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Summary

This Working Paper seeks to shed new light on the international dimensions of Spain's democratisation process (1975-86), a topic which first began to receive serious academic attention in the early 1990s. It applies some of the insights derived from the recent academic literature on democratisation to an analysis of the Spanish case, paying special attention to the external factors that impinged on the country's socio-economic evolution in the years prior to the transition; the influence of the Roman Catholic Church; the multi-faceted European dimension, particularly the role of the European Communities (EC) and the major European democracies (above all, Germany); and the (relatively limited) impact of the US and NATO.

Conceptual framework

Functionalist interpretations of democratisation tend to underscore the role of long-term structural factors, such as the contribution of external actors to a state's insertion in the regional and world economies and the social changes that result from it. In contrast, the transitology (or 'elite agent') school emphasises shorter-term phenomena, such as the strategies and decisions implemented by individual and collective external actors, and their interactions with their counterparts in the recipient society. The 'wave theory' paradigm theorised by Samuel P. Huntington, used extensively here, stands somewhere in between, combining both long-term structural elements and an emphasis on shorter-term interactions between external and domestic actors.

Political scientists have traditionally broken down the process of democratisation into three distinct phases: liberalisation, transition proper and consolidation. In keeping with this, the functionalist approach may be more useful in studying the liberalisation and consolidation phases, which are generally more protracted and multi-faceted, while the genetic view can provide better insights into the dynamics of the transition process itself. In keeping with this, different kinds of external pressures may manifest themselves during the three phases of democratisation, since external actors will perform different tasks and roles as their priorities change in response to the evolution of the process in question. During the liberalisation phase, for example, these actors will generally apply pressure on the non-democratic regime to force it to 'open up'. When the transition begins, these same actors will often seek to support key emerging political and social organisations, such as political parties and trade unions, and the process of institution-building overall. Finally, during the consolidation phase, external support will often aim to ensure the economic success of the new democracy, for example, by facilitating membership of regional organisations that may help to underpin it economically (as well as politically), and to guarantee that democratisation is irreversible. In this paper, liberalisation is used with reference to the period prior to the appointment of Adolfo Suárez as Prime Minister in July 1976, the transition itself is the process leading to the adoption of a new democratic Constitution in December 1978, and the consolidation phase is understood to have been completed with Spain's accession to the EC in 1986.

Another generic finding worth noting is that the importance of the external dimension will vary according to the type of transition under observation, or the nature of the 'road to democracy' that is followed by the state in question. External factors (and actors) appear to be somewhat less relevant in so-called 'pacted transitions', such as the Spanish, which are often characterised by negotiations and agreements arrived at between regime reformists and representatives of the democratic opposition.

It should also be noted that authoritarian collapse and the transition to democracy usually brings with it a reconsideration of external policy allegiances, essentially because the discredit attached to the outgoing regime rebounds on its traditional foreign policy priorities and attachments. In turn, this will often engage the concern of interested foreign powers, particularly if this policy change threatens to upset or significantly modify the status quo. Consequently, it is safe to assume that transitions such as Spain's, which did not imply a challenge to the existing balance of global power or regional spheres of influence, are more likely to succeed than those that do.

One of the major weaknesses of the early literature on the international dimensions of democratisation was that it did not clearly conceptualise the relationship between external and domestic actors. Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way shed significant light on this matter by introducing two very useful concepts, namely 'leverage' and 'linkage'. Leverage refers to the ability of external actors to apply pressure in favour of democratic outcomes, while linkage describes the density of the bonds (political, economic, military and cultural) and the flows (people, goods and capital) that exist between promoter and recipient states. Fundamentally, this framework posits that the chances for effective leverage will largely depend on the strength of the linkages that exist between the promoter and recipient states. Secondly, leverage will also be influenced by the presence or absence of alternative options or models, which is in turn often determined by geographic, cultural and linguistic proximity. Finally, the existence (and relative importance) of foreign policy and security priorities other than the promotion of democracy may limit a promoter state's willingness and/or ability to support democratisation; by the same token, a non-democratic recipient state may seek to limit this leverage by presenting itself as a guarantor of certain foreign policy and security priorities that are of particular value to the promoter state.

The transitology literature is often criticised for being overly state-centric, placing too much emphasis on the relationships forged between promoter and recipient states, and more specifically, on the motives and actions of the former. A slightly different way of viewing this problem is to consider how democratic practices, institutions and norms are propagated, sometimes quite spontaneously (and even involuntarily), and not necessarily by state actors alone. According to the typology developed by Laurence Whitehead, democracy may come about through contagion, control or consent. The idea of 'democratisation by contagion' is based on the empirical observation that states which are geographically close to one another tend to develop similar political regimes. This is similar (though not identical) to the 'snowball effect' described by Huntington in connection with the 'third wave', by which recipient states may be encouraged to imitate and adopt the democratic practices, institutions and norms they observe in other states, particularly when they see them working successfully in societies they consider not unlike their own. The notion of 'democratisation by control' refers to political change resulting from direct external action or explicit democracy promotion, the most extreme examples of this being transitions resulting from invasion (and occupation) or decolonisation. In other cases, of course, sanctions and incentives may suffice to bring about democratisation. The third variant identified by Whitehead, 'democratisation by consent', which alludes to the generation of new democratic norms through international processes, is also the most complex and subtle, and often the most difficult to document empirically. This brings together several different dimensions of the democratising process, both external and domestic. Firstly, democratisation may raise questions about the territorial limits of the state in question: the establishment of boundaries is an eminently international act, while generating social consent for those boundaries is essentially a domestically driven process, and these two very different dynamics may result in conflict. The important point here is that 'a peaceful international system needs to generate consent (both within and between nations) for a precisely agreed pattern of inter-state boundaries and security alignments'. Writing in the mid-1990s, this author regarded the EC as the most effective provider of external consent, which it largely implemented by means of a policy of 'democratic conditionality', which is analysed in

greater detail below with regard to the Spanish case. Whitehead also placed the EC at the heart of a specific modality of 'democratisation by consent', namely 'democratisation through convergence', or the process whereby a country's economic, political, social and cultural practices, institutions and values gradually align themselves with those of other, already existing democratic states.

The Franco regime: from Civil War to Cold War

Before analysing the international dimensions of Spain's democratisation, it is useful to place this episode in the broader context of the country's evolution over the previous decades. The Second Republic (1931-36), Spain's first attempt at fully-fledged democracy, was plagued by chronic cabinet instability, party-system fragmentation, ideological polarisation and political violence. Nevertheless, it did not succumb of its own accord but was violently overthrown by a military coup led by General Francisco Franco, which plunged Spain into a bloody three year-long Civil War (1936-39). Following the defeat of the Republican armies, Franco established a political system that was repressive, extremely confessional, half-heartedly corporatist, deeply conservative and Spanish nationalist. His regime was not unlike others that existed in much of Southern and Central Europe in the interwar years; unlike them, however, Francoism not only survived World War II but continued to exist for another three decades, a longevity only equalled (and indeed surpassed) by Salazar's dictatorship in neighbouring Portugal. However, even the Franco regime had to adapt to the new, post-war status quo and, largely in response to growing pressure from abroad, it soon abandoned its early neo-totalitarian trappings, gradually evolving into a more conventional authoritarian regime, formally becoming a monarchy without a king, with Franco as regent for life, in 1947.

International factors, most notably the onset of the Cold War, played an extremely prominent role in the Spanish regime's survival. Initially, Franco was completely excluded from the post-war European and international community, on account of both the military and political backing he had received from Hitler and Mussolini during the Civil War, and the support he later offered them in World War II. Spain paid a very high price for this and, alongside Finland, was the only Western European country excluded from the Marshall Plan and, by extension, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC, 1948), the Council of Europe (1949) and NATO (1949). In view of the political hostility of the European democracies, Franco sought the country's diplomatic reinsertion in the new post-war international order via Washington. The Pentagon identified Spain as a potential ally in 1946, and its interest intensified in the wake of the Berlin Blockade (1948) and the outbreak of the Korean War (1950). With growing support from the US, in 1950 the United Nations withdrew the sanctions it had imposed on Franco in 1946 (with France and Britain abstaining), paving the way both for the return of ambassadors to Madrid and for Spanish membership of the World Health Organisation (1951), UNESCO (1952), the International Labour Organisation (1953) and, finally, the UN itself (1955). This bilateral rapprochement with Washington, which took the shape of sizeable loans and government aid from 1950 onwards, eventually resulted in the signing of the decisive Pact of Madrid in September 1953, whereby the US was granted the use of several air and naval bases on Spanish soil in return for substantial military and economic assistance.

The European powers were initially far less accommodating, excluding Madrid from the European Coal and Steel Community (1951) and the negotiations leading to the Rome Treaties (1957). However, given that at the time the six founding member states of the European Communities (EC) only purchased 30% of Spain's exports and provided 23% of its imports, the regime initially believed it could afford to remain aloof from the European integration process. In Spain the year 1957 was thus generally associated not with the Rome Treaties, but with the appointment of a new government dominated by technocratic modernisers, who adopted a decisive Stabilisation Plan (1959) that initiated a far-reaching transformation of the country's economy policy. Both events, however, were closely related. If the regime decided to abandon economic autarky, it was largely out of fear that it was leading to an economic disaster of unthinkable social and political consequences, an outcome that would inevitably be attributed to its failure to develop closer ties with the major European economies.

The Stabilisation Plan inaugurated a period of very significant economic and social modernisation. Over the next decade and a half, Spain experienced unprecedented economic growth (averaging 6.9% per annum in 1960-74), with GDP per capita rising from US$300 to US$3,260. The Plan would not have succeeded had Spain not first joined the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (1958), and later the OEEC (1959), whose experts and funds helped to design and finance it. In short, the Plan accelerated the process of Westernisation initiated with the signing of the 1953 bases agreement with Washington, though in this case the measures implemented led to a steady Europeanisation of the Spanish economy, significantly reducing its dependence on the US.

Western European governments gradually established a reasonably good working relationship with Madrid, and their commitment to democratisation while Franco was in power should not be exaggerated. The opening-up of Spain's economy in the late 1950s took place with their full support, and the 'economic miracle' of 1960-74 would not have occurred if Europe had not supplied direct capital investment, tourists and jobs for Spanish emigrants in abundance. France and Germany strongly encouraged Spain's economic development and closer ties with Europe in the hope that this would eventually create conditions conducive to the restoration of democracy, which was of course fully compatible with their own economic self-interest.

Spain and Huntington's 'third wave of democratisation'

Historians and political scientists have long been puzzled by the fact that democracy appears to have advanced worldwide in both spatial and chronological clusters. It was largely this observation that led Huntington to advance his 'wave theory', according to which democracy had disseminated throughout the globe in three distinct, consecutive waves, during the years 1828-1926, 1943-62 and 1974-90. Huntington set out to explain why some 30 countries with authoritarian regimes (but not another 100 non-democratic systems also in existence at the time) adopted democratic forms of government in 1974-90, and why this occurred during this decade and a half and not at some other time. One possible answer to the first question could be that 23 of the 29 countries that democratised during the 'third wave' (including Spain) had already experienced democracy in the past. The second question, however, led him to posit that in the 1960s-70s five plausible dependent variables produced the dependent variable he had observed, namely the almost 30 democratic transitions that took place in the 1970s-80s. In the paragraphs below we examine to what extent these changes help us understand the deeper causes of Spain's democratisation.

The domestic socio-economic environment

The first of the variables identified by Huntington refers to 'the deepening legitimacy problems of authoritarian regimes in a world where democratic values were widely accepted, the dependence of those regimes on performance legitimacy, and the undermining of that legitimacy by military defeats, economic failures, and the oil shocks of 1973-74 and 1978-79'. As we saw above, Spain experienced a period of unprecedented growth in the 1960s, but this came to an abrupt halt when oil prices quadrupled after the 1973-74 crisis, which was hardly surprising in a country that imported some 70% of its energy from abroad. This triggered a sharp increase in inflation, unemployment and public debt, and a decline in productivity and foreign investment. However, the full brunt of the crisis was not felt until after Franco's death in 1975, and it therefore cannot be said to have played a major role in undermining the regime's performance legitimacy, though it did provide his successors with an added incentive to initiate the democratising process.

The second change identified by Huntington was 'the unprecedented global economic growth of the 1960s, which raised living standards, increased education, and greatly expanded the urban middle class in many countries'. This is undoubtedly applicable to the Spanish case, where rapid economic growth brought with it unprecedented social change as well. Most remarkably, while in 1950 almost half the working population was still employed in the agricultural sector, by 1975 this had dropped to 23%; this decline from half to a quarter of the working population had taken 75 years in France, 50 in Germany and 30 in Italy. Similarly, between 1950 and 1975 the share of the labour force employed in industry and the service sector rose from 25% to 38% and 40%, respectively. Furthermore, between 1962 and 1975, almost 6 million Spaniards moved from rural to urban areas, so that by the time of Franco's death, a quarter of the population lived in a province different to that of their birth. These changes brought with them a significant expansion (and transformation) of the middle class, which grew from 14% to 43% of the population, and the emergence, for the first time in Spain's history, of a nationwide industrial working class. Spaniards also became better educated: adult

illiteracy rates, still at 44% in 1930, had dropped to 5% by 1975, and the number of children enrolled in secondary education rose from 260,000 in 1953-54 to a million and a half in 1970-71, while that of university students increased from 77,000 in 1960 to half a million by 1975. Prosperity also brought widespread access to consumer goods: while only 1% of households owned TVs in 1960, by 1975 this had risen to 90%. In short, by the mid-1970s Spain was a relatively modern, urbanised, and prosperous society, with a political culture substantially different to that of the 1930s.

In keeping with Huntington's expectations, these transformations fed a growing demand for democracy: according to one study, between 1966 and 1976 support for democratic institutions rose from 35% to 78%. Attitudes favourable to democracy were particularly strong among the working class, which largely turned its back on revolutionary ideologies and procedures as collective bargaining was gradually institutionalised in the workplace in the late Franco period. Modernisation and increased prosperity did not make the advent of democracy a foregone conclusion, however; indeed, economic growth may have delayed it somewhat by making the regime more acceptable to an increasingly prosperous and consumer-driven population. However, these changes did make many Spaniards significantly risk-averse, which may explain why most favoured a gradual, controlled process of democratisation that would avoid the pitfalls of earlier, more abrupt experiments with regime change.

The Roman Catholic Church

The fact that three quarters of the 'third wave' transitions took place in predominantly Roman Catholic countries also led Huntington to stress the impact of 'the striking changes in the doctrine and activities of the Catholic Church manifested in the Second Vatican Council in 1962-65 and the transformation of national churches from defenders of the status quo to opponents of authoritarianism and proponents of social, economic and political reform'. In Spain, the Catholic Church, which had suffered significant persecution during the Second Republic and the Civil War, emerged from the latter as one of the Franco regime's staunchest pillars, and was duly recompensed with an extremely generous Concordat (1953). However, following the Second Vatican Council, the Spanish Church began to provide protection, support, resources and even leaders for several increasingly influential anti-regime movements, most notably the Workers' Commissions, a grassroots labour union which was banned in 1967. Similarly, in Catalonia and the Basque Country, the younger clergy increasingly identified with those who resisted the regime's repression of linguistic and cultural pluralism. The Second Vatican Council also led to a significant internal democratisation of the Church, which resulted in the establishment of a national Episcopal Conference in 1966, which elected a moderate but sincere reformist, Cardinal Vicente Enrique y Tarancón, as its second president (1971-81). It was at his instigation that a joint Assembly of Bishops and Priests was convened in 1971, which adopted resolutions in favour of the freedom of expression, political association and unionisation. Though reluctant to confront the regime head-on, Tarancón achieved world fame in 1974 by threatening to excommunicate Franco and his government after the Prime Minister, Carlos Arias Navarro, attempted to expel a bishop from the country for writing a homily in defence of the public use of the Basque language. Given that Spain under Franco was a staunchly confessional state, criticism of its policies by the Church inevitably undermined its legitimacy.

By the early 1970s, the Vatican had very specific reasons for wanting a change of regime in Spain. In 1941 Franco had reluctantly been granted the right of presentation to bishoprics, which gave him a considerable say in the appointment of bishops. This was incompatible with the Second Vatican Council's insistence on the Church's autonomy relative to all political systems, and in 1968 Pope Paul VI asked Franco to renounce this privilege. The latter refused, however, and was unmoved when Spain's bishops reiterated this request in 1973. Over time, it became clear to bishops and Pope alike that only a change of regime could result in a separation of Church and state such as that desired by Rome and much of the Spanish population.

After Franco's death, the Catholic Church became a staunch supporter of the democratising efforts led by King Juan Carlos. In the homily he read at the mass held to celebrate his proclamation in November 1975, Tarancón explained that although the Church could not determine 'which authorities should govern us', it was entitled to demand that they be 'at the service of the entire community', that they 'respect the rights of the individual without discrimination or privileges' and 'protect and promote the exercise of adequate freedoms for all and the necessary collective participation in common problems and in government decisions'. Tarancón also implicitly advocated the future separation of Church and state and hoped to establish a relationship based on 'mutual autonomy and freedom'. Far from seeing this as an unwelcome encroachment, Juan Carlos interpreted it as a highly valuable legitimation of his aspiration to rule as 'king of all Spaniards'. Tarancón would later admit to him in private that 'although the Church's mission is not to support any particular regime, it is its mission to favour political coexistence and society's orderly progress which, as things currently stand, largely depend on the monarchy', in light of which he could rest assured that he would 'find the utmost loyalty in the Spanish hierarchy and the Holy See'. Several weeks later, Pope Paul VI reiterated this message to the Spanish foreign minister: 'We are on your side. Our desire is for Spain to carry out an orderly transition without violence'.

Following Adolfo Suárez's appointment as Prime Minister in July 1976, Juan Carlos offered to renounce his right to nominate Spain's bishops, in response to which the Vatican agreed to surrender the ecclesiastical privileges it had enjoyed under the 1953 Concordat. This marked the beginning of a process that eventually led to the formal separation of church and state in the democratic Constitution adopted in 1978, a change of status which was later codified in several bilateral agreements, which replaced the existing Concordat in early 1979.

In sum, the Catholic Church contributed to the democratising process both by undermining the Franco regime's legitimacy in the final years of the dictator's life, and by throwing its weight behind those who favoured a gradual, controlled transition which would eventually enable it to redefine its relationship with the new democratic state in a manner that was mutually satisfactory.

The European Community and the Council of Europe

Huntington also attributed the 'third wave' to 'changes in the policies of external actors, including in the 1960s a new attitude of the European Community toward expanding its membership', at a time when it was 'actively promoting liberalization and democratization'. In brief, 'the establishment of democracy was seen as necessary to secure the economic benefits of Community membership, and Community membership was seen as a guarantee of the stability of democracy'.

There can be little doubt as to the positive influence of the major European institutions on Spain's democratisation, though some authors have questioned its importance. Although the preamble to the Rome Treaty (1957) establishing the EC mentioned 'peace and liberty' amongst its goals, this was not initially seen as an insurmountable obstacle to membership by the regime. Madrid nevertheless understood that, although article 237 stated that 'any European state may apply to become a member of the Community', the decision to accept new members required both the unanimous support of all governments and the approval of national parliaments. Franco and his alter ego, Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco, who later became his first Prime Minister in 1973, feared that any attempt to establish closer relations with Brussels would make them increasingly vulnerable to external political pressures, but the technocrats who had conceived the 1959 Stabilisation Plan persuaded them of the need to do so. The latter were greatly encouraged by expressions of French and German support, and not without reason: in 1961, General de Gaulle went so far as to praise 'the attitude of Franco and the Spanish regime as a factor for stability and social peace in the world and especially in Europe'. This partly explains why Madrid underestimated the importance of a debate held in January 1962 in the European Parliament to examine a report compiled by the German social-democrat Willy Birkelbach, which, drafted with Spain very much in mind, concluded that 'the guaranteed existence of a democratic form of state, in the sense of a free political order, is a condition for membership'. In the knowledge that the Parliament's approval was not necessary for membership agreements, the Spanish government went ahead regardless, formally requesting 'the opening of negotiations to examine the possibility of establishing an association with the Community capable of leading in time to a complete integration' in February 1962. By way of justification, the application cited Spain's 'European vocation', its geographical position and territorial contiguity with the EC, and its ambitious programme of economic reforms.

Spain's application provoked a remarkable reaction from the Franco regime's many opponents in Europe, who mobilised via political parties, trade unions and the media, in an unprecedented effort to stymie what might otherwise have been an unspectacular diplomatic overture. Although Communist and Socialist activists were particularly vocal in their opposition, Liberals and Christian Democrats also played a prominent role. Most surprisingly, perhaps, non-state actors proved most effective in voicing their concern. In June 1962, over 100 Spanish opposition leaders, both exiled and resident in Spain, convened at Munich under the auspices of the IV Congress of the European Movement, concluding that 'integration of any country with Europe, whether in the form of full membership or of association, requires democratic institutions', while at the same time producing a catalogue of prerequisites for Spanish membership largely borrowed from the European Convention on Human Rights. On returning from Munich, dissidents residing in Spain were forced to choose between exile and confinement, provoking

further protests from numerous European national parliaments, political parties, trade unions and EC officials. In light of this reaction, and in spite of considerable official French and German sympathy for the Spanish application, at the insistence of the Benelux countries, Belgium in particular, the Council of Ministers decided to reply with a mere accusé de réception, and in October 1962 the Commission decided to put all applications on hold until negotiations with Britain had been completed.

In the 1960s, relations with the EC became increasingly important to Spain owing to the European dimension of the three factors that most contributed to its economic growth, namely foreign investment, tourism and emigrants' remittances. In the wake of stabilisation, European capital gradually began to perform the role previously played by US investments. Similarly, by 1967 over 80% of tourists visiting Spain originated in the Six. Additionally, most of Spain's emigrant workers, whose remittances increased sharply in value, chose EC countries as their destination (Switzerland excepted). Furthermore, rapid economic growth in the 1960s failed to eradicate fundamental economic weaknesses while helping to create new ones: although exports grew rapidly during the 1960s and early 1970s, imports increased even faster, resulting in a steadily worsening trade deficit. Madrid therefore hoped that closer relations with Brussels would grant it a greater say in decisions that increasingly affected the Spanish economy.

The EC finally granted Madrid a Preferential Agreement in June 1970 on the understanding that it would contribute to Spain's socio-economic development, thereby facilitating an eventual transition to democracy, while keeping the Franco regime at arm's length. Crucially, its six-year life span, whose possible extension was made conditional on members states' satisfaction with Spain's political evolution, was premised on the implicit assumption that Franco would not outlive it. The agreement was nevertheless very generous, for it envisaged a significant reduction in tariffs by the EC that greatly boosted Spanish industrial exports to the Six, while Madrid was permitted to implement more modest reductions, thereby preventing a massive influx of imports that might have plunged the domestic market into turmoil.

The Preferential Agreement gave the European Parliament a fresh pretext to monitor Spain's political evolution, and in December 1970 it responded vigorously to the trial of 11 members of the Basque terrorist organisation Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), six of whom received death sentences that were later commuted. External pressure did not always succeed, and in March 1974 the Parliament failed to prevent the garrotting of a young anarchist. In September 1975, however, it responded to the execution of five anti-Franco activists with a resolution demanding the suspension of the negotiations then underway with a view to expanding the 1970 agreement, which the Commission and the Council endorsed. Although national governments were often more complacent towards the Spanish authorities than the Parliament, it is thus unfair to claim that the EC generally did more 'to support the Franco regime than to weaken it'.

In his proclamation speech of November 1975, King Juan Carlos announced Spain's commitment to full integration in Europe's major institutions, a goal subsequently reaffirmed by his first governments. By so doing, those in power effectively invited the EC (and the Council of Europe) to scrutinise developments in Spain and pass judgement as to when and how the political requisites for membership should be met. This also

enabled the democratic opposition to open a European front in their ongoing tug-of-war with those in power. In February 1976, the Parliament held a major debate on Spain, in the course of which Socialist and Communist members denounced Arias Navarro's reformist programme as a half-hearted liberalisation of the existing political system, and in April the arrest of pro-democracy leaders meeting in Madrid to announce the creation of a single opposition platform (including the Communists) led to a formal protest by EC heads of government. A month later, the Parliament adopted a text condemning Arias Navarro's plans for a bicameral Cortes, in which a democratically elected Congress would share power with a 'corporatist' Senate, on the grounds that such a body 'would not measure up to the democratic standards we in the countries of Western Europe set for ourselves'. Significantly, it also objected to the government's attempts to limit political participation, arguing that 'the legal existence of Communist parties is a characteristic common to our Western democracies', and consequently a requisite for Spanish accession to the EC. These statements seriously weakened the Prime Minister, while strengthening Juan Carlos's resolve to remove him.

The ability to monitor and influence developments in Spain from abroad in this manner –even during Franco's lifetime– may largely be attributed to the existence of highly effective European political networks. The leaders of the Parliament's Socialist, Christian Democratic and Liberal groups were in constant communication with their Spanish allies, who kept them abreast of the latest developments, allowing the latter to have a direct say in the formulation of motions and questions debated in Brussels and Strasbourg. As well as enabling the European institutions to influence events in Spain, these transnational links proved highly beneficial to the democratic opposition, since access to European institutions that were widely associated with democratic values at home allowed them to establish their credibility in the eyes of potential voters.

Suárez's appointment as Prime Minister in July 1976 paved the way for a rapid rapprochement with the European institutions. After discussing his plans with government and opposition leaders in Spain, the Parliament's representatives agreed to give him the benefit of the doubt, and in December, its rapporteur, Maurice Faure, returned to express his satisfaction at the success of the referendum on the decisive Law for Political Reform, while advising Suárez to bring the Socialists into the political process as soon as possible, so as to avoid a return to the 'popular frontism' of the 1930s. Interestingly, he also recommended that Spain adopt a system of proportional representation like that of Germany, on the grounds that majoritarian systems were better suited to well-established democracies, as would indeed be the case. In April 1977, the Parliament welcomed the legalisation of the Communist Party, and in June it reacted to the holding of democratic elections for the first time since 1936 by expressing the hope that it might 'see Spain occupy its place in the European Community as soon as possible', in response to which the newly elected government submitted its formal application for membership several weeks later. The Council of Europe's Assembly also hastened to recognise the new democratic Cortes, and in November 1977 it took the unprecedented step –largely at Bonn's insistence– of granting Spain full membership even though it had not yet adopted a democratic constitution.

Despite the above, it should be recalled that the negotiations leading to membership of the EC during the years 1977-86 were difficult and protracted, and sometimes had a negative impact on the democratising process. Several member states were initially apprehensive about the competitiveness of some of Spain's agricultural products, the size of its fishing fleet, the possible future mobility of its workforce and the relative poverty of some of its regions. Negotiations with Spain finally got underway in February 1979, but Paris immediately instigated a variety of delaying tactics, and in June 1980 the French President publicly announced that the Iberian enlargement (but not Greek accession) would have to wait until the consequences of British membership had been fully digested. This lack of progress in the EC negotiations weakened Suárez considerably and was one of several factors leading to his resignation in January 1981. Spaniards were very grateful for the Commission's forceful condemnation of the attempted coup carried out a month later, and for the Parliament's call for an acceleration of negotiations, but in June 1982 the incoming French President, François Mitterrand, demanded that Brussels draft a new 'inventory' of the problems posed by enlargement, stalling the process once more.

Negotiations did not resume until after the Socialist landslide victory in the October 1982 elections, by which stage EC membership seemed more urgent than it had in 1977. Partly due to the uncertainty generated by the transition process, Spain's economic performance during the intervening years had been poor: while most European nations recovered quickly from the 1973 oil shock, Spain was still hounded by high unemployment, inflation and a worrying decline in foreign investment. Furthermore, in order to prepare the economy for EC membership, the government faced the daunting task of reforming an outmoded small-scale agricultural sector, an ill-adapted financial system hobbled by undercapitalised banks and securities markets, and an industrial sector handicapped by inefficient state-run firms. However, although the economic reforms adopted by the Socialist party (PSOE) proved socially painful (with unemployment reaching 21% by 1985), the government rode the storm without great discomfort. This was largely because the prospect of EC membership served as a pretext and a catalyst for the modernisation and liberalisation of the economy, as well as for adapting an outdated state bureaucracy to the new demands of Spanish society.

As other candidates to EC membership had already discovered, the key was not so much the bilateral negotiation with Brussels, but rather the discussions between existing member states regarding the cost of enlargement. Fully aware that this would require a prior understanding between France and Germany, Felipe González focused on strengthening bilateral ties with Paris and Bonn. This also made good economic sense, since these two countries were also Spain's major trading partners: by 1984, they accounted for 54% of Spanish imports and 50% of its exports, also providing a quarter of all foreign direct investment. Despite their ideological affinity, Mitterrand was unwilling to make concessions, so González turned to the Christian-Democrat Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, who was wholeheartedly in favour of the Iberian enlargement for political, economic and geostrategic reasons. The Spanish leader offered his unconditional support for the deployment of Pershing missiles on German soil in the face of stiff opposition from his political allies in the German Social Democratic party (SPD), and in return, Kohl made it clear that France would not obtain the increase in European funds needed to overhaul the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) until it allowed the Iberian enlargement to

proceed. The point of no return was not reached until the Fontainebleau European Council of June 1984, which finally produced an agreement on the British rebate and the reform of the CAP, opening the door to Spain's accession on 1 January 1986.

The major European democracies

The EC's leading member states thus played a key role in Spain's accession, but also influenced the democratisation process in other ways. Overall, their ability (and willingness) to do so depended on several key variables, the most important of which was the density of pre-existing bilateral linkages. As we have seen, the economic footprint of Germany, France and Britain in Spain was quite considerable, while Italy's was less significant. In the political domain, both at the official (government-to-government) and societal (parties, trade unions and other civil society organisations) levels, the density of bilateral linkages was quite significant in the German case, somewhat thinner in that of France, feeble in that of Britain and weakest in the Italian case.

The other variable that explains their role is the leverage they were able to exercise, which in turn depended on several factors. The first of these was their standing with Spanish public opinion: Germany was by far the most admired European state in the 1970s, while France, Britain and Italy were significantly less popular. The stability and continuity of their national governments, and their ability to pursue democracy promotion as a long-term, non-partisan foreign policy objective, was also relevant. Once again, this was very high in the German case, significant in France, modest in Britain and poorest in Italy. Throughout the 1969-82 period, Germany was ruled by a Social Democratic-Liberal coalition, with Chancellors Willy Brandt and (from 1974) Helmut Schmidt at the helm, providing remarkable executive continuity. France also experienced considerable stability under centre-right Presidents Georges Pompidou (1969-74) and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (1974-81), and the latter was quite actively involved in Spanish affairs, as was his Socialist successor, Mitterrand (1981-95). British politics, on the other hand, were unusually volatile during this period, which saw four Prime Ministers from both major parties in office: Harold Wilson (in 1964-69 and 1974-76), Edward Heath (1970-74), James Callaghan (1976-79) and Margaret Thatcher (1979-90). Italy, in the meantime, experienced the highest governmental turnover of all, with seven Christian Democratic Prime Ministers presiding over nine short-lived, multi-party coalitions.

Closely related to this, the leverage exercised by the major European democracies also depended on the ideological hue (and political culture) of their national governments. By and large, in the 1970s-80s left-leaning governments were more likely to believe they had the right (and indeed, the obligation) to intervene in the domestic political affairs of non-democratic European neighbouring states than was generally true of conservative ones. German actors had an additional motive for intervening in Spain, namely their collective feeling of guilt at having contributed to Franco's victory in the Civil War, and the concomitant sensation that European democracy would be incomplete without the future participation of a democratic Spain. Conversely, France's leverage was somewhat inhibited by widespread concern over the possible economic (and electoral) impact of Spanish accession to the EC, and by its reluctance to cooperate with Madrid in its struggle against ETA. Similarly, Britain's leverage was significantly limited by the on-

going historic dispute over Gibraltar, which dampened the willingness of successive governments –whatever their ideology– to invest significant political resources in Spain's democratisation. Indeed, Britain is perhaps the best European example of a country's failure to exercise significant leverage despite the existence of strong economic and social linkages. This is fully in keeping with the premise that the existence (and relative importance) of foreign and security policy priorities other than the promotion of democracy may limit a promoter state's willingness and ability to support democratisation.

European governments were able to influence developments in Spain in a variety of ways. Most of them sought to do so by cultivating (and encouraging) Juan Carlos, whose appointment as Franco's successor in 1969 enabled them to court him without appearing to bolster the dictatorship. This allowed him to make official visits to France in 1970 and Germany in 1972, though most EC member states did not host him until after the dictator's death. European executives also expressed their commitment to democratic change by becoming increasingly outspoken in their support for the democratic opposition. The latter's contacts abroad gradually raised the cost of repression for the regime, thereby providing them with a degree of protection, though not immunity. Indeed, the semi-toleration of the moderate opposition so characteristic of the early 1970s was partly the consequence of the proliferation of these external links. The contrast between US and European attitudes is striking in this respect: the same Spanish government which prevented Secretary of State William Rogers from meeting a group of opposition leaders in May 1970, for example, had acceded to German Foreign Minister Walter Scheel's request for a similar interview a month earlier. Unsurprisingly, this discrepancy did not go unnoticed by the domestic opposition, who particularly valued their European contacts. The density of these political linkages, which varied considerably, largely explains the impact of the major European democracies. Schmidt would later write that Germany had 'supported all democratic parties and labour unions to the best of our ability' in Spain, though Bonn mainly sought to ensure that the Communists did not establish themselves as the hegemonic party of the Left by bolstering González's PSOE. In August 1975, for example, the Chancellor successfully lobbied Arias Navarro to provide the Socialist leader with a passport so that he could attend the annual SPD conference.

Symbolic gestures could also prove useful. In November 1975, the major European governments abstained from sending high-level representatives to Franco's funeral, but Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France, Walter Scheel of Germany and the Duke of Edinburgh (representing Queen Elizabeth) made a point of attending Juan Carlos's proclamation shortly afterwards (characteristically, Washington sent Vice President Nelson Rockefeller to both events). Subsequently, European leaders pursued two separate though complementary strategies regarding Spain. On the one hand, they urged the King and his successive governments to move slowly but surely along the road to full democratisation, not least so as meet the requirements of EC (and in some cases, NATO) membership. At the same time, they supported the moderate opposition in their efforts to conquer official recognition and win the right to participate in free elections to a constituent assembly. When he visited Madrid in January 1977, for example, Schmidt advised Juan Carlos and Suárez to legalise the PCE while strengthening the non-Communist elements of the labour movement, as a result of which the government

adopted a more constructive attitude towards the PSOE's sister trade union, the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT).

Non-state actors were also very active, and German political parties were particularly effective in assisting their Spanish counterparts in two main ways: through their joint membership of transnational political organisations, such as the Socialist International in the case of the highly influential SPD, and via the organisational, electoral and economic support provided by their party foundations: the Freidrich Ebert Foundation in the case of the SPD, which proved particularly successful; the Christian-Democratic Konrad Adenauer Foundation; the Liberal Friedrich Naumann Foundation; and the Hanns Seidel Foundation, affiliated with the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU). Some authors have attributed González's growing moderation and pragmatism to the influence of his German mentors, but the impact of this external support should not be exaggerated, as the transformation is probably best explained in terms of domestic incentives and constraints. The German Trade Union Confederation also provided UGT with significant economic and organisational assistance, while the Ebert Foundation helped it to establish a constructive relationship with the Spanish Federation of Employers' Organisations (CEOE). Interestingly, the Ebert and Adenauer foundations also organised numerous seminars in Spain during the constituent process which were attended by leading German constitutional lawyers. Partly as a result, the Spanish Constitution of 1978 borrowed significantly from the Federal Republic's Basic Law of 1947, though the Italian (1947), French (1958) and Portuguese (1976) constitutions also proved influential.

The US and NATO

In his seminal book, Huntington argued that changes in US foreign policy in the 1970s-80s also contributed to the 'third wave' of democratisation, even though the promotion of democracy and human rights did not become a priority until Jimmy Carter came to office in early 1977. However, Washington's support for democracy prior to Franco's death was lukewarm at best, and not of great relevance thereafter. This was mainly due to both the existence of significant foreign and security policy priorities other than the promotion of democracy, most notably the need to guarantee continued access to its military installations (which also impaired the US's ability to promote change in South Korea and the Philippines), and to the Franco regime's ability to limit Washington's leverage by presenting itself as a guarantor of these priorities at a time of growing regional instability. In October 1973, the Yom Kippur war had highlighted the importance of Spain's bases, even though Madrid forced US aircraft in transit to Israel to refuel in the air so as not to antagonise its Arab allies. Furthermore, the ensuing oil shock increased the strategic importance of the Straits of Gibraltar, since most Middle-East oil reached Europe and the US via the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean. Shortly afterwards, the Cypriot crisis resulted in unprecedented tension in the Eastern Mediterranean between two NATO members, Greece and Turkey. Most importantly, US attitudes to Spain were strongly coloured by events in Portugal after the 'Carnation Revolution' of 25 April 1974, and the overthrow of a dictatorship not unlike Franco's by a left-wing Armed Forces Movement (MFA) that was strongly influenced by the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP).

The Portuguese Revolution influenced developments in Spain in numerous ways. One unexpected domestic by-product was the creation of the Unión Militar Democrática (UMD), a clandestine organisation consisting of several hundred young officers dedicated to the establishment of a democratic system of government and the political independence of the armed forces. The UMD did not aim to emulate the Portuguese MFA, but rather to prevent the more reactionary sectors of the Spanish military from intervening against a civilian uprising against the regime, should it take place. Although it grew rapidly in 1974-75, it collapsed when its leaders were court martialled and expelled from the armed forces shortly thereafter. However, the discovery that not even the military were immune to contagion from the democratic virus provided reformists within the regime with fresh evidence of the need to find a new role for the armed forces, which they believed could best be achieved in the context of a parliamentary democracy (and NATO membership).

The Leftist opposition naturally read Prime Minister Marcelo Caetano's failure to perpetuate the Salazar dictatorship as evidence that something similar could be expected in Spain after Franco's death. More specifically, the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) initially believed that events in Portugal vindicated its own efforts to lead a broad-based, cross-class 'pact for freedom', but the PCP's subsequent attempt to seize power by non-democratic means (which Spanish Communist leader Santiago Carrillo rushed to condemn) deprived the Portuguese example of much of its appeal. In marked contrast, the PSOE interpreted the meteoric rise of Mario Soares and his Socialists as evidence that a relatively new party could successfully challenge far better-established rivals if it enjoyed the necessary external and domestic support.

Liberalisers within the regime who demanded reforms that might pave the way for more substantial changes after Franco's death also felt vindicated by events in Portugal. Most importantly, the Portuguese Revolution taught them that, after decades of right-wing authoritarianism, political parties capable of representing moderate (let alone conservative) sectors of society could not be improvised overnight. These lessons were not lost on Juan Carlos, who had spent part of his childhood in exile near Lisbon and knew the country well. The Prince was personally involved in assisting prominent Portuguese financiers and industrialists who fled the country in the aftermath of the coup, an experience which strengthened his resolve to carry out the necessary reforms to prevent something similar from occurring in Spain. Indeed, Juan Carlos would later claim that Portugal had provided a very useful blueprint of everything he sought to avoid.

Events in Portugal also influenced the major external actors' perceptions of Spain's immediate prospects. The threat of a Communist take-over in Lisbon led the US Administration, and particularly Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (1973-76), to view further political change in the Iberian Peninsula with deep apprehension. Paradoxically, however, by late 1975 the failure of the PCP and their allies in the MFA to take control had discouraged Moscow from becoming entangled in Spain, something it had never contemplated very seriously in the first place. Conversely, the success of the German-led intervention in Portugal, which sought to defeat Communist efforts to take power while strengthening Soares and his Socialist party, suggested to European observers that even a situation which seemed lost could be turned around to their advantage if

efforts were made to bolster moderate domestic forces to the detriment of more radical ones.

Given their own foreign and security policy priorities, the Republican Administrations of Richard Nixon (1969-74) and Gerald Ford (1974-76) did not show much interest in supporting Spain's democratisation. Kissinger would later write that 'our choice was whether to ostracise and oppose the existing regime or, while working with it, to extend our contacts and therefore our influence for the post-Franco period', but there is little evidence of the latter. Like their European allies, the Americans mainly cultivated Juan Carlos, though largely to urge him to proceed with caution (it is therefore absurd to claim, as some conspiracy theorists have done, that Carrero Blanco's assassination by ETA in December 1973 was somehow masterminded by the CIA so as to accelerate liberalisation, particularly since he was the senior official who had most vigorously defended the regime's military relationship with Washington throughout his career). Unlike many European governments, however, Republican Administrations never seriously engaged with the moderate opposition. Furthermore, Kissinger believed Eurocommunists were even more of a threat than those who remained loyal to Moscow and forbade US diplomats to meet the PCE leadership in Madrid. His claim that America's contribution to Spain's evolution during the 1970s constituted 'one of the major achievements of our foreign policy' is thus largely unwarranted.

The final years of Franco's life coincided with the renegotiation of the 1953 bases agreement, which had been renewed in 1963 and 1970. This was deemed important enough to justify a visit to Madrid by President Ford in May 1975, even though his ambassador had warned that many Spaniards 'regard the United States critically as the principal mainstay of the Franco regime'; to the extent that it 'demonstrated continuing US support for the present regime', his presence might even 'contribute to the further blocking of the evolutionary process'. Before flying to Madrid, Ford and Kissinger attended a NATO summit in Brussels, at which Chancellor Schmidt told them quite candidly that 'to us in Europe the whole Spanish problem looks a little different than it does to the United States, for whom Spain is primarily a strategic factor', adding that 'we should be encouraging those we hope will govern after Franco'. Ford objected that his Administration could not afford the luxury of not dealing with the regime at a time when it was trying to renew the bases agreement, to which Schmidt replied that 'so that you can be sure of your bases and your special strategic ties with Spain you should talk about it with tomorrow's rulers as well'. The Europeans rejected Ford's plea to bring Spain into the Alliance regardless of the nature of its political regime, leaving him at a loss to understand why some of the Alliance's 'more liberal' members, such as the Dutch and the Belgians, 'insisted on blocking Spain's membership as long as Generalissimo Franco was alive'. In Kissinger's view, the allies 'concurred that there was a sound military reason for renewing the base agreement', but 'they could not bring themselves to be seen to be cooperating with Spain while Franco was still in power'.

Prince Juan Carlos clearly attributed considerable importance to Washington's influence in Spain, and when Franco fell seriously ill in late October 1975, he approached the US Ambassador, Wells Stabler, with the request that the Ford Administration urge Arias Navarro to encourage the head of state to surrender his powers once and for all. Kissinger was horrified at the possibility of being accused of having conspired to remove

Franco from office against his will, however, and quickly aborted the operation. As he confessed to the Prince's emissary in November, his 'biggest worry' was that Juan Carlos might have been 'too seduced by the liberals' and would 'want to move too far too fast toward the left', though he understood his need to 'make some progress in liberalizing the regime in order to have good relations with Europe'. The Secretary also acknowledged that his views were 'quite different from those of Western Europeans', who would try to 'push the Prince toward full democracy and probably as far left as he will go', which would be 'a disaster'. He should therefore rest assured that 'there will be no pressure from us on making arrangements with Communists, even with Socialists'. In private, Kissinger admitted that 'I don't know Spain, but I know enough of its history and of revolution to know that… if he moves too fast, the lid will blow off'.

The best proof of Washington's tendency to prioritise its own foreign and security policy concerns over Spain's domestic needs was provided by its response to the extremely serious crisis triggered by King Hassan II of Morocco's decision to launch a 'Green March' of several hundred thousand 'volunteers' against the Spanish Sahara in October 1975. Juan Carlos feared that an armed conflict with Rabat might dangerously destabilise Spain on the eve of his proclamation as head of state, not least by radicalising the young, left-wing officers of the UMD. The Prince therefore sought to apply pressure on the Alaouite monarch by urging Kissinger to intervene on Spain's behalf, but Washington was reluctant to antagonise its Moroccan ally. Furthermore, the Secretary always opposed granting the Spanish Sahara its independence, and was quite happy to see it annexed by Morocco; 'after all, what does self-determination mean to a bunch of Bedouins wandering around in the desert?', he would ask. It was thus the bilateral negotiations between Madrid and Rabat, directly supervised by the Prince, that eventually provided a way out of the stalemate: to avoid blood being shed, whether that of the unarmed Moroccans mobilised by Hassan II or of the Spanish troops guarding the border, Juan Carlos agreed to a symbolic invasion of the territory, after which the King finally ordered the 'Green March' to turn back. This allowed for a more permanent agreement to be reached in November 1975, which envisaged the complete withdrawal of Spanish troops by February 1976, after which Morocco and Mauritania could carve up the territory between them.

Undeterred by this crisis, in January 1976 the Ford Administration finally signed a new Friendship and Cooperation Treaty with Madrid, which guaranteed continued access to Spanish military bases, though without offering substantial financial support in return. In Juan Carlos's eyes, the fact that this was a treaty (which required the approval of the US Senate) and not a mere executive agreement also implied an explicit endorsement of the monarchy, enabling him to embark on his first state visit to Washington in June 1976. In his speech to a joint session of Congress, the King promised to ensure 'the orderly access to power of distinct political alternatives, in accordance with the freely-expressed will of the people'. It is very revealing of the internal difficulties he faced during Arias Navarro's premiership, and of the importance he attributed to the external endorsement of his political goals, that he should have made his first unequivocally democratic statement outside Spain, and in a foreign language. Overall, the visit served to reassure his apprehensive hosts that the transition would take place in an orderly fashion, and without endangering the geopolitical status quo.

It has been claimed that, while in Washington, Juan Carlos consulted the Ford Administration about his decision to replace Arias Navarro with the relatively unknown Suárez, and some authors have even attributed his appointment to US pressure, which is fanciful in the extreme. Kissinger was perfectly happy with Arias Navarro's overly cautious attitude to political reform, and as he prepared to leave office in late 1976, he was still advising Juan Carlos not to legalise the PCE, while urging him to remember that 'Spain without a very highly-developed central authority will become anarchic'. More surprisingly, he still believed that Arias Navarro was 'probably very good for a transition period', a view hardly anyone in Spain shared. Kissinger's failure to impose significant limits on Spain's democratisation, in particular by excluding the PCE from the political process, thus gives the lie to those who have claimed that the entire process was masterminded by Washington.

The Carter Administration (1977-81) was generally more optimistic about the chances of establishing a Western-style democracy in Spain than its predecessors. Most importantly, it did not object to the PCE's legalisation in April 1977, which many saw as the litmus test of genuine democratisation. However, Carter gave Suárez a rather lukewarm welcome when he first visited Washington a month later, and Stabler would later reflect that 'if we took the view that we supported Spanish democracy, then we ought to have followed through so that people involved believed we supported them'. Tellingly, Carter did not visit Spain until May 1980, finally becoming the first Democrat President in US history to do so.

If anything, the Reagan Administration's performance was even more disappointing. Spaniards were understandably dismayed when, instead of rallying to the support of their beleaguered democracy, Secretary of State Alexander Haig publicly dismissed the attempted cup of 23 February 1981 as 'an internal affair'. Reagan briefly telephoned Juan Carlos and later sent him a long letter expressing his admiration for the courage he had shown during the coup, but Haig was unrepentant when he visited Madrid in April. Determined to make up for this, when Reagan hosted the King in Washington later that year, he compared his courage to that of the legendary El Cid, but Spanish public opinion was unimpressed. Although no hard evidence of this has even been produced, to this day many Spaniards believe the 1981 coup enjoyed the acquiescence, if not the active support, of the Reagan Administration and the US embassy. However badly Washington may have handled the coup attempt, it is difficult to see what it could have gained by supporting it. The US had always seen Juan Carlos as a close ally, and a successful military coup would have undermined his position and raised doubts about the monarchy's future, as had happened in Greece in 1967. Most importantly, a right-wing dictatorship would never have secured NATO membership, something Suárez's successor, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, was already fully committed to.

Unlike the promise of EC membership, the prospect of joining NATO did not contribute significantly to the Spanish democratising process. This was largely because, whilst in post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe the Alliance was widely associated with the protection of freedom and democracy from a powerful, hostile neighbour, in Spain it was seen by many as the expression of US foreign and security priorities that had been fully compatible with –and even partly responsible for– the survival of Franco's authoritarian regime. Consequently, Calvo Sotelo's decision to apply for NATO membership, which

was endorsed by the Spanish parliament in October 1981 and implemented in May 1982 in the face of determined opposition from the Left, proved socially and politically divisive, though it did offer the armed forces the possibility of developing a more outward-looking role and identity. On coming to office in October 1982, Prime Minister González soon accepted that it was one thing to oppose joining NATO and a very different matter to withdraw from it, which at the very least, would have complicated the EC accession negotiations. As a result, during the next few years he had to invest an inordinate amount of political capital in convincing his party (and public opinion at large) that continued membership was in the country's best interest, an effort vindicated by his victory in the March 1986 referendum which confirmed it. In return, González promised to significantly reduce the US's military presence, which he achieved when a new bases agreement was signed in 1988.

Conclusion

Spain's transition to democracy is a paradigmatic example of 'democratisation by consent', and more specifically, of 'democracy through convergence'. As we have seen, as a result of the Cold War, the country joined the Western bloc under the auspices of the US, but its subsequent political, economic and social evolution led it to converge increasingly with its European neighbours. This was largely due to the influence of the EC, which represented a complex system of medium- and long-term incentives and guarantees tending to favour democratisation. On the one hand, by depriving Spain of the real (and imagined) benefits of full integration in a rapidly developing Community, its membership veto contributed to undermine the ruling authoritarian coalition, elements of which began to regard the regime's continued existence as a hindrance to their present and future prosperity. Additionally, this veto (and to a far lesser extent, that of the Council of Europe), together with the growing prosperity and stability of Western Europe in the 1960s, contributed to enhance the appeal of parliamentary democracy as practiced in EC member states in the eyes of Spanish elites and public opinion at large. More specifically, the EC came to be regarded as the embodiment of liberal democracy and the rule of law, and an antidote to the regime's authoritarianism. It was thus widely accepted that the democratising process would be incomplete until it had been formally sanctioned by the EC (and not just its member states).

Both before and during the transition to democracy, the prospect of EC membership also provided guarantees and reassurances to those who faced a post-authoritarian future with apprehension. As Whitehead has observed, membership could be expected to guarantee the free movement of capital, the freedom to travel and work abroad, and most importantly, legal protection against arbitrary confiscation of property. As a result, those sectors of the Spanish population who feared that Franco's death might lead to a violent overturning of the established socio-economic order came to regard the EC as an external wall of containment against possible revolutionary excesses. It has even been argued that, if such external guarantees had existed in the 1930s, those apprehensive about the consequences of democratisation would have been far less inclined to take up arms against the Second Republic.

In marked contrast, the US's ability to influence events in Spain was constrained by the existence of significant differences in political culture and institutions. The US political

spectrum of the 1970s-80s did not coincide with that of the Western European democracies, and the absence of Socialist (let alone Communist) parties meant that Democrats and Republicans alike could only interact with their centrist and conservative counterparts across the Atlantic. Furthermore, US political and civil society institutions (such as Congress, state governments, political parties and trade unions) generally lacked both the tradition and the means to engage meaningfully with domestic actors abroad. Finally, US definitions of democracy placed almost exclusive emphasis on the electoral dimension, while European actors gave more importance to social and economic aspects. Most importantly, however, the US's willingness and ability to support democratisation was mainly hampered by the existence (and greater importance) of foreign and security policy priorities other than the promotion of democracy, which explains its failure to exercise the kind of leverage that its relatively dense political, economic and social linkages might have warranted. As a result, the (re)Europeanisation of Spain's political and economic systems that accompanied democratisation inevitably came about at the expense of US influence. One of the longest-lasting consequences of this process was thus Spain's reinsertion in the Western bloc through its integration in a Community of like-minded European democracies, which required a simultaneous, partial de-alignment with the superpower that had originally facilitated its insertion in the early stages of the Cold War.

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