

Political Science in Contemporary Spain: An Overview

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I. INTRODUCTION¹.

1. The first attempt at liberal political organization in Spain took place in the period 1810-1814: contemporary Spanish politics can be said to date from that time. Since then, the history of Spanish politics has been one of rupture and discontinuity.

The very instability of the model of political organization meant a permanent and deep disagreement about how this model had to gain its legitimacy. Both the lack of continuity in Spain's political institutions and the on-going controversy about how to justify conflicting projects had strong repercussions on the conceptual definition of politics, on the official position of political studies and, finally, on the development of Political Science itself.

Therefore, we will briefly trace the evolution of political studies, identifying their sociopolitical context, the main subjects examined and approaches used, and the leading authors of every stage.

Four major periods of Spanish history will be analysed. Even though the dividing of history into periods is always open to discussion, it is even more arguable when attempts are made to combine events and scientific and cultural movements in specific categories. Although this approach certainly raises some important problems, it is nonetheless useful in a preliminary approach to our subject here.

We have deliberately limited our scope to a description of the situation in Spain, with no attempt to make a theoretical or comparative study of the development of Political Science in Spain as a discipline. The current state of Political Science in Spain and the available bibliography are such that it is difficult to advance much beyond this descriptive stage, although inevitably there will be some explanatory hypotheses or references to a more general model of the discipline.

A final remark: in many occasions, I have deliberately used the term «political studies» and avoided the reference to Political Science. I feel that the broader term is more suitable when attempting to trace the historical evolution of the field in the Spanish context. I have pinpointed the moment when one can legitimately refer to Political Science as such, regardless of —or in spite of— the official denominations given to these studies at the time.

2. The following periods will be briefly examined:

- I) 1810-1898: Political studies and the struggle to legitimize the Liberal State.
- II) 1898-1939: Political studies and the crisis of Liberal democracy.
- III) 1940-1975: Political studies under a conservative dictatorship.-From «political doctrine» to Political Science.
- IV) 1975-...: Political studies and the new Democratic regime.

Each period is relatively long and could easily be divided into subperiods, to which I will refer when necessary. I feel, however, that the subject will be more readily understandable at this point, if we take contemporary history as divided into longer and more general periods.

II. 1810-1898: Political studies and the struggle to legitimize the Liberal State.

During the 19th century the Spanish Liberal State remains a very fragile organization². It was struggling against the diehards of the «Ancien Régime», but it was simultaneously under pressure from radical democrats anxious to turn liberalism into democracy. This resulted in three civil wars in less than a century.

Political studies of the time mirror the Liberal State's problems in gaining its legitimacy. This fact can explain the ambiguous position of these studies, carried out by Faculties —Graduate Schools— of Law, but not very juristic in nature and approach.

Politics were studied as part of Legal Philosophy and of Political Law. When they were a subject in Legal Philosophy, emphasis was put on political and social theory, with a strong ethical accent. When they were examined in courses of Political Law, the emphasis was on the history of political institutions.

It is important to recall that until quite recently «Political Law» (Derecho Político) has been in Spain the official name for what in most Western countries was known as Constitutional Law³, the reason being the already mentioned weak position of the Spanish Liberal State at the 19th century, and can be interpreted as the result of a compromise between the partisans of Absolutism —who refused to accept Constitutional Law as a typical Liberal outcome— and the moderate —or middle-of-the way— version of this very Liberalism, which finally prevailed over more radical positions⁴.

During these years Political Law was given a rather «encyclopedic» status in order to express three approaches —philosophical, historical and legal— combined

in any of the authors and schools (PORTERO: 1980). Three relatively different tendencies can, however, be traced.

The first one was inspired by German —speaking legal historicism. Works by SAVIGNY, BLUNTSCHLI and STAHL were translated and used in University courses. Its political orientation was clearly conservative and occasionally downright antiliberal. E. GIL Y ROBLES (d. 1908)⁵, a catholic professor of Political Law was its leading representative.

The second school or tendency was the so-called «Krausism», which developed an organicist social theory rooted in Kantian philosophy⁶. Some of the Krausist oriented scholars showed a partly socioeconomic slant in their analysis of political problems. Critical of the existing situations, the Krausist political stance was basically democratic. Among its representatives or sympathizers we can mention G. DE AZCÁRATE (1840-1917)⁷ and J. COSTA (1846-1911)⁸.

Finally, a third orientation —highly eclectic— paid more attention to the legal aspects of organized politics, but without a clear stance for the Public Law theory of positivistic orientation, whose theoretical bases were being built up in Europe. Its political orientation fitted within the framework of the moderate liberalism prevalent at that time. M. COLMEIRO (1817-1898)⁹, as an early and influential professor of Political Law, and, later, V. SANTAMARÍA DE PAREDES (1853-1924)¹⁰, can be considered as the better known representatives of this tendency.

Thus, political studies at the University level¹¹ were never completely appropriated by Constitutional or positivistic Public Law as they were in other countries, where Law was seen as the main ground upon which the Liberal State established its legitimacy. But neither did «social positivism» flourish, as a viable alternative. Krausism —where social aspects of politics were emphasized— could have been close to some kind of social positivism, if it had not been by definition openly dependent on an humanistic moral philosophy.

Some historians consider that at the end of the 19th century Spain had only an «unfinished» Liberal State in both political and economic terms, unable to shape the academic and intellectual structure that could legitimize the very existence of its political organization.

This situation became increasingly more complicated when —at the turn of the century— the most powerful European countries began re-examining their liberal constitutionalism in the light of the radical changes taking place in their economies, politics and culture.

III. 1898-1939: Political studies and the crisis of liberal democracy

1. The historical background

During the final decade of the 19th century, the beginning of a new period in Spanish history was marked by a number of movements and events. The Spanish-American War of 1898, —which brought about the loss of the last Spanish colonies (Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines) and moved forward a deep social and cultural crisis— is taken as a conventional milestone in Spanish contemporary history.

In this new period, lasting from the beginning of the century until the 1936-39 Civil War the Spanish political system was in a permanent state of crisis, worsened by European doubts about democratic liberalism after World War I. Political studies were influenced by this general atmosphere.

2. The development and orientation of political studies.

The three tendencies mentioned above —conservative historicism, Krausist social organism and eclectic legal positivism— were still in evidence in the 1898-1939 period. But they became less clearly defined when exposed to influences of intellectual trends in other European countries, which were then facing the crisis of individualistic liberalism.

Furthermore, some changes were introduced in the academic by-laws governing the course of studies, and a new discipline —Administrative Law— appeared as a distinct discipline separated from Political Law, a decision that would affect the development and orientation of political studies at the time.

The leading representative of this new situation —when differences between tendencies or schools became less clear— is A. POSADA (1860-1944).¹²

Professor of Political Law, prolific author and the guiding light of a number of journals and publications, Posada war far and away the most active and influential academic of the time in the social and political studies area. Though Posada had his roots in Krausism, his approach to political studies —under the traditional label of Political Law— was influenced by contemporary constitutionalists, sociologists and even by some of the early authors of US Political Science.¹³

POSADA affirmed that it was impossible to analyze Constitutional Law without applying a Theory of the State which had a definite sociological slant. «Theory of the State», he wrote, «can be considered to be a Political Sociology» (1915: I, 55). As a consequence, Political Law was for POSADA a combination of Theory of the State and Constitutional Law, backed by Political Sociology.

Latter day observers disagree about the value of POSADA's approach with its broad focus and its somewhat eclectic refusal to give a more precise definition to what in other countries were already becoming autonomous disciplines. Some feel that value because it sacrifices none of the facets which are present when politics are manifested in society (OLLERO 1955). However, others feel that this broad approach is at the roots of the scientific weakness of an academic denomination — "Political Law"— which they feel is a juxtaposition of disciplines which has made it impossible to develop Constitutional Law and Political Science as clearly defined independent disciplines (RUBIO LLORENTE 1973).

POSADA's attempts to redefine the contents of Political Law came just as Spain began receiving the impact of the trends reflected in the legal-political studies of a Europe where the institutions and the legitimacy basis of the Liberal State were in crisis.

Furthermore, this also was a time of cultural ferment in Spain when, after centuries of isolation, the country was wide open to the influence of scientific and cultural trends from abroad.¹⁴

And so G. JELLINEK's revision of legal positivism¹⁵, M. HAURIQU's neo-Thomistic inspired institutionism¹⁶, H. KELSEN's normativism¹⁷ and also H. LASKI's¹⁸ social—and socialdemocratic—approach to politics made their way into Spanish university circles.

Nevertheless, none of these trends had a predominant or decisive influence. They served in some way to increase the scientific perplexity of Spanish scholars, fully aware that the Liberal system—which had never been solidly implanted in their country—was now in a state of general crisis. This was dramatically underscored by the military uprising in 1936 against the Republic and the subsequent Civil War in 1936-1939, which led to a lengthy conservative dictatorship.

3. Conclusion.

During the 1898-1939 period, there were no major alterations in the institutional position of political studies, which continued to be attached to the Faculties — Graduate Schools— of Law. Emphasis on the «non-juridical» approach increased to a certain point. And this fact underscored a paradoxical state of affairs: the institutional relationship with the Faculties of Law coexisted with an increasing reluctance of the so-called «Political Law» to accept a strictly legal approach to the issues it entailed.

The crisis of the Liberal State and the openly declared loss of confidence in the ability of law to settle social conflicts in the interwar period in Europe probably exerted a decisive influence, when Spanish scholars of Political Law generally refused to assimilate their discipline to a strictly juristic one.

But this reluctance did not produce any clear-cut alternative, as no other global proposal was strong enough —perhaps for institutional reasons, perhaps for lack of historical opportunity or of an outstanding personality— to relocate political studies in a different institutional stage or to view them under a new approach.

IV. 1940-1975: Political studies under a conservative dictatorship: from «Political Doctrine» to Political Science.

1. The historical background.

The military victory of the conservative alliance led by General Franco had long and important effects on the Spanish political and social organization. A new political cycle which lasted nearly forty years began in 1939.

However, if we follow the country's social and economic evolution, we perceive that this political cycle contains the succession of two great periods. At the beginning of the sixties, Spanish society underwent deep mutations: general industrialization, urban expansion, cultural secularization and mass education. We could say that there lies a greater distance between the Spain of 1950 and the Spain of 1970 than between the Spain of 1850 and the Spain of 1950.

It is not easy to summarize and read into the evolution of this period, as we still lack some historical perspective. But it can be admitted that such changes had a clear impact on scientific and cultural fields, including social and political studies.

2. The orientation and development of political studies.

In which way did Civil War and a dictatorial system of government affect political studies? We must differentiate the two great periods which we have just referred to.

A) In the first stage of the period —which continues till the end of the 50's—, the direct impact of the new political situation on political studies is very obvious.

—a) From an institutional perspective, one must first point out the rigid control exercised by the Francoist regime over scientific and academic institutions, especially those which affected the mechanisms of social and political legitimization.

—First of all and as a direct outcome of this control, many of the authors and professors active in the previous period disappeared physically or professionally, either obliged to leave the country in exile or condemned to intellectual exile in their own country, as they suffered imprisonment, expulsion from the University or were relegated to secondary posts.

—Second, we observe an attempt to systematize and diffuse an official «political doctrine», in the style of the Nazi or Fascist ideology. With that aim in mind, «nacionalsindicalismo» or «doctrina del Movimiento Nacional» was introduced as an academic subject in the syllabuses of University Faculties and other education centres.

—This attempt did not altogether succeed, because of the varied ideological support —conservative catholicism, the «Falange» local version of Fascism, traditional monarchism, etc.— of General Franco's dictatorship and also because of the pragmatism of the dictator himself, who was not eager to adhere to any theoretical construction which tended to be too complex.

—But this rather elementary ideological project was important in another aspect: the creation of new institutions primarily devoted to the elaboration and diffusion of the official «doctrine», namely the Instituto de Estudios Políticos (1941) y la Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Económicas in the University of Madrid (1943).

—Outside the University system, the Instituto de Estudios Políticos was regarded as an organism devoted to teach and research on political studies. The Instituto was directly attached to the only authorized party —Falange Española— and its minor associated groups. The function of the Instituto was to bring about doctrinal support for the new regime as a contribution to its

intellectual legitimization. As I will point out further on, the Instituto had an important role in the later evolution of political studies in Spain.

—The Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Económicas in Madrid was the first University centre which had, as a direct objective, the formation of graduates in Politics and Economics, who would act as a future elite of «State servants», either through Public Administration or through the political apparatus of the regime.

From this moment on, studies on political subjects developed simultaneously in the Law Faculties and in this new Faculty of Madrid, which for almost 40 years stood as the only University centre devoted to political disciplines.¹⁹

Even so, the naming of the Chairs and courses related to political studies still lacked explicit reference to Political Science. In the Faculties of Law, the traditional Derecho Político —or Political Law— went on being used. In the new Faculty of Political Sciences, different labels were successively employed. When special Faculties of Economics were created in the late 50's, Teoría del Estado —State Theory— was to be the official name of a course on politics. Only as late as in 1973 —after a studies reform— a course titled «Introduction to Political Science» appeared in the Madrid Faculty of Political Sciences.

—b) Focussing on contents, political studies after the Civil War were centered around the crisis of the Liberal-Democratic State, moreover of the State as political organisation, both at a national level —Francoism spoke as well about the need for a Nuevo Estado— and at an international one. But this confirmation of rupture did not lead to new paths. It led to the readoption of two already well-known approaches:

— a critical attitude in front of legal positivism, following the work of two German scholars, who —for different reasons— had been known in Spain in the immediate years prior to the Civil War: C. SCHMITT's decisionism²⁰ and H. HELLER's sociological approach²¹. In spite of their different political stances, both authors helped to stress the view of political studies as a «Theory of the State» —or, better— of its crisis.

— the reinforcement of the axiological emphasis on conservative catholicism, inspired in the moral and political philosophy of Thomas Aquinas and the Spanish authors of the 17th century —VITORIA, SOTO, BÁÑEZ, SUÁREZ, MOLINA—, whose influence was emphasized by the highly nationalistic thrust of the Francoist regime.

Therefore, in an official climate that refused liberal democracy and far from any positivistic legal approach —which had no object of its own in a political system without formal Constitution—, political studies wavered between two poles. On one side, a political theory —or State Theory— of a relatively «sociologistic» character and often compatible with the justification of an authoritarian political system. On the other side, the moral-philosophical approximation of the Catholic iusnaturalism. Among the most representative authors of this moment, we must mention F. J. CONDE²², I. de LOJENDIO²³ or E. GÓMEZ ARBOLEYA²⁴.

We should also add —in a transition towards the next period— the names of L. SÁNCHEZ AGESTA²⁵ and C. OLLERO²⁶, who would gradually import some elements of the political analysis that was being carried out in the United States and in Western Europe. Their lasting position as active professors of Political Law until the early seventies will give them the chance to act as a bridge between the old tradition and the new developments that we shall observe from the middle sixties.

— c) As I have already pointed out, a continuity feature with the pre-Civil War period could be the mistrust for legal positivism, and —except for the Catholic iusnaturalism— this tradition gives way to the sceptical approach of a «realist political theory»²⁷.

But —as it was mentioned before— this permanent refusal of a legal approach to politics was again unable to openly assume some alternative approach, as it happened in other Western European countries where the US's well established Political Science was received after World War II as a substitute for the legal positivism approach to politics.

With some exceptions²⁸, this general exposure to mainstream Political Science of the forties and early fifties did not occur till a later date, when some of its dominant currents were already in crisis. How can this fact be explained?

— A first and general reason may lie in the isolation endured by the Spanish academic world, as a result of the estranged relationship that intellectual circles of Western countries did have with general Franco's dictatorship after World War II.

— A second reason could be the difficulty of applying some specific tools of a positive political analysis to a system that openly denied freedom for public political opinion and action, concealing its decision-making process to those who intended any kind of empirical approach.

— Finally, we should not forget the traditional weakness of social positivism, be it due to a lack of research resources and organisation or be it due to a preference for a more theoretical and philosophical approach.

B) The situation outlined in the previous section was partially modified towards the end of the sixties, when Spanish society came under important social and economic changes. At that moment, it was important for the regime to add a presumed modernization ability to the legitimization basis of its military triumph in 1939.

The parafascist and/or catholic conservative ideologists were gradually replaced by «technocrats» —economists, engineers— not bothered about formal ideology, and given over to the launching of the so-called «social and economic development plans». Repercussions of these changes can be seen in different ways.

— a) First of all, a greater recognition of social sciences in general began from two different standpoints: because social sciences were regarded as auxiliary tools to a «developmentalist» official policy, but also because they were seen as giving the conceptual basis for a critical opposition to the political regime. Economics and Sociology stood out as «fashionable» disciplines, producing an increase in the number of new Faculties of Economics, chairs of these disciplines and public and private research centres.

— b) Second, contacts and exchanges with the international scientific community increased, thus allowing the reception of the great trends in social sciences: logic positivism, functionalism, neomarxism, behaviourism which till that moment had had a very marginal presence in the Spanish scientific community.

This aperture also implied that a greater number of Spanish graduates and scholars traveled abroad —especially to France and the United States— to extend their education in social sciences.

C) In a more specific way, what happened with political studies?

— a) First of all, political studies also benefited from the global movement of attention to the processes of social and economic change: these gains refer to a relative rise in the institutional side, to a closer relationship with the international state of the discipline and to a meaningful increase in the number of Spanish scholars with specialised Political Science training in foreign Universities.

— b) Concerning contents, political studies began to receive the varied influence of theories and approaches currently prevailing in other Western countries²⁹, thus relegating the normative outlines of the previous period to very marginal positions.

In an attempt to group the general tendencies, we could quote the following orientations:

— the study of foreign political systems, with a fundamentally institutional approach and a «realistic» kind of constitutional analysis, not applicable to the Spanish political regime of the day³⁰. Two names must be mentioned because of their influence: M. GARCÍA PELAYO³¹ and M. JIMÉNEZ DE PARGA³²;

— the reception of critical theory and neomarxist political analysis (GRAMSCI, French marxism-structuralism, Anglo-American New Left) in State and social theory studies, based upon the concept of conflict and class antagonism. In this area, one of the most well-known figures is E. TIERNO GALVÁN³³, among a set of younger scholars (R. MORODO, J. A. GONZÁLEZ-CASANOVA, J. SOLÉ-TURA);

— finally, a more clearly oriented «Political Science» approach, grounded upon current concepts and interpretative frameworks of American and European Political Science. F. MURILLO FERROL³⁴, J. J. LINZ³⁵ and P. LUCAS VERDÚ³⁶ must be mentioned here, in spite of their differences of emphasis and orientation. MURILLO and LINZ have also been pioneers in undertaking empirical research about social and economic aspects of the Spanish society, when politics continued to be a risky research subject.

However, these three groups cannot be considered as totally closed: the connections between one another are quite frequent, as when some of them are able to receive more than one influence and to develop more than one approach.

Likewise, this diversity of tendencies fits into the official denominations of «Political Law» and «State Theory». Under those two official labels, programmes of these courses could alternatively include, for example, political theory and history of political ideas, marxist State theory, comparative government or Spanish social structural analysis. This enabled a well-known professor to define the Political Law of this period as a «hydra of many heads and a universal master card»³⁷.

3. Conclusion.

We could conclude that the «prehistory» of Political Science ended sometime between 1960 and 1975, when political studies in Spain started to approach the main trends of the field in the Western scientific community³⁸.

Yet Political Science as an autonomous discipline did not manage to clearly define a scientific and institutional position that would have given to it a decisive legitimization within the field of social sciences.

— A first reason for this relative frailty may be found in the diversity of theoretical definitions of the discipline, once «behaviorism» ceased to be the identification signpost that —for good or bad— had been till the early sixties. This situation gave way to an increase of perplexity among Spanish «latecomers» to the discipline.

This lack of self-confidence was reinforced by the fact that political studies were still predominantly attached to the Faculties of Law and Economics, where the traditional concepts of Political Law or State Theory did determine the faculty recruitment system of public competition (concurso-oposición).³⁹

— A second factor was probably dependent on the political environment. I have already pointed out that social sciences became —during the sixties and throughout the early seventies— instruments for socioeconomic «modernization», but also weapons for radical criticism and sociopolitical opposition. While certain Economics and Sociology approaches could analyse Spanish reality bordering on the fringe of the vetoed territory of political affairs, Political Science did find greater difficulty in reaching its own object, to which it had to refer through allusions or comparisons, either with other countries systems, or with Spanish historical past⁴⁰.

This actual ban on important contemporary political subjects could also explain the paradoxical fact that part of the best academic (non strictly political) Sociology was being developed by Political Law scholars. In fact, many of the to-day best known Sociologists did actually start theirs careers in Political Law or State Theory Departments and Chairs.

— A third motive could be found in the narrow field offered for professional alternatives, in other words, the lack of social legitimization of the «political scientist». In other countries, two major professional fields —together with research and University teaching— have been opened to political scientists: public administration and high school teaching. In Spain, Political Science has not gained access to secondary education —partly because of political control reasons, partly because of the traditional position of History and Geography teachers—. On the other hand,

political scientists have not been significantly incorporated into public administration, still under the hegemony of lawyers and —as a new and recent development— of a growing number of economists.

Because of the professional orientation of the Spanish University education, political studies —without a big enough professional impact— did not obtain a clearcut social legitimization, thus also affecting the academic situation of the discipline.

— A final reason may be found in the institutional weakness of Political Science, regarding teaching and research. We have already mentioned the fact that till very recently only two publicly supported bodies —the Instituto and the Facultad in Madrid— have been the exclusive centres specifically devoted to political studies.

The denial of the Francoist education authorities to increase the number of political studies institutions was clearly based on the negative experience of these two preexisting centres, which paradoxically became a focal point of opposition to the regime.

This particular situation did impair, in my opinion, the diffusion and strengthening of both the discipline and the profession, when in dialogue with other scientific and institutional actors, within the University itself, with public administration bodies and with other social actors like the media, the non-profit making organisations or the business community. In this respect, the contrast with other social disciplines, like Economics or Sociology, is remarkable⁴¹.

V. 1975-...: Political studies and the new democratic regime

1. The political background

The death of General Franco (1975) expressed the political exhaustion of the dictatorship and forecasted democratic changes demanded by three main factors: the needs of the economic and social system, the aspirations of a majority sector of the elites (economic, intellectual, working, professional) and the pressures coming from countries such as the U.S. or Federal Germany, both with important strategic and/or economic interests in contemporary Spain.

The so-called «political transition» resulted form an agreement between reformist sectors of the Francoist regime and the leaders of democratic opposition parties, clandestine trade unions and nationalist —Catalan and Basque—

movements. The 1978 Constitution legally records this transaction, carried out without any kind of political banning or personal depurations. But, although the State services (Army, police, Courts, high civil servants) have been left intact, the political class has been largely renewed by the recognition of party pluralism and open competition.

Thus, democracy opened new perspectives for political studies, as access to opinions and decisions of political actors became relatively easier. At the same time this smooth transition from dictatorship to democracy has become an attractive subject for foreign and national political scientists.

2. The development and orientation of political studies

How have political studies evolved under the new political situation? We will examine institutional and more substantial aspects of this evolution again.

A) From an institutional point of view, I want to point out some circumstances that can be interpreted as signs of a somewhat better position of the discipline. These circumstances are related to the University status of Political Science, the organisation of the teaching profession and the publishing activity.

— a) With regard to the University status of Political Science, two facts that can give way to a balanced conclusion must be mentioned:

— In 1985, the Faculty of Madrid lost its monopoly when two new Faculties were created —one at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, the other at the UNED (Open University) and a third one was announced.

As teaching seems to be an important factor of consolidation for the discipline, this greater institutional presence of Political Science studies at the University level can be seen as a positive step towards a stronger position.

— On the other side, a general University reform established by an University Reform Act (1983) implies the revision of programmes leading to University degrees. In this process, the presence of different disciplines in every one of the graduate studies administered by the Faculties is now being discussed.

As far as Political Science is concerned, its old and relatively solid de facto position in many Faculties of Law is now being seriously threatened. The present trend points towards its traditional position being exclusively occupied

by an expansive Constitutional Law. Thus, there is a risk that the institutional locus of Political Science might be limited to the specific Faculties of Political Sciences and Sociology. Given the minority situation of these Faculties with regard to the large number of Faculties of Law, what can be gained in scientific coherence may mean a loss in institutional and personal resources.

— b) With regard to the teaching profession, we should also refer to some recent developments:

— In 1978, an association was created gathering all Political Law, Political Science and Theory of State professors and associate professors of the Spanish Universities. The name of the association —a member of IPSA— is Asociación Española de Ciencia Política y Derecho Constitucional, as an expression of a still undecided borderline inside the profession. The association's goal is scientific discussion, limited to an annual conference and some special workshops. There are no professional formal aims, as University teachers are State civil servants, with a general and rigid recruiting system and status.

— Nevertheless, one of the provisions of the already mentioned University Reform Act (1983) establishes the organization of University teachers by scientific areas, whose names have been imposed by the Education authorities. In our field, old labels such as Derecho Político or Teoría del Estado have been replaced by two new «scientific areas»: Derecho Constitucional and Ciencia Política y de la Administración.

Education authorities have taken the responsibility of solving —with an administrative decision— the old scientific debate about the nature of «Political Law». Professors assigned to this traditional discipline have therefore been forced to choose between the two new areas. The result of this choice has been that those choosing the option of Derecho Constitucional outnumber those who opted for Ciencia Política y de la Administración in a proportion of about 4 to 1.⁴²

But, as a matter of fact, a large portion of the faculty members who opted for «Constitutional Law» had mainly worked in the fields of political theory, comparative government or political behaviour. Their personal decision came about, in many cases, as a tactical answer to needs related to the recruiting processes for new teachers. Thus, the result of the dynamics opened up by this event is still to be seen.

- Another important fact has been the greater connection of Spanish political scientists with the international academic community, by means of their scientific cooperation in joint research projects with foreign scholars interested in Spanish politics or by means of their more active participation in international bodies such as IPSA or ECPR. This can help the Spanish profession to reinforce its self-identity.
- c) Referring to publishing activity, the appearance of some new journals devoted to political studies must be mentioned, as well as the appearance of new book collections, which gather original works by Spanish authors and translations of both classical and recent foreign works.⁴³

B) Concerning contents, some facts and trends related to political studies must be pointed out.

- a) The first one is the great impulse given to the legal approach to politics, due to the importance which the interpretation and implementation of the new Constitution of 1978 have received.

After nearly half a century without a formal object of analysis, the legitimization of political processes grounded on legal norms acquires an outstanding importance. As a side result, labour market has considerably increased its offer to specialists in Constitutional Law. This is a partial explanation to the previously quoted constitutionalistic «conversion» of some political scientists of the previous years.⁴⁴

In the context of the historic development of political studies, it could be said that there is now a better definition of two different forms of political analysis. In this sense, I would affirm that the reappearance of Constitutional Law as a strong scientific discipline favours a better delimitation of the Political Science field, relieving it of the complicated exercises on self-definition to which I referred before.

- b) The second important fact is the intellectual and political curiosity stirred —in Spain and abroad— by the working of the new democratic institutions and the issue of continuity and change in the country's political culture and its agents and expressions: political parties, unions and interest groups, elections, local government, political attitudes, etc. And, as an important element of the Spanish political science, the phenomenon of nationalism, —its origins, forms and performance— also gains special relevance.

From a «scientific division of labour» point of view, these subjects are being worked on, not only by political scientists coming from the old Political Law Chairs

and Departments, but also by a sector of sociologists which now regard political facts as an object of analysis without the risks or limitations suffered in the previous period.

In this way, sharing —or fighting for— the new political reality as a scientific subject can revive in Spain the old debate about the respective identities of Political Science and Political Sociology.

— c) The strongly «ethnocentered» focus of today's Spanish Political Science stands out at a first glance. The attention given to the country's political evolution in recent years has relegated other fields and subjects to a minor position.

As a result, research has been mainly focused on topics such as the process of political transition, electoral system and electoral behaviour, political parties, political attitudes and opinions and nationalism, among others.⁴⁵

— d) The theoretical framework on which these analyses are based is often unstable. The critical theory trend —inspired on a neomarxist approach— which developed spectacularly in the years immediately before the democratic transition, has lost its momentum, let apart the work of some marginal sectors or individuals.

In the analysis of the transition process, studies on political culture and public opinion lean upon a schematic functionalism, with greater or lesser accumulation of historical explanations.

Concerning data selection and research techniques, the development of quantitative techniques applied to the analysis of electoral or opinion data is impressive⁴⁶. Contributing to this rapid development, we can find the fast assimilation that the new democratic regime has made of political mass-communication, based more on political advertising and audiovisual media than on political parties or social organisations.

Even so, this abundance of opinion studies and polls not always give way to interesting interpretations, because of the frequent absence or weakness of a previous theoretical framework or a sound enough later exploitation. This is due to the fact that such research often responds more to well-timed reasons of the political market —pre or post electoral polls demanded by parties or media— than to research programmes. Thus, a «vulgar positivism» prevails, and also the risk of identifying political science with the unhappy —and sometimes journalistic— treatment of a specific field such as the analysis of opinion and behaviour.

— e) The above mentioned «ethnocentrism» of to-day's Spanish Political Science and the limited resources —human and institutional— of the profession have an immediate and negative effect: Spanish Political Science has neglected other important subfields, such as formal theory, local and mesogovernments, comparative politics or policy studies.

3. Conclusion.

The evolution of Spanish Political Science since 1975 hinders an easy characterization: the provisional balance has, therefore, an indefinite sign.

Speaking in global terms, we can point out as positive aspects:

- first, the improved political conditions concerning the environment for its development, once a political system based on public freedom and political pluralism seems to be consolidated;
- and, secondly, some institutional facts such as the creation of new University Faculties and Departments, the reorganisation of a better defined Political Science «profession» or the stronger relationship of Spanish political scientists with their foreign colleagues and the international scientific community.

But Political Science in Spain also faces some negative factors:

- first, a less favourable general attitude —coming from public opinion and decision centres— towards social sciences, thus largely differing from the situation in the 50's and 60's, when Political Science was institutionalized in other Western European countries;
- second, the absence of widely accepted paradigms which, in other times, had a «securizing» effect on the discipline and its followers; and,
- finally, with regard to Political Science itself, a weak legitimization in a rather limited labour market, where it has to compete with stronger corporations such as lawyers, sociologists and even journalists.

VI. A «Besieged Political Science»? A provisional remark based on a comparative approach

The position of Political Science in contemporary Spain must be seen in contrast to the position kept by the discipline in other Western societies, where Political Science evolved according to a relatively common pattern. This pattern may be summarized as follows.

1. The emergence of Political Science as an autonomous discipline can be explained as an effect of two processes, which results have differently combined under specific social and political conditions.

A) The first process has to do with the constitution of politics as a subject of intellectual discourse. When the «social construction of politics» gradually took place in the work of historians, moral philosophers or lawyers. Political activity began to be intellectually distinguished from socioeconomic action, and the world of power started to be shown as distinct from the world of production.

Since then, a «science of politics» was more or less clearly-affirmed, a science that did not necessarily pretend to be the immediate knowledge demanded by the requirements of practical action. So, this intellectual activity, which had «politics» as its subject, intended to approach it, either with a prescriptive aim or with a descriptive one.

The «science of politics» —mainly developed in Western Europe— had no specific institutional setting: traditional and well established disciplines such as history, law or moral and legal philosophy gave to it, for many years, a more or less permanent shelter. Its importance was based —more than on institutional grounds— upon the intellectual influence of some individuals work, which was part of a more general social knowledge. When one of those influential authors did become a «classical reference», then the «science of politics» acquired a stronger legitimization.

B) The second process or sequence of events starts with a pragmatic political purpose, when some individuals or groups related to academic circles try to influence the political conditions of a given society. Their political project is based on the belief that the «science of politics» —that scientific discourse about politics— is an essential tool for the implementation of their practical project. As a part of it, the organisation of specific political studies is seen as an instrument for the advancement and diffusion of political knowledge and, consequently, for the success of their political project.

Academic institutionalisation of political studies actually took place in Italy, France and the USA —in the last quarter of the XIX century— and Great Britain —at

the beginning of the XXth century—, when some groups and individuals saw their political societies as lacking a scientific basis for political and administrative action. In this sense, CESARE ALFIERI, EMILE BOUTMY, JOHN BURGESS or the WEBBS appear to be the promoters of political science institutionalisation in their respective countries, as a political answer to a given social and political situation.

Would this be an effective answer to these specific situations or not, the fact is that Political Science —or Political Sciences— gradually became an established academic reference and the identification label for a professional group.

The most successful process of this kind took place in the United States, from where it was partially exported —after World War II— to some Western European countries. IPSA and the participation of young European scholars in graduate programs of US Departments of Political Science— did work as the main vehicles of this influence, which combined with local traditions and gave way to relatively different situations in each country.

2. Looking now at the Spanish experience, it is not difficult to see how both processes have historically given very scarce results.

With regard to the first process, Spain has occupied —from the 17th century on— a very peripheral position in the social and cultural development of Western Europe. The social and economic conditions that in other countries produced the construction of politics as an object of scientific discourse were hardly present in Spain, where a strong theological and legal tradition did hinder a specific consideration of the economic and political new phenomena.

Spain was then reduced to the role of a late recipient of other societies intellectual production. No Spanish name can be found among the classical «political thinkers» appearing in traditional lists, where not only «central» countries —such as France, Germany or Great Britain—, but also others like Italy, have some outstanding representatives.

Referring to the second process —institutionalisation of political studies based on the impulsive of a political purpose—, the unstable political history of contemporary Spain shows no other formal and lasting attempts⁴⁷ that the Facultad de Ciencias Políticas at the University of Madrid and the Instituto de Estudios Políticos, which were created by general Franco's authoritarian regime. Because of its origin and historical timing, both institutions were —for a long period— unable to give a clear and full support to the kind of analysis carried out by «standard» Political Science in other countries.

Thus, the lasting monopolistic position exerted by those two academic organisations made more difficult the development of the discipline, blurred its identity among social sciences and limited the social impact of the profession.

Therefore, it can be affirmed that in both respects Spain has been a latecomer to the «science of politics». And when Political Science has got a chance to develop under conditions of free political activity and less traditional academic organisation, some of the factors that did impulse Political Science in other countries seem to have lost part of its thrust.

It is certainly true that in the last fifteen years, Political Science has gradually gained a better position in Spain. Still, the discipline and the profession show some important weaknesses that we mentioned earlier.

We could thereby —exaggerating somewhat and making a parody of a well known article⁴⁸— refer to a «besieged Political Science»: Spanish Political Science of the 80's has painfully succeeded in conquering a territory of its own, but a number of circumstances —historical, institutional and scientific— still appear to be reducing its chances for an easy and immediate expansion.

NOTES

- (1) Revised version of the paper prepared for delivery at the Conference on the Comparative Study of the Development of Political Science (IPSA-Fondazione Feltrinelli), Cortona, Italy, September 21-26, 1987. I have to thank participants in the lectures and colleagues of my Department, at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, for their critical comments.
- (2) In 1810, the traditional "Cortes" -or Ancient Regime Parliament- were called together after centuries of political "hibernation". A large part of the country was under the control of Bonaparte's Army. He obtained an abdication from the Spanish King -Fernando VII-, who renounced his rights in favour of Napoleon. But the Spanish "Cortes" considered this abdication void and without legal effects, declared war against Bonaparte and assumed all political powers as a representation of the free will of the country. The "Cortes" also decided to write and approve a liberal Constitution of 1812 -that was in force for a short period- is nonetheless considered to be the starting point of Spain's Liberal State.
- (3) MONTESQUIEU (De l'esperit des Lois, Livre I, chap. III, 1748), BURLAMAQUI (Principes de Droit Politique, 1751) and ROUSSEAU (Le Contrat Social. Principes de Droit Politique, 1762), had used the expression, but not always with the same meaning. They seemed to share the "enlightened" position that politics can be submitted to law, against Ancient Régime political ideas.
- (4) This label -already used by J. DONOSO CORTES (Lecciones de Derecho Político, Madrid 1836-37) was still uncertain in the middle fourties, as we can see in the title of the textbooks of two influential professors of the time: A. ALCALA GALIANO (Madrid, 1845), Veinte lecciones de Derecho Político Constitucional, or J.F. PACHECO (MADRID, 1845), Lecciones de Derecho Político Constitucional.
- (5) Tratado de Derecho Político según los Principios de la Filosofía y el Derecho cristiano. (Salamanca, 1899-1902, 3 ed.).
- (6) K.H. KRAUSE (1781-1832) and his disciple H. AHRENS (1808-1874) were translated and introduced by J. SANZ DEL RIO (1814-1869), Philosophy Professor at the University of Madrid. His interpretation of KRAUSE's Kantism stressed an ethical approach, producing a loose intellectual system that inspired an active group of scholars and scientist of politically radical and socially reformist orientation. La "Institución Libre de Enseñanza" -founded in 1876 by F. GINER DE LOS RIOS (1839 - 1915)- Worked as their institutional basis and had a strong influence -academic and political- until the Civil War of 1936-39.
- (7) Among AZCARATE's works, see El selfgovernment y la Monarquía doctrinaria (Madrid, 1877); El poder del Jefe del Estado en Francia, Inglaterra y los Estados Unidos (Madrid, 1878); El régimen parlamentario en la práctica (Madrid, 1885); Relaciones de la política con los problemas económicos (Madrid, 1890); Tratado de Política (Madrid, 1897). About AZCARATE's position, see GIL CREMADES, V- (1967) and TORREGROSA, J.R. (1964): El pensamiento político de don GUMERSINDO DE AZCARATE. in Revista de Estudios Políticos, nn. 135-136 pp. 121-134.
- (8) Among JOAQUIN COSTA's works, see Colectivismo agrario en España (Madrid, 1898); Crisis política de España (Madrid, 1901); Oligarquía y Caciquismo como la actual forma de gobierno de España (Madrid 1901-1902).

- (9) Elementos de Derecho Político y Administrativo (Madrid, 1857); Derecho Político según la Historia de León y Castilla (Madrid, 1873).
- (10) Curso de Derecho político según la Filosofía Política Moderna, la Histórica General de España y la legislación vigente. (Valencia, 1880-81), This long title is a clear expression of this author's highly eclectic approach, where Political Philosophy, History and Positive Law are jointly considered.
- (11) Outside the University, political analysis was also carried out by members of scientific and debating societies -Academias and Ateneos- or in the press. In the work published by some political writers of the day, we often find an approach to political phenomena that takes account of social and economic elements. We should mention, among others, Jaime BALMES, (1810-1848), Andrés BORREGO (1802-1891), Francisco PI Y MARAGALL (1824-1901) or Valentí ALMIRALL (1841-1904).
- (12) As his most representative work, see Tratado de Derecho Político (Madrid, 1915, 2 ed.). See also: Principios de Sociología (Madrid, 1908); Evolución legislativa del régimen local de España (Madrid, 1910); España en crisis. La política (Madrid 1923); El régimen constitucional (Madrid 1930); La idea pura del Estado (Madrid 1933); La crisis del Estado y el Derecho político (Madrid 1934).
- (13) Among the authors cited by Posada in some of his recommended bibliographies are SPENCER, MARX, DURKHEIM, GUMPLOWICZ, GIDDINS, BURGESS, WILSON, BRYCE OR DICEY.
- (14) J.ORTEGA Y GASSET (1883-1955), professor of Metaphysics at the University of Madrid, is a well-known and representative intellectual figure of this time. His approach to social and political subjects was influenced by contemporary authors such as PARETO, SIMMEL or SPENGLER. His La rebelión de las masas (1930) was largely translated and diffused in the international academic community.
- (15) Teoría General del Estado (Madrid, 1914). This translation of the Allgemeine Staatslehre is due to F. DE LOS RIOS, a professor of Political Law, bred in the Krausist tradition and evolved towards a nonmarxist socialism. He was an active member of the Socialist Party (PSOE) and one of the writers of the Republican Constitution of 1931.
- (16) Principios de Derecho Público y Constitucional (Madrid, 1927), translated by C. RUIZ DEL CASTILLO, a conservative professor of Political Law.
- (17) Compendio de Teoría General del Estado (Barcelona, 1934); Teoría General del Estado (Madrid, 1934). KELSEN's work was introduced was, however, a critical introducer who opposed a sociological and ethical approach to the kelsenian pure theory of law and its political consequences.
- (18) El Estado Moderno. Sus instituciones políticas y económicas (Barcelona, 1932). This is the Spanish translation of the original LASKI's A Grammar of Politics. The translator is T. GONZALEZ, professor of Political Law.
- (19) Only in 1985 a second Facultad de Ciencias Políticas was opened at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.
- (20) La defensa de la Constitución (Madrid, 1931); Teoría de la Constitución (Madrid, 1934); Escritos políticos (Translated by J. CONDE, Madrid 1941).

- (21) Teoría del Estado (México, 1941) is the translation of his Staatslehre of 1934.
- (22) Introducción al Derecho Político actual (Madrid 1942); Representación Política y Régimen español (Madrid 1945). Javier CONDE became Director of the Instituto de Estudios Políticos (1948-1956). During the fifties, CONDE and GOMEZ ARBOLEYA introduced at the Instituto some elements of an empirical approach to social and political studies that would partially develop in late fifties and early sixties.
- (23) Régimen político del Estado español (Barcelona, 1942).
- (24) GOMEZ ARBOLEYA, a professor of Legal Philosophy, is the author of a Historia de la estructura y del pensamiento social (Madrid, 1959). See also his Estudios de Teoría de la Sociedad y del Estado (Madrid, 1962), a collection of essays published between 1940 an 1956, dealing among other subjects- with Heller's Staatslehre, the Spanish Political Philosophers of the XVIIth century and positivistic sociology in Europe.
- (25) Lecciones de Derecho Político. Teoría de la Política y del Estado (Granada, 1943); Principios de Teoría Política (Madrid 1970).
- (26) Introducción al Derecho Político (Barcelona, 1948); El Derecho Constitucional de la postguerra (Barcelona, 1949); Estudios de la Ciencia Política (Madrid, 1955).
- (27) T. FERNANDEZ MIRANDA, El Problema político de nuestro tiempo (Madrid, 1950); N. RAMIRO RICO, El animal ladino y otros estudios políticos (Madrid, 1980) is a collection of essays written between 1949 an 1974.
- (28) It should be mentioned the group of scholars, led by prof. E. TIERNO GALVAN who, as early as in 1954, edited the Boletín informativo del Seminario de Derecho Político de la Universidad de Salamanca (1954-1964), opened to a varied range of topics and approaches to political studies.
- (29) In this respect, it must be mentioned the role of new academic periodicals, which enlarged the more traditional contents of the old Revista de Estudios Políticos; published by the Instituto de Estudios Políticos since 1941. See Boletín Informativo de Ciencia Política (Madrid, 1969-1973), directed by professor C. OLLERO, and Revista Española de la Opinión Pública (Madrid, 1964), renamed as Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas (Madrid, 1978).
- (30) Some foreign influences must be mentioned here. First, the 1954 French reform of Law studies, with the inclusion of Institutions Politiques et Droit constitutionnel and Sociologie Politique, as core or elective courses. The works by French professors of discipline - like G. BURDEAU, M. DUVERGER or A. HAURIOT- were translated in those years. On the other hand, the approach to institutional analysis made by some German-American authors such as C.J. FRIEDRICH or K. LOWENSTEIN did also have an influence on this approach.
- (31) GARCIA PELAYO, who left Spain in the early fifties for political reasons, has been professor of Political Science in Latin America (Mexico, Puerto Rico, Venezuela). But his work on political theory and comparative politics -mainly based on the study of political institutions and their constitutional frame, has been highly influential among Spanish scholars: see, for instance, Derecho Constitucional Comparado Madrid 1984 (1st. ed. 1950); Mitos y símbolos políticos, Madrid 1964; Burocracia y Tecnocracia, Madrid 1974; Las transformaciones de Estado Contemporáneo Madrid 1977.

- (32) Los regímenes políticos contemporáneos (Madrid, 1960); Las monarquías europeas en el horizonte Español (Madrid, 1966).
- (33) See Introducción a la Sociología (Madrid, 1961); Razón mecánica y razón dialéctica (Madrid, 1964); Escritos 1950-1960 (Madrid, 1971).
- (34) FRANCISCO MURILLO FERROL (1918) has been Professor of "Political Law" at the Universities of Granada, Valencia and Autónoma de Madrid. Among his works, see Las Clases Medias Españolas (Granada, 1959); Estudios de Sociología Política (Madrid, 1965); Estructura Social de Andalucía (Alcalá, 1970).
- (35) JUAN J. LINZ (1926), in spite of his University career in United States (Columbia, Yale), has been permanently involved with, research and teaching in the Spanish social sciences community, where he has exerted an important influence.
- (36) Principios de Ciencia Política (Madrid, 1969-71, 3 vol.); de Derecho Político (Madrid 1972-76, 3 vol.).
- (37) N. RAMIRO RICO (1980), 105.
- (38) It is important to stress the fact that two attempts of appraisal of the Spanish Political Science of the day were published in the early seventies: PASTOR 1972 and SANTAMARIA 1974, taking as a reference two collective works of different approach and political inspiration: Estudios de Ciencia Política y Sociología (Libro homenaje al profesor Carlos OLLERO), (MADRID 1972) AND M. FRAGA (ED.) La España de los años setenta. El Estado y la política (Madrid, 1974).
- (39) In this respect, the analysis of the reports -memorias- that candidates to a Chair have to present shows the limits of this situation. In these reports, we find highly refined conceptual exercises in order to make compatible the traditional denominations - Political Law, State Theory- with contents such as political systems analysis, behaviorist research, marxist social theory or positive Constitutional Law.
- (40) See for instance the studies on the political institutions, pressure groups, parties and elections of the Second Republic period (1931-1936) undertaken in the 60's and 70's by young scholars like M. RAMIREZ, I. MOLAS or J.R. MONTERO, among others.
- (41) The evolution of the institutional position of Sociology is highly significative. Even if sociology was being taught in the Faculty of Political Sciences since its foundation, only in 1973 the first specific Sociology degrees were given by the University of Madrid. However, Sociology studies were not confined to this University, as academic existence of some Faculties of Economics, where a special Sociology section existed. This situation increased the number of teaching positions for sociologists and the number of graduates as well. As a result, sociologist had a stronger identity feeling, already expressed in some "state of the art and the profession" reports published in the early seventies. See, for instance: CECA (Confederación Española de Cajas de Ahorros) (1971): La sociología española de los años setenta. Madrid; DIS (Departamento de Investigación socioreligiosa de Fomento Social) (1971): Las ciencias sociales en España. Madrid; MIGUEL, A. de (1972): Sociología o Subversión. Barcelona.
- (42) The present number of active Professors (Catedráticos) of Political Science is 8. Associate Professors (Titulares) are about 30.

- (43) With regard to journals, the old Revista de Estudios Políticos, which first appeared in 1941, has now been joined by other journals devoted -mainly or partially- to political studies:
- Revista de Derecho Político (Madrid, 1978)
 - Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas (Madrid, 1978)
 - Revista de Política Comparada (Madrid, 1980)
 - Estudios Electorales (Barcelona, 1978).
- (44) The old Instituto de Estudios Políticos - which in the last years played an active role in supporting Political Science research and activities- has also been "renamed" as Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, as an expression of the above mentioned trend.
- (45) A summary of recent work by Spanish scholars can be found in GONZALEZ ENCINAR, J.J. (ed. 1984), Diccionario del Sistema Político Español (Madrid).
- (46) One of the most active institutions in the field and the best equipped social research body in the country is the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, attached to the Spanish Government. In the commercial side, there is a full range or more or less credited poll and survey organisations.
- (47) We should mention - just for historical record- a short lived project (1878-1879) of the already quoted "Krausist" tradition, when a private Escuela de Ciencias Sociales organised in Madrid some courses on topics connected to Political Institutions, History, Political Economy and Political Theory. This intent - that had a very ephemeral existence- was the side - effect of a political conflict at the State University in Madrid, from which a group of well-known liberal professors had been temporarily expelled. In addition, a possible influence of the then new "Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques" in Paris cannot be excluded.
- (48) D. EASTON (1981): The political System besieged by the State. In Political Theory, vol. 9, August 1981, pp. 303-325.

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