controversy are the same. Four of the most common themes shared between the two sides of this debate, from most to least common, are productivity, family, culture, and health. The main voices for each side and for each theme argue that their position presents a more accurate depiction of Spain to unify an audience who will construct their version of Spain's identity.

Productivity

Spain's economic crisis has many Spaniards wondering if the country is doing all that it can to bring money into their economy. Currently, groups both inside and outside of Spain view Spain as a slow, non-productive nation that should expect low productivity rates and high economic turmoil. Because Spain has traditionally emphasized a more laid back and worry-free identity, the "group" can now only see Spain through that lens. Therefore, the desire to find a solution of relative ease and low finance that not only impacts Spain's economy but also helps Spain form a new community identity is at the top of the nation's list. Consequently, siesta time, which promotes a slower-paced society, has been seen as a potential part to these problems. One of the questions surrounding this practice is whether or not employees would be able to work as hard with or without a siesta. Therefore, it is logical that the most prevalent of the themes in the discourse is productivity.

The popularity of using productivity as an argument against siesta time has made those in favor of it fire back with contradictory evidence. They argue that getting rid of siesta time would not make workers more productive or efficient but would rather make them less productive. They emphasize the fact that having a siesta equates to higher levels of worker efficiency and

performance. Arguments range from making general logic claims regarding productivity without any specific supporting evidence to claims that are built on detailed statistics and research.

Aubrey McCleve's opinion article in *The State Press*, for example, showcases the general argument that siesta time is not a major agent impacting Spain's economic crisis when she writes that "research proves that the average person would be more productive with an afternoon nap or rest period...productivity levels are proven to be higher when people are well rested and full." McCleve references research and claims that such research "proves" her argument of productivity without ever actually mentioning the research to which she is referring.

On the other hand, there are advocates who choose to use specific statistics and case studies in order to strengthen their opinions, making them more legitimate and credible. For instance, Iván Gil posted an article in the online Spanish newspaper *El Confidencial* that begins by introducing the general claims about siesta time and the negative effects of the environment on workers, arguing that "the increase in the number of hours of light and the change in temperature causes a greater fatigue, lack of energy, and difficulties in concentration." At the same time, Gil broadly argues that taking a siesta can help employees in these areas. Gil then goes on to support these general claims by citing evidential studies performed by agents such as the Centro de Investigación sobre Fitoterapia (Center for Research on Phytotherapy), NASA, the *Annals of Emergency Medicine* – an International Journal, and the *Journal of Sleep Research*. The study conducted by NASA asserts that "people that habitually take a siesta commit 34% fewer errors at work." The author has used this specific study to support his general claim. The utilization of logos (or logic) makes the author more credible and thus reinforces the legitimacy of the arguments he makes. The author's argument is much stronger than opinion blogger McCleve, but does not supersede McCleve's contribution to the overall argumentation.

Viente Mundos, a Spanish website created to help online Spanish learners, posted a reading exercise of an opinion article in which a different type of evidence is employed. This particular article relies not on statistics but on personal testimony and case studies. Like the *El Confidential* article, the author Carmen Boronat, begins by making the claim that “the siesta...is very good, a physiological necessity that extends a short period of time during which a person need to rest.” She too explores the study conducted by NASA while quoting specialists, business owners, and laypersons. For instance, she quotes Rafael Rico, the owner of a dried fruit small business in Valencia, who asserts that “workers who take a siesta in the afternoon after lunch ‘have fewer labor accidents and produce more.’” To further strengthen her argument, the author notes Spanish cities that wish to protect this practice as well as other countries that participate in a version of the Spanish siesta. Individual testimony, as used in this example, makes the controversy more personal and seeks to appeal to a reader’s sense of humanity by giving evidence of everyday people who rely on a siesta to be more productive in their jobs. The author avoids using impersonal numbers and statistics that tempt to downplay the significance of a siesta within Spanish culture.

Arguments in opposition of siesta time argue that siestas tend to make employees sluggish, lazy, and less motivated to accomplish tasks. They argue that taking extended breaks in the middle of a work day forces Spain to work more hours than the rest of Europe without increasing its productivity. Thus, they rely on logic arguments supported by studies to demonstrate that productivity would best be increased by consolidating Spain’s working hours and/or moving Spain back into the GMT time zone. Interestingly though, the ways in which they present their arguments parallel those of the audience members who are siesta time advocates.

For instance, some texts reveal that those who are against Spanish siesta time often make general claims based upon undisclosed evidence. Kendall Baker, a writer for an online newspaper called *The Hustle*, wrote an article in which he points to a series of studies that indicate Spanish citizens are less efficient than their European companions. Baker does not specifically cite the study, although he does include a hyperlink to the study within his article, stating “studies suggest that Spaniards sleep an hour less than the rest of Europe, which has all kinds of negative consequences, most notably lack of productivity and increased stress” (“Spain Has Been in the Wrong Time Zone”). Baker expects readers to put faith in the credibility, authenticity, and integrity of his source and the consequences it implies solely based on the logic of the argument. This technique is like that which is utilized by Aubrey McCleve.

Those who oppose siesta time do make claims that rely upon specific evidence, however. Antonio Guzmán Córdoba, the director of the Health and Prevention Area of Fundación MAPFRE, began a seminar on “Rational Hours” by speaking on the changes Spain must make in order to progress. Córdoba recounted a report given by the Subcommission with the Commission for Equality of Congress towards the end of his speech. According to the report, longer lunch breaks are causing decreased levels of productivity. Antonio draws on this report as the foundation on which he presents his message by putting logic arguments before the report’s findings, claiming that consolidating Spain’s working hours “will motivate people and make production more competitive” (“Timetables, Health and Productivity”). The report and its findings seem to be cited after all of Córdoba’s claims were made to strengthen the appeal of those claims. His rhetorical style is like that of his opponents’ which gives more weight to his opinion without negating the importance of the general claims made by Baker.

Although numbers can be appealing, sometimes the best arguments are those made based upon emotion. Personal stories about the negative effects Spanish siesta's can have on Spaniards are quite compelling and can be the elements advocates lean towards. For example, John Anderson and Jennifer Green, two writers for the *Washington Post*, documented in an opinion piece the story of Ana Delgado. Delgado works for a company that forces her "to take an extended lunch break – from 1:30 to 4:30pm – and work until 8pm or later, pushing her family's schedule deep into the night" (Anderson and Green). She laments about her work schedule saying, "I would love to go home earlier – all the working mothers would – but my company will not allow it" (Anderson and Green). Thus, because of the company's strict adherence to siesta time, working parents must work late and arrive home even later. Consequently, this late night work culture leads to families staying up later in order to have dinner and watch their favorite late night television shows together – cultural values and activities of which few Spanish families opt out. Using this story as a gateway to discuss the issue of irrational working hours further, the two authors argue that Spain has the highest workplace accident rate and third-lowest productivity rate in the European Union. They then use the words of the anti-siesta movement leaders. Fernando Moraleda, a government spokesperson, suggests:

The long break and late working hours have put Spain out of sync with the rest of Europe, making it difficult to coordinate business schedules and to take advantage of the European Union's borderless economy ("Shaking Spain Out of Its Siesta").

Ana Delgado's story is meant to catch the audience's attention and put a real life example behind all of the statistics and quotations resulting in the audience thinking and relating to Ana Delgado, not the general Spanish populace.

The similarity between how the advocates of a siesta and those who are against it approach the topic of productivity is evident. Both sides use less time discussing productivity in depth and opt for a few statistics, general claims, logic arguments, or personal testimony. The argumentation style chosen reflects the overall purposes of the text's author. Neither side, unfortunately, gives extensive or conclusive evidence to provide more weight to their side. The two positions both affirm the value of productivity as a key component of Spain's identity, but entertain two different ideas as to how productivity accomplishes this construction. This leads to a battle amongst the audience as to what conclusions they should draw about their own identity or the identity that they would like to possess.

The conclusion the audience believes is most representative of the environment they wish to promote will be how productivity manifests itself in the construction of Spain's identity. The rhetoric of those in favor of maintaining siesta time is trying to say that the status quo is sufficient and that siesta time is not actually the core of the problem. By fighting against the removal of siesta time, they are advocating for the ideologies and an identity they hope will remain. However, those in opposition of keeping siesta time see this suggestion as a near impossibility. Their rhetoric seems to be a plea for an identity that is rooted in the 21st century mentality towards productivity through a work-schedule that mirrors European and Western countries. Both positions desire to reconstruct their identity through the theme of productivity; they just have different end goals in mind. The siesta supporters see their potential identity through the lens of productivity as a society in which they can maintain their practices while also being productive. The siesta contestants see their potential identity through the lens of

productivity as a society that can move away from the stigma they are more sluggish and lazy than their European or Western counterparts. Each individual comprising Spain's constituted audience relates to the theme of productivity, thus as a collective, they must work together to promote the image of productivity they wish to create – a similar process they must enter in with the other themes.

Family

The disagreement concerning productivity and family are quite alike. Spain is a collectivist nation which means that “the family is the basis of the social structure and includes both the nuclear and the extended family” (“Spain Guide: A Look at Spanish Language, Culture, Customs, and Etiquette”). It also means that they place a large amount of weight on familial relations and working together as a collective community. Thus, the family unit is one of the most integral aspects of Spanish culture. Arguments pertaining to this theme are more concerned with appealing to the value of family within Spanish culture than they are about appealing to Spain's current economic status or how well Spain's relations with the rest of the world could be. By emphasizing a traditional value such as family, the authors of these texts are trying to invoke feelings of unity so that the audience may see itself as a collective whose shared values can help construct an identity that promotes progressiveness.

It is key to note that both sides argue this theme to cause interpellation to occur with an audience. Those advocates who are in favor of keeping siesta time the way it currently is assert that siesta time promotes family bonding and unity by setting aside a specific time in which family members can interact with the knowledge that there are no other pressing issues at hand.

Conversely, those who are against siesta time argue that having a siesta makes parents work later into the night and can cause children to go to bed without seeing their parents.

Advocates of siesta time do not spend a great deal of time talking about family because this particular theme does not necessitate extensive argumentation. Siesta time is already a time honored tradition in Spain that has catered to families for centuries. Siesta enthusiasts simply call upon the arguments that go along with the status quo. In doing so, they remind their audience through memories based upon emotion why they have kept siesta time thus far. Therefore, despite the need to make the argument, advocates can get away with making one or two general statements about family life in relation to siesta time to get their point across.

For example, a blog posted by Megan R (aka meggr), laments the devastation that eliminating siesta time would have on the world. She makes a note about the “myth” of siesta time and implies the seriousness of this error. By myth, Megan is referring to the idea that Westerners have about siesta time being a 3-hour nap for Spaniards. She discounts this myth as being false and goes on to assert that siesta time means more for Spaniards than simply napping the entire time. She even mentioned that her Spanish “family” and friends “strongly reject the notion that the Spanish are lazy people taking a quick snooze on a hillside or park bench over the extended lunch hour” (“Is the Spanish Siesta Under Siege?”). For them, it is a time to enjoy the biggest meal of the day (lunch) and to reconnect with friends and family. It is during siestas when families are most able to enjoy one another’s company. Megan also states that “the long break is to allow time to join with other family members and/or friends, have a nice, big meal, and have a little time to go for a walk or just relax after eating.” She makes the argument that taking a siesta is part of the Spanish routine, no matter what kind of job a Spaniard has, which

should not be trifled with in exchange for Western ideologies about a 9-5 working schedule (“Is the Spanish Siesta Under Siege?”).

Megan is not the only opinion writer in favor of keeping siestas. Joseph Lindsley with *The Weekly Standard* also points out the benefits that families obtain by maintaining a siesta in their work schedule. He mentions a sojourn he once took to Spain and the appreciation he had for their culture. He talked about watching children go home to escape the heat of the day along with their fathers. Together, both child and parent could enjoy a midday meal and a time of relaxation. In reaction to his observations, Lindsley angrily suggests that, “Thanks to the Socialists, father and mother have disappeared from Spanish birth certificates (“Hasta La Vista, Siesta”).” He is making the claim that as time progresses, less emphasis is being placed on the importance of families and the role of fathers and mothers in the life of their child. This argument may make any parent or adult uneasy, especially a parent from a collectivist nation like Spain. Lindsley gives no additional evidence or testimony other than his personal experience, but in a way, he does not have to. His own story and claims reach audience members on a level that numbers may not.

Those who stand in opposition to having a siesta have a more arduous task using family as a central theme of argumentation because they are advocating for a change in the status quo. Essentially, they are asking their audience to turn from consistency to change. It is for these reasons that articles written in favor of eliminating or modifying siesta time go into greater detail and depth about how families are affected by siesta time.

Researchers Pablo Gracia and Matthijs Kalmijn wrote an article in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* that was fully devoted to the relationship between families and siesta time. They sought to discover what it was like for parents who had what is known in Spain as a split-

shift. This type of shift is characteristic of a parent who goes into work in the morning, takes a siesta in the afternoon, then goes back to work until late evening/night. Their studies have revealed:

About 45% of employed parents report having a long lunch break....This split-shift schedule in a country where only 15% of employed parents report having control over their wrk schedules has led to media and policy debates about its family-unfriendliness (Gracia and Kalmijn 402).

These negative consequences include having less time or ability to spend interacting with their children or their spouse. Gracia and Kalmijn also claim that split-shift schedules do not match the increasing emphasis on modernization or post-industrial economies. They finish their report with a statistic stating, “The fact that only about 15% of parents in Spain report control over their work schedules and that Spain in general has unfriendly family policies, implies that many parents would like to adapt their work schedules to meet their family priorities” (“Parents’ Family Time and Work Schedules” 401-415). Thus, their research reveals that families are having a hard time balancing taking a siesta with modern ideals about the economy and industrialization. What is more, their studies show that parents of these families no longer desire a split-shift, but aspire to have a standard shift to meet the needs of their family unit.

Yet, opponents of siesta time do not merely use statistics to achieve their goals. They also appeal to the audience’s sense of humanity and their capacity to sympathize with Spanish families. In 2012, Ignacio Buqueras y Bach presented a political proposal at the World Congress of Families that pushed the Spanish government to abandon the Central European Time zone in favor or returning to the Greenwich Mountain Time zone. During the entire legislation, he uses words such as “harmonization,” “family reconciliation,” and “reconciliation between work and

family (Buqueras y Bach). His goal with using this type of rhetoric is to convey the necessity and how imperative changing time zones is for families and work culture alike. Throughout the proposal, Buqueras makes the case for families by appealing to values such as communication, family reconciliation, and equality. He asserts his belief that changing time zones would be the only way “to better balance their [Spanish] family and personal life with the professional, to achieve real equality between women and men in different areas of society and to improve productivity” (Buqueras y Bach). Buqueras has made similar arguments in multiple other avenues including interviews and website posts. This concentration on familial values is centered on returning to Spain’s core value as a collectivist society – the family.

There is a stark contrast between how both sides of the controversy have chosen to defend the theme of family. Because of their alignment with the status quo, supporters of siesta time do not spend a lot of effort trying to convince the audience that taking a siesta is good for families. Rather, they rely on making general claims and each family’s personal experience to bolster their side. At the core, the rhetoric of those supporting siesta time is trying to reinforce the idea that their current system is more aligned with the family values of Spain. Meanwhile, opponents to siesta time exert more effort to convince the audience that siestas are slowly but surely destroying the value of the family unit in Spanish society. This degree of argumentation is necessary since they are advocating a change in the status quo. Through using these fear appeals, opposition forces to siesta time seek to convince the audience that without reconstruction, Spain may lose its family unit in the trade-off. They are advocating for an identity where Spanish families come together earlier in the day to spend time with one another leaving more time for family investment.

Like the theme of productivity, although both sides approach the argument for family differently they both do affirm that this theme is an important value in Spanish society. Those in favor of a siesta time use rhetoric to assert that the status quo is the best manifestation of this value. Whereas, those against siesta time use rhetoric to argue that the status quo actually does families a disservice. They claim that if the country of Spain truly wants to push for the value of the family, they will eliminate the instituted tradition of siesta time as a hindrance to family unity. Appealing to Spain's collectivist nature forces the audience to begin paying closer attention to their cultural traditions.

Tradition

When referring to tradition, it is appropriate to assume a parallel reference to culture. Often times, groups in favor of siesta time and groups opposing siesta time use this as a basis for argumentation onto which the foundation for other claims can be made. On one side, there are those who assert that siestas are a part of Spanish tradition and to remove that would severely damage Spanish society. On the other side are those who argue that siestas are no longer a needed cultural tradition and that remaining in the Central European Time zone runs counter to the way Spain's time was originally established.

It returns to the argument about the status quo. When an entity begins to target traditions that are inherent to a society's culture, there tends to be backlash. Siesta enthusiasts tend to be the most sarcastic and humorous when it comes to discussing this aspect of their history. While there are more serious attempts to re-emphasize the value and tradition of having siesta time, there are more examples from laypersons who are astonished that the Spanish government is considering eradicating a beloved part of their culture.

For example, David Blanco, president of the National Association of Friends of the Siesta, decided to implement a siesta competition. The competition took place in a shopping mall in Madrid and competitors were tasked with taking the best 20-minute nap they could manage. The purpose of the entire competition was “to spread the idea that the nap is something of ours [Spaniards] that must be defended and practiced because it is healthy and good for everyone” (“Campeonato De Siesta”). Blanco told NPR reporter Melissa Block that he created the competition to encourage citizens to take naps during the day, which he acknowledged goes against modern mentality. He believes that there is something integral in being able to go home for a nap and in the ability to enjoy the evening. In response to Melissa’s question as to the popularity of the competition, Blanco admits that:

The championship is going so, so well that we are amazed....We are surprised because we felt in the very beginning that they’re going to be embarrassed to try to sleep in front of everyone. But, no, they are taking it as a contest that is funny (“In Spain, A Drive to Save the Siesta”).

His approach is a rhetorical act that seeks to bring awareness to the issues with modern day mentality while urging Spanish citizens to maintain their values by celebrating the institution of siesta time. By doing so, Blanco hopes to preserve the sanctity of this instituted tradition.

David Blanco is not alone in his thinking. As was seen with the influx of participants in his competition, Spaniards are voicing their opinions and are waiting to be heard. This desire is no more prevalent than on social media. Looking specifically to the Twitter handle #vivasiesta, it is apparent that many citizens disapprove of the idea that siesta time may be taken away. Their cries range from blatant opposition to siesta being taken away to more creative innuendoes to how great life is with a siesta. Jon Laird tweeted a response to a *Washington Post* article titled

“Time to Wake Up! Spain’s Prime Minister Wants to End Siesta” in which he commented that the rest of the world should “adopt the Spanish siesta” rather than Spaniards assimilating to the rest of modernized thinking. Laird’s tweet is accompanied by many others, yet some tweets are not necessarily in response to the controversy itself, but to the culture surrounding siestas. For example, Libby Cruz tweeted her disgust at someone who was weed whacking during her siesta time and how she wanted them to “show a little respect.” This Twitter handle demonstrates the fire citizens feel towards what is perceived as an attack on their culture and the traditional norms that they have enjoyed for so long.

For those who are against siesta time, the topic of culture cannot be ignored. With such a large resistance to changing what is perceived as a time honored tradition rooted in the complexities of custom, those in opposition to the institution of siesta time must make compelling arguments as to why it is necessary to rationalize Spain’s working hours. Most forms of argumentation on this side of the controversy take the form of scrutinizing this existing “culture” and the relevance it has to current Spanish society. The rhetoric would suggest that many people who are against the idea of a siesta claim that Spain should move back to the time zone it was originally in because that is the true culture of Spain.

Giving more voice to the groups going against siesta time is José Díaz Canseco, the Asturias Delegate of the National Commission for the Rationalization of Timetables in Spain. He responded in an interview with the EAE Business School that Spain’s current time zone is an anomaly. He explains that during the second World War, many countries aligned their time zones to be in sync with Germany’s, whether they were allies or not. After that war, almost every country except Spain went back to their original time zones. Thus, for the past 70 or more years, Spain has been living in a different time zone that what would be expected by the position

of the country on the world map of time zones. He asserts “that we [Spaniards] are now living in an anomaly” (“A 6-hour Work Day”). Canseco claims that the Greenwich Mountain Time zone is the correct time zone for Spain and holds the true originality for Spanish culture (“A 6-hour Working Day”). This particular argument only addresses one part of this side of the debate (moving Spain’s time zone), but it does play a role in undermining the pro-siesta argument that siesta time is deeply rooted in tradition.

In continuing to undermine siesta time supporters’ assertions of culture, supporters of eliminating siesta time result to criticizing or mocking the culture in order to show its lack of relevance to society and, therefore, society’s need to change its habits. One writer for ABC.es, an online Spanish newspaper, commented that two different newspapers ridicule Spain for its siesta time culture: *The Telegraph* and *New York Times*. He points out two different instances when these newspapers posted articles pertaining to Spain’s siesta time and used cliché photos of people taking a siesta. The author claims that these pictures are not just cliché, but also imply that Spain is lazy by posting images that “depict a fat man sleeping” (“España, Vista Por The New York Times”). However, these news images are not the sole agents in creating negative perceptions of siesta time. Spaniards and laypersons are speaking out against siesta time using the Twitter hashtag #stopsiesta. For instance, both Lluís Dalmau and Vicente Bonifas proclaim in their tweets that changes need to be made regarding siesta time. Dalmau asserts that Spanish time needs to be reset or “this country [Spain] won’t go anywhere” while Bonifas argues that siesta time’s “clock” needs to stop. Their cries for change are coupled with other people’s personal experience such as Yanira Jiménez who comments that siestas “have the opposite effect” and make her feel worse rather than helping her feel better. These citizens make it clear that siesta time must go. Their arguments are indicative of the fact that not everyone in Spain

agrees on the legitimacy of having a siesta time anymore and that their time could be better spent doing something else during the siesta hours of the day.

Traditions amongst a “people” create a common culture that invariably creates a shared identity. Siesta supporters stand firm alongside the assertion that siesta time is a part of their culture and should not be changed for modern ways of thinking. Opponents of siesta time do not negate the fact that siesta time is an ingrained tradition in Spanish culture today. Analysis of the texts reveal, though, that they argue that this tradition is falsely labeled as Spain’s original culture and that it lacks the relevance to Spanish society that it once had. They emphasize Spain’s history before World War II and assert that the time before Spain changed its time zone to Central Mountain Time is the true original culture of Spain. The contrast between these ideas of culture amongst Spaniards is consequently reflected in the gap between those for siesta time and those against siesta time. Those who are arguing in favor of the siesta are looking to promote an identity of tradition and culture, no matter how “slow” that tradition may be. Conversely, those who are arguing against the siesta desire to promote a cultural identity that has been fixed and a tradition that has been archived.

But the rhetoric behind both positions still emphasizes the importance of cultural identity in Spain. Both sides of the debate want to elevate cultural identity; they just have different approaches as to how to achieve that goal. For those in favor of siesta time, it is maintaining that tradition. For those against siesta time, it is through finding new traditions and embracing the new ideals of an evolving nation. As much a role as culture plays in widening the gap between these two groups, other topics such as health also fairly contribute to the gap.

Health

Not only does Spain have one of the best national healthcare systems globally, but according to the 2013 Gallup-Healthways Global Well-Being Index, 35% of Spaniards under the age of 45 excel in physical well-being (Standish and Diego-Rosell). Supporters for and against siestas both tackle the theme of health within their arguments, using claims and evidence to legitimize their appeals. However, like the other themes mentioned thus far, each side advocates for a polar opposite side with the confidence that they are more correct than their opponents. The breadth of the arguments go from mental fortitude to physical well-being.

Health and productivity have a cause and effect relationship that is hard to separate. Those who are healthy are more likely to be more productive and more efficient than those who are not. Likewise, those who are productive are likely to be healthier than those who are less active. This relationship is not always proven correct, but it is hard to deny the logic of such a relationship. Therefore, when discussing health, those in favor of siesta time argue that taking time to relax, enjoy one's family, and simply nap is healthier for the human body and spirit which produces a more efficient person. Their main focus, however, is not on the result (productivity) but on the cause (health).

There is a paralleled logic that goes unstated by most writers who support siesta time, including Karen McCann, a travel blogger, who commented on Spain's controversy. She writes that "siestas reduce the chance of a fatal heart attack by 37%. And a National Institute of Mental Health study showed that siestas can also reverse information overload and prevent burnout" ("Rocket Scientists Discover the Siesta"). McCann is careful to avoid the correlation-causation fallacy by merely stating these two facts without saying one is caused by the other. However, it is almost apparent that the author wishes the audience to make these connections on their own, especially when she states at the end of her article that "I count on my siestas to make me more

efficient and less likely to suffer burnout, stress, or a fatal heart attack” (“Rocket Scientists Discover the Siesta”). Again, she evades stating a fallacy by making the relationship of causation a personal one and not a general statement of how each element functions in terms of the others. While she circumvents this fallacy, she puts weight into the logic that taking a nap inherently makes you healthier and legitimizes her claim by use of statistics.

Not only do siesta enthusiasts make claims about how siesta time is physically good for a person, they also argue that siesta time is a biological necessity. Robinson claims:

Taking a long break in the middle of the day is not only healthier than the conventional lunch; it’s apparently more natural. Sleep researchers have found that the Spanish biorhythm may be tuned more closely to our biological clocks.

Studies suggest that humans are ‘biphasic’ creatures, requiring days broken up by two periods of sleep instead of one up-till-you-drop ‘monophasic’ shift” (“In Praise of the Spanish Siesta”).

Robinson uses these arguments to show that siesta time is actually a healthier option for people than the 21st century mentality of the “monophasic shift.” He reveals that “the life expectancy in Spain is two years longer than in the United States.” Thus, Robinson asserts that the way Spaniards have set up their schedules is better in regards to health because it is more closely aligned with our natural time clocks.

Interestingly, some of those in favor of keeping the tradition of siesta time concede that a 2-3 hour nap is not really necessary (and not the standard protocol in Spanish society anyway). They assert that most Spaniards only take about a 20-30-minute siesta, which is healthy. The benefits of such a nap are numerous and seem to expand past physical standards of well-being into mental states as well. Lloyd Alter, a writer for the online sustainability website

TreeHugger.com, confidently notes the benefits of siesta time from “memory boosts to lower blood pressure to enhanced creativity and improved alertness. It could lower medical costs too” (“Don't Kill the Spanish Siesta”). At the same time, other advocates make even broader claims as to the benefits that a siesta can provide such as: more energy, happiness and wellbeing, and reduced risks of accidents at work and on the road (“La Siesta”). These directly stated consequences (without any evidence to support them) can easily fall into the correlation/causation trap, but tend to gain credibility when brought alongside other articles that mention the same benefits and provide evidence.

The parallelism between health and productivity does not cease to exist when turning to the other side of this debate. In fact, groups in opposition to siesta time also use the relationship to point out flaws in the idea of taking a siesta. These advocates almost call upon the traditional stereotypes of a lazy Spanish lifestyle and claim them as reality while also stating that this type of lifestyle results in unhealthy people who are unmotivated to be productive. For example, those who are against the idea of a siesta and/or are advocates of changing time zones argue that it is better to work all the way through a project or a set time (like 8am-5pm) than to break it up into segments, claiming multiple negative consequences. Yet, these texts primarily, if not solely, look to consequences regarding physical health. They make no mention as to siesta times' impact on mental stability.

Opponents of siesta time rely on one major style of argumentation to justify why siestas are not healthy: statistics. Most of the article and opinion pieces provided by advocates against siestas only use case studies and numbers to prove that although taking naps may seem like a healthy alternative to working, it can lead to health defects. One such instance is an opinion article posted by a website called SlumberWise in which it talks about why some cultures

practice a siesta while others do not. One explanation to the variance of siestas across cultures is health. SlumberWise refers to a study done in Costa Rica that was published in the *Oxford Journal* which argues that “those who took long, daily siestas were more likely to develop coronary disease than those that siesta less than one time per week” (“Siesta: The Little Nap with a Big History”). The study explained that not only can inactivity contribute to the increased risk of these health problems, but the process of waking up can cause an increase in blood pressure and heart rate (“Siesta: The Little Nap with a Big History”). Thus, this opinion article uses the Costa Rican study to disprove older studies on the topic, while also working to demonstrate that siestas may not be as physically beneficial as pro-siesta enthusiasts make it out to seem.

Similarly, two other studies came to the same basic conclusion about siesta time: regarding the negative health status. The first of these studies analyzed the relationship between those affected with the malaria disease and taking a siesta. They discussed how their results indicate a negative association with taking a siesta and contracting an infectious disease such as malaria stating that “siestas did appear to be associated with the presence of malaria, and likely other parasitic and infectious diseases” (Barone). However, Barone does recognize the possibility that siestas may be a biological defense mechanism to disease. Barone’s study seeks to explore the negative results of taking a siesta in a specific way by focusing on malaria and other infectious diseases. ObesityFacts had a similar motivation when they published an article discussing the association between a siesta and obesity. They argue that their studies reveal “short sleep duration at night was associated with a higher risk of obesity; additionally, a siesta of 30 min was inversely associated with the risk of obesity” (Sayón-Orea, Bes-Rastrollo, Carlos, Buena, Basterra-Gortari, & Martínez-González). This lack of sleep and increase of body fat can cause a decrease in productivity levels due to decreases in the energy (Sayón-Orea et al.). Both

texts oppose arguments that claim siesta as a healthy tradition. They seek to prove through studies and statistics that siesta time is, in fact, a rather unhealthy practice. It is true, however, that although their exploration goes into the negative physical health repercussions, they spend no time researching the effects of siesta time on mental health.

It is important to address the two definitions – physical health and mental health– in order to fully appeal to concerns regarding this theme. Proponents of siesta time have accomplished this task. Those against siestas only touch on the relationship between siesta time and physical health, but use the negative consequences they find to assert siesta time should not remain a part of Spanish society. Both sides of the controversy show how interrelated the themes of health and productivity are, almost bringing the discussion of themes full circle. Whereas there is no 100% causation relationship, both sides tend to lean on the correlation/causation fallacy of asserting the direct link between being healthy and being productive and vice versa.

And yet, the identity each side is advocating for is drastically different. Those who are supporting the institution of siesta time are encouraging an identity where rest and relaxation are key components to the health of all individuals and is, thus, an acceptable stigma to maintain. Those who are against siesta time strongly disagree. Through their evidence of how damaging siesta time can be on a person's health, they are promoting an identity of a healthier society based on an 8am-5pm work schedule which keeps the body in line with its natural clock. And yet, cohesively, the two sides work together to promote the value of health. Neither position would argue that health is not important or that Spain could do without focusing on health. Rather, the rhetoric of both sides promotes high ideals of health and both positions assert that the nation can only achieve the greatest levels of health through agreeing with and implementing their side of the debate and the identity they wish to construct.

Chapter 6 – Discussion

The siesta time controversy is not a problem with a simple solution. Siesta time is a tradition that is ingrained in the seemingly time honored culture of Spanish life. Both sides use a wide range of stylistic appeals to advocate for their side including studies, statistics, personal stories, interviews, and fun protest competitions. The four most prominent themes found throughout both positions are productivity, family, culture, and health. Although talked about as though they were separate entities entirely, it is important to note that these themes rely on each other and are interwoven together. Most texts combine appeals to two or more of these topics within the same article and it is rare to find a text that solely focuses on one. Therefore, these themes can be analyzed as singular parts to a greater whole or as a collective whole in which each component part is examined.

Both sides utilize different appeals to construct Spain's identity because their end goal is different. For those who are in favor of siesta time, they desire to adhere to the status quo. In this instance, they are not fighting for an audience to re-construct Spain's identity, but rather they wish to have an audience that will undergo a renewal of pride in Spain's current identity – an identity that promotes a strong force against the modern mentality of making the Spanish lifestyle more productive, efficient, and progressive. They wish to promote an identity that seems to maintain Spain's unique cultural atmosphere.

Conversely, those who are against siesta time yearn to change the status quo because they perceive it to be a barrier to economic and social progress. Instead of remaining unchanged, those in opposition to siesta time hope to gain an audience who will reconstruct Spain's identity. The identity they wish to endorse is one that idealizes Spain as a progressive and industrialized country that substantially benefits Spanish citizens.

Through this rhetorical analysis, an answer has been reached about the research question: How does a “people” (nation) construct its identity as a component of the “group” (the global community)? The theory of constitutive rhetoric provided the lens through which to see that a “people” must undergo the process of interpellation through commonly held beliefs or values. Once they have formed a collective audience, then they may choose whether to be passive or aggressive agents in the procedure of constructing an identity. The audience or “people” then turn to the “group” to introduce their new identity. This process may even take place in the presence of opposition from the “group” and the “group” may even influence the degree to which the “people” reconstruct their identity.

In Spain, this process can be seen in relation to the siesta time debates that the nation is currently undergoing. The “people” (those inside Spain/Spanish culture) are trying to discover, not only what values are the most important to them, but also what the manifestation of those values looks like moving forward. The “group” (or those outside of Spain and Spanish culture) is trying to help Spain along by providing an argument that they are fine the way they are now. They are trying to promote an idealized version of Spain that suits their preferences while ignoring other factors like Spain’s struggling economy. However, the rhetors who are insiders to Spain are trying to advocate a position that maintains all of Spain’s values while also creating a better economy and a better, progressive nation for the future. This dual perspective is exactly how the “people” are trying to build an identity while also being a component of the “group.”

There is more research to be done in the field of constitutive rhetoric. More substantive research on the relationship between an active audience and resistance would contribute to discovering the relationship between “the people” and the “group.” Future research may also seek to explore the repercussions of a re-constructed identity to determine the success of identity

formation and longevity. Finally, future research can look at how authors would appeal to an audience who is divided among stances, values, and beliefs and how those authors strive to create a community of shared goals to construct their identity. Furthermore, this study does not just impact future research in the field of communication studies, but also in global studies/international relations. Research may be conducted in these fields that analyzes the relationship that nations have with one another and whether those relationships impact national sovereignty or national identity construction.

Spain has struggled with their identity since the early 2000s. Since the Roman conquering, Spain has been influenced and impacted by other countries. Now, it is time for Spain to take a step towards its own sovereignty. Constitutive rhetoric gives Spain the tools it needs to create an audience willing to accept the challenge of reconstructing an identity for Spain. The rhetoric of this controversy lies within the confines of four primary “themes,” with each side advocating a different perspective. Yet, the two differing sides try to emphasize the importance of the theme itself in Spanish society. They simply construct two different identities that affirm these ideals. For those who are in favor of siesta time, upholding the themes of productivity, family, tradition, and health is directly accomplished by the continued implementation and practice of a siesta time in Spain. For those who are against siesta time, perpetuation of the four themes is most adequately achieved by moving away from the practice of siesta time and embracing a society that no longer needs a break, but is ready to move forward as a more progressive nation. Moving forward, Spain must either concede to the “group” and continue to endorse images of fat, lazy, old men cat-napping in the sun or they must stand fast in their desire to reconstruct their identity to promote images of progress, innovation, and modernization for the betterment of their own society.

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