

**Business and Politics in Spain: From Francoism to  
Democracy**

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## I. Introduction

"For all the talk and the public curiosity about the relations between business and politics, there is a remarkable dearth of studies on the subject. What is written is more likely to come from the pen of a sociologist, an historian, a lawyer, or an economist than from a political scientist" (R. Dahl, 1959).

The description above made by professor Dahl, writing about the topics in the United States three decades ago, could be perfectly valid for the Spanish situation even in our days: Antonio Ramos Oliveira, Manuel Tuñón or Mercedes Cabrera, all of them historians; Juan Velarde, Ramón Tamames, Fermín de la Sierra, J. García Delgado, Juan Muñoz and Santiago Roldán, economists; and Amando de Miguel, Carlos Moya, Salvador Giner, Victor Pérez Díaz, Carlota Solé or Salvador Aguilar, sociologists, have occupied their minds with this subject and published on these matters. But the nomina of political scientists writing about it is extremely short and significantly enough -with the noteworthy exception of Juan Linz, who nevertheless could be considered as a sociologist too- until the late eighties none of them were researching in this case about the more recent periods but on the Second Spanish Republic or earlier periods: Isidre Molas, Manuel Ramírez, both of them coming from and teaching in a Law School. Considering the short history of Political Science as an autonomous discipline in Spain and the really small size of the Political Science community in our country (not more than fifty permanent professors defining themselves as political scientists just a couple of years ago) there is nothing really surprising in that.

Nevertheless, both the final institutional takeoff of this discipline in 1984 and its academic expansion through a process of creation of new Schools of Political Science starting 1987 (Barcelona, Granada, Madrid-UNED, etc.) could contribute to change substantially this panorama in a few years. Recent works by younger political scientists (Molins, 1989; Llera, 1990) seems to prove that such a sort of expectatives is not completely unreasonable.

Meanwhile, for the modest purpose of this paper -to give an account of the main findings on the topic among us as well as the gaps to be filled- we are partly benefiting of the work done by specialists of other disciplines, mainly Sociology. We are found particularly useful the research made by Linz and De Miguel after conducting a survey among Spanish entrepreneurs in the years 1959-1960, the one by Robert E. Martínez -from Yale University- based on two surveys conducted in 1981-1982 in the most industrial regions of Spain (one among the chief executive officers of 259 firms and the other among the leaders of 115 employers associations -including the AEB, the banking association-, all of the latter affiliated to the peak employer association, the CEOE) and the most recent by Pérez Díaz, who analyses

the opinions and attitudes of a representative sample of the Spanish entrepreneurs in 1984, after more than a year of the Socialists in government at state level.

Additional considerations must be made referring to what we are going to understand by "business" in these pages. So, we emphasize that we are dealing basically with organised management, without necessarily excluding some specific references to individual attitudes or personal relations of members of the industrial or financial bourgeoisie with government, either at cabinet or parliament level.

## **II.1. The collective representation of business interests under the authoritarian regime**

An initial legal framework for the economic interest articulation including labor, was set in Spain by the turn of the century, once the right of association was regulated by law in 1887, not without some restrictions against anarchist and collectivist labor organizations. Nevertheless, the first essays of the industrial bourgeoisie in order to organize its potential constituencies, as on the unions side, virtually failed. The industrial groups were linked more to individual politicians than with either of the two system parties introduced with the 'Restauración' in 1875, liberals and conservatives, the exception being the Catalan business, closely tied with the Lliga Regionalista (vid. Molas, 1972). As professor Linz has argued, emphasizing the historical weakness of Spanish nationwide interest organizations as a whole, "in a largely agrarian and underdeveloped society, organised interest groups were less important than the personal and family links between the political class and large landowners, bankers, railroad magnates, and many industrialists. Their number and the concentration of wealth made organised interests less necessary than in other societies with a larger bourgeoisie" (1981, p. 372). Particularly significant in this regard was the absolute superiority and predominance of the private banking sector with respect to the industrial enterprise and the monopolistic and oligarchic character of that banking system. As a result, the Spanish industrialization process was channeled almost exclusively by the big banks -the siete grandes- in terms much more important than in other European countries (J. Muñoz, 1970, chaps IV and VII).

The Dictatorship inaugurated by the general Primo de Rivera in 1923 put an end to the liberal political system and introduced some corporatist policies and practices that would allow to speak of some kind of social corporatism, rather than state corporatism, to use Schmitter's terms (Ph. Schmitter, 1974). As a result, the representation of interests was institutionalized through the participation of business and labor in a plurality of public advisory and regulatory organisms. Moreover, the slow down of class conflict on a state level and the character basically reformist of the stronger unions "did not force employers to develop a nationwide organization; regional, local, and sectoral economic interest groups remained outside larger

representative bodies. The rapid economic development of a few successful enterprises within a protected market facilitated monopolistic tendencies" (Linz, 1981, p. 379).

Under the II Republic, real socioeconomic interests were going to know a certain integration in effective membership organizations, the rise of the first nationwide employers federation -the Unión Nacional Económica, founded in December 1931-being the most significant change on the business side, despite its low activity in this period. Nevertheless, this was a secondary phenomenon considering the intensity of social and ideological conflicts in those years, only exceptionally expressed through such articulated channels (Linz, 1981, pp. 382-386).

Thereby, the institutionalization of economic interest groups unsuccessfully articulated, had been precarious before the breaking out of the civil war. Under the three different political regimes that the country had known from 1875 relationships between Spanish entrepreneurs and the Spanish state could be characterised, roughly speaking, by a pauta of interchange in which the entrepreneurs asked the political class, and normally obtained, a double protection: on the one hand, a protection against the threat of an open development of the free market system and, on the other hand, the defence against the threat of the labour pressure (V. Pérez Díaz, 1985, p. 6). To some extent, behind this situation there was from the beginning of the century a permanent attempt to build some kind of corporatist system through different practices and policies, some of them implemented even by the governments of the Second Republic (Velarde, 1984).

The Francoist dictatorship has been frequently presented as a case of corporatism, the regime defining itself through its laws -i.e., the Fuero del Trabajo of 1938, the law of Unidad Sindical of 1940 or the Ley de Cortes of 1943- and ideologues in such terms, at least in its first stages. It would be reasonable to ask ourselves about the nature and entity of that corporatism. While Linz has argued that it was a state corporatism as an instrument of planning and a corporatism as an instrument for the collective representation both condemned to failure for structural reasons, a corporatism that would clearly fit Stepan's model of "exclusionary" state corporatism rather than the "inclusionary" based on fascist ideological commitments (1981, pp. 392 and 403), Giner and Sevilla assert that, even if Spanish fascist corporatism was largely a "sham", some of fascist-corporatist features were held, being incorporated to the Leyes Fundamentales (1984, pp. 117-119). Some other author has been much more categorical, arguing for Franco's highly institutionalised corporatist strategy (Forewaker, 1987, pp. 51 ss.).

Regarding the specific institutional framework for the collective representation of business interests, the Ley sobre Unidad Sindical of January 1940

would attempt to introduce a monopoly of the representative function according to the state corporatism model. The Vertical Syndicate was the sole interest organization "with enough personality" recognised by the new state. Any other economic interest association was formally incorporated to the Spanish Syndical Organization (articles 1-2). This integration of the economic associations -business and labours as well as the professionals- was already announced almost two years before by the Fuero del Trabajo (March 1938) which emphasized the functions of articulation and integration of interests to be played by these organisms (Linz and de Miguel, 1966, pp. 1314).

In keeping with corporatist philosophies, the "horizontal" trade unions were outlawed and replaced by 27 "vertical" syndicates, representing the different economic sectors -such as textil, building metals, chemicals, banking, etc. Chief executive officers, managers or technicians, as well as common workers, were to be represented by a single syndicate.

However, trade associations -the Cámaras de Comercio, Industria y Navegación- obviously connected with the entrepreneur interests were allowed to remain legally independent and completely outside of the syndical structure (Cf. Molins, 1989). Furthermore, if the institutional framework for the interest representation already permitted some legal exceptions, in fact -as has been documented by the study by Linz and de Miguel- a continued system of parallel employer organizations acted for the most part independent of the Sindicato Vertical. While officially covered to some extent under its rubric, these organizations approximated the functions of entrepreneur interest groups in more pluralist regimes (1966, pp. 17-18).

The research by Linz and de Miguel among the chief executives of 460 corporations, conducted just at the start of the Spanish economic takeoff period, included a review of the 71 entities which integrated the UNE (Unión Nacional Económica) the peak employer association of the II Republic. Of these, 26 continued to exist at the time of their study: 16 in Madrid, 6 in Barcelona and 4 in the Basque Country (1966, p. 8). Beside these organizations already existing before the civil war, others emerged during the Franco period either in "more or less tenue relation" with the Syndical Organization or, primarily, adopting the legal form of a "sociedad anónima" (corporation), but doing all the functions of a pressure group (Linz and de Miguel, 1966, p. 18). Survey-based research commissioned in 1966 by the OECD and the Comisaría del Plan de Desarrollo Económico y Social (the Spanish Planning Commissariat at the time) in Andalucía, conducted by Eberhard Düller, also made reference to the extra official collective interest bodies then active (Robert E. Martinez, 1984, p. 79).

To sum up, under Francoism and in matter of collective interest representation there was a significant distance between theory and practice. Which

by no means allows us to undervalue the role played by the official unions. To put it in the words of Linz, summarizing years later one of the main findings in his research with de Miguel on the Spanish business elite, the "impression is that sindicatos nacionales with formally identical functions developed very differently from the forties to the end of the regime. Some of them remained ineffective bureaucratic patronage organizations, others became technocratic instruments by performing some of the functions of real interests groups, such as gathering information; helping the business community, particularly smaller business and exporters; and serving as a channel for demands before the state bureaucracy and later before the committees of Cortes -the legislature created in 1943 where they would be represented. In some instances they became organizations closely connected to the informal leaders of the business community and were at their service" (1981, p. 391).

## **II.2. Business attitudes and behaviour**

Concerning business attitudes of Spanish entrepreneurs regarding to the Franco regime we are short of data permitting us to reach reliable conclusions. Certainly survey findings are available on the opinions of Spanish businessmen about that political system, but the correspondent surveys had been unvaryingly conducted years after the death of Franco, in a democratic context (we are making reference to these opinions in point III.1.). Obviously enough, we can't rest on these findings to argue seriously on the topic. Hence, for this period, on the one hand, we are dealing with the specific question of employer opinions on associability in and outside of the syndical structure on the basis of Linz and de Miguel data. On the other hand, we are going to suggest some reasonable hypothesis on business feeling and attitudes on Francoism in its different stages.

Under Francoism the firms established in Spain had the possibility of being associated to a variety of entities public or private, that Linz and de Miguel summarized in six sections: the respective national union, the syndical subgroup -i.e. the subgroup Empresas de Obras Públicas de Ambito Nacional (corporations of Public works at state level)-, the local Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation, the consorcio -more or less official and ranging from international groups such as the International Cotton Federation to other merely local-, the regional associations or ligas and those already mentioned industrialist associations taking the legal form of a "sociedad anónima" (1966, pp. 28-29).

When asked "to which of the numerous organizations -public or private- Colegios (professional associations), Chambers, Unions Consortium, etc., that serve -or attempt to serve- the interest of economy do you belong or your corporation belong", most entrepreneurs mentioned various entities, particularly the respective Sindicato Nacional -79%- and the Cámara de Comercio (or Industria) y Navegación,

depending on what province they were dealing with) -71%-. Two findings were the most significant: first, the high diversity of entities; and, second, that many of them failed to mention the Sindicato or the Cámara -21 and 29% respectively- that were the sole entities to which they were obliged to become members and those legally in charge of representing their interests (pp. 27-32).

Moreover, when the industrialists were asked what entities they considered most closely connected with the defence of their interests, none of those entities received more than 26%, which was a clear sign of the great dispersion of the activities of defence of interests among the most various bodies (the Sindicatos appeared in the first position followed by the "Subgrupos"). As for active participation, it was extremely low: less than 8% in the Sindicatos and 6% in the Consortios, and minimal in the Ligas (only 2%) (pp. 33-34).

In general, the data for the total employers sample reflected considerable apathy and lack of opinion and, further, a fragmentation in the climate of employer opinion (pp. 34 and 71). Beside the particular sector to which the firm belonged the most significant differences concerning the Syndical unions were connected with factors such as the size of the firm and its geographic location: "The smaller businessmen in the less industrialized regions found in the sindicatos the possibility to make themselves heard, where as the large entrepreneurs in the advanced industrial regions, with their contacts with top-level national elites and their independent, specialized interest groups, had less need for and less confidence in the sindicatos" (Linz, 1981, p. 388).

Starting from the data and analysis offered by Linz and de Miguel it is possible to conclude that there is enough evidence of the wide distance between entrepreneurs and public powers in this middle stage of Francoism. In general, the industrialists felt themselves greatly distant from the political decisions making processes including those related to the economic policy (Pérez Díaz, .1985, p. 7).

Nevertheless, in no way Francoism can be considered as a static regime through its long-lasting life. From the point of view we are adopting here, the years 1957-1959 were the bracket between a first stage which was basically autarchic and, a second one, characterized by a spectacular economic growth as a result of the economic liberalization process opened in February 1957 with the entry of Opus Dei technocrats in the new government and followed by Spain moving towards fuller international integration, becoming a member of the CEDE, the IMF, and the World Bank, and, specially, by the 1959 Stabilization Plan. (Giner and Sevilla, 1984, pp. 137-138). Consequently, we must paid attention to the fact that the study by Linz and de Miguel was measuring the entrepreneurs' opinions just when those policies let their first effects be felt.

It is easy to presume that the closeness between the industrial bourgeoisie and the regime was much larger through the autarchic period, even if the economic growth was extremely low. As a matter of fact, after the civil war the country knew a return to a situation in which the majority of Spanish active population was occupied in the agrarian sectors (51.9% in 1940, against 46.1% in 1930) (Anuario Económico y Social de España, 1977, p. 212). Only in the late 1940's was there a return to the normal process: a "proto-industrial situation" (Tuñón de Lara, 1973, p. 49), in which the population occupied in the industrial, building and service sector represented 19.2%, 5.3% and 25%, respectively, adding up to 49.5%, compared to 48.9% occupied in the Agrarian sector (1950 census).

While the entrepreneurs saw the sinking of the internal market and hardly supported intensive state interventionism, they were in favour of the protectionist policy and they felt free of labour pressures, enjoying both low salaries -real salaries in the early fifties were still 50% below the prewar level- and a guaranteed social peace through the regime tight control of the working class. Certainly the main beneficiaries of Franco military victory were other particular sectors of the upper class, the latifundio owners and the financial aristocracy: the first, obtaining either the devolution of their lands or being liberated both from the pressures of the jornaleros (non-owners peasants) and government threat of expropriation: the financial aristocracy, taking advantage of the difficult economic situation of the 1940's that significantly allowed the five most important banks to grow extremely, increasing their annual benefits approximately, in a 700% and gave them the control of approximately 65% of the financial resources mobilized in Spain in 1950 (Fermín de la Sierra, 1953). The political significance of the Spanish financial aristocracy, a "national ruling class" emerging through a long process of mutual penetration of the financial bourgeoisie and the aristocracy that started with the liberal Disentailment of the XIX Century (C. Moya, 1975), was seen in the financing of the Francoist uprising by the Bank of Spain, largely under the control of this fraction of the bourgeoisie from 1875 until the Bank was nationalized in 1962 (J.M. Maravall, 1981, pp. 21-22). However, the intensity of class conflict before and during the civil war undoubtedly aligned most entrepreneurs, including owners of medium and small sized firms with those other social sectors economically -and traditionally- more powerful.

The situation was substantially altered in the late 1960's and in the early 1970's. By these years a new industrial bourgeoisie and a wave of "new directors" in the banking and industrial sectors -including the growing "new state bourgeoisie" linked to the INI (Instituto Nacional de Industria) (Giner and Sevilla, 1980, p 213)- as well as in the Public Administration have risen as a result of the economic development, creating greater fragmentation and heterogeneity within the ruling class (Maravall, 1981, pp. 21-22).

In a parallel way, a new working class with relatively high levels of income

had emerged (Cf. I. Fernández de Castro and A. Goytre, 1974, pp. 306-307). The character of the working class threat to the industrial and financial bourgeoisie had been transformed by that relative prosperity.

In this framework of socio-structural changes there was a shift in the attitude and behaviour of employers, looking increasingly for agreements on wages and productivity through unofficial negotiations and collective bargaining with the clandestine unions, that is to say, outside the official channels. To some extent, the industrialists were beginning a process of conversion to what they themselves called "the Western political model" (Giner and Sevilla, 1980, pp. 218-219).

Two solid reasons for dissatisfaction of the members of industrial and financial bourgeoisie with the political institutions of Francoism has been suggested by British historian Paul Preston: a) while many members of the economic elite had hopes of integration the working class into the capitalist system by means of a reward-based economy, they felt that their hopes will be frustrated as long as the only method of expressing political preference open to workers was the strike; b) their view of those institutions as a major obstacle to further economic development, particularly regarding to Spain's relations with the EEC, since entry in Europe required democratization (P. Preston, 1976, pp. v-vi).

This kind of arguments could lead to the conclusion that these upper social sectors were coming clearly closer in their activities to the traditional opposition forces. However, I prefer Linz's point of view when he writes that there is "little evidence that business groups played an active role in favor of or against the political transformation in this period and even less evidence of structural alignments for or against change". Certainly there were contacts between opposition leaders and some business leaders who, however, felt that they did not want to compromise their interests by coming into conflict with the state" (Linz, 1981, p. 394).

There is still another question to be considered: the entity of the direct political participation of representatives of the industrial and financial bourgeoisie in the high levels of the Franco Administration. It is noteworthy that while a significant percentage of the members of the initial military Junta de Defensa Nacional -15%- and a even higher proportion -20%- of the presidents of the various commissions that made up the Junta Técnica del Estado (a seudocivilian cabinet created by Franco in October 1936) were recruited among those fractions of the bourgeoisie (Viver, 1978, p. 243), subsequently -once the regime started its institutionalization and at least for the next two decades- that participation was going to decrease remarkably. In fact, only 8% of the first Franquist elite -understanding by such elite the individuals appointed to any office at the three highest levels of the Administration, from director general to cabinet member, between February 1938, date of the first cabinet, and February 1957- occupied positions on the board of directors of any industrial firm or

bank (Jerez, 1982, p. 134).

From the Stabilization Plan of 1959 this situation changed substantially representatives of big business and the industrial bourgeoisie were appointed to cabinet posts in a significant number and during the sixties the employers covered more than one third of the positions in the Cortes, the Francoist pseudolegislative body (de Miguel, 1975, p. 73). As the regime advanced, members of the industrial and financial bourgeoisie increasingly rose to high positions in the government. By the early seventies the Council of Ministers overwhelmingly consisted of such individuals (Gunther, 1980, p. 8)

There was, of course, the other way: the new political class from the very beginning started to move to the seats of the boards of directors, both of the newly founded industrial firms of the public sector dependent of the INI and the public banks as well as the boards of private corporations and banks. Some data may illustrate that process; for example, between 1940 and 1950 the proportion of members of the first Francoist elite -as described above- occupying seats on the board of directors of a corporation or a bank rose from 12.7% to 33.2%, and by 1960 that proportion was 41.3 (Jerez, 1982, pp. 137-138). Nevertheless, with the exception of the INI firms, the presence of the new political class on the boards of directors of the industrial and banking systems did not allow those individuals to control these corporations, "but, rather, gave the old business elite access to the new power holders" (Linz, 1981, p. 391). In short, as has been argued by Viver, the progressive links established between political elites and big business was the main way to restore the traditional imbrication between the ruling class and the political class, momentarily interrupted (1978, p. 267).

### **III.1. Employer associability under the new institutional framework**

Employer organizations in Spain obtained full institutionalization at a legal level in the framework of the 1978 Constitution, which draws a model of pluralistic democracy on the double base of a state defined as "social and democratic" (Article 1.1) and of the recognition of the free market system (Article 38), although introducing both the possibility of public planning and the right for State intervention (Articles 38, 128 and 131). Article 7 of the Constitution recognizes explicitly both "labor unions" and "employer associations" as economic and social actors assigning them a role of "defence and promotion" of the interests which they represent in these fields and providing legal guarantees for their creation and for the exercise of their activities. While not directly attributing them a political role, unlike that made for political parties (Article 6), the Constitution, starting on the content of the same article 7 and others (i.e., 127.1 and 131.2), would allow us to speak in terms of political subjects, even on a formal level, relating to employer associations as well as trade

unions (Palomeque, 1985, pp. 57-62).

The emergence of the current system of employer organizations had been already opened by the April 1977 government decision to dismantle the Vertical Syndicate (definitely abolished in June, the month of the first parliamentary elections) and to passing a law which legalized the labor unions (Ley sobre regulación del derecho de asociación sindical) that could be of use to those organizations since reference to free associability for employers as well as workers was made in it. It was just this law which introduced a pattern that has been observed in representational matters affecting the "labor of work" during the transition, the Constitution included as we have seen in article 7: the pattern of referring in the same norm to both labor unions and employer associations (R. Martinez, 1984, p. 9).

The Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales (CEOE), the peak association for the business side, was formally created at the end of June 1977, just two weeks after the first general elections were held in the framework of that April legislation. However, significant efforts in order to reorganize the employers had been already made from November 1975, once Franco's death clearly showed that the end of his regime was imminent, as the old system of collective interest representation would consequently be finished. In fact, this period that has been typified as "protoorganizational" knew various employer initiatives developed through four main lines of action (Aguilar, 1985, pp. 60-61):

a) The revitalization of historical owners organizations, which have played an almost purely formal role under Francoism, as was the case of the Catalan Fomento del Trabajo Nacional (FTN), which began to function again in October 1976.

b) The creation of employer organizations linked to the remains of the Sindicato Vertical, looking for the capitalization of the available infrastructure in order to negotiate the participation in the future peak employer associations: for instance, the Confederación General Española de Empresarios was founded in May 1977 following this strategy.

c) The creation of employers associations linked to cliques of industrialists enjoying a dominant position in one or more economic sectors or in a particular geographic zone. The foundation of the powerful Círculo de Empresarios or the Confederación Empresarial Española, (in March and May 1977, respectively) and the creation of SEFES (in 1975 as an instrument of business interest defence in a particularly conflictive Catalan area) responded to this line of action.

d) Propagandistic activities -such as newspaper articles, conferences, encounters, advertisements, etc.- in order both to promote the organization of business interests and to justify its necessity with regard to society.

The reactive character of the entrepreneur associationism -sufficiently documented for other countries- was particularly evident in this first period, the positions of industrialists being eminently defensive (Martínez and Pardo Avellaneda, 1985, pp. 92-93; and Aguilar, 1985, p. 61). The creation of the CEOE by the fusion of four employer organizations (Fomento del Trabajo Nacional, Agrupación Empresarial Independiente, Confederación General Española de Empresarios y Confederación Empresarial Española) represent the opening of a new stage in which two were the aims efficaciously pursued: on the one hand, a certain consolidation of a entrepreneurial bureaucracy representing consistently the interests of those sectors of big business more in favour of the democratic transition; on the other hand, a satisfactory level of stable affiliation now obviously voluntary. The first objective was finally reached through the reelection in November 1978 of Ferrer Salat as president of the CEOE, heading a large Junta Directiva (50 members) and a homogeneous Comité Ejecutivo (6 persons) where the most right-wing members were excluded; the second, through the so-called "actos de afirmación empresarial", a practice that would be abandoned in 1979 once those aims were reached: the gathering of thousands of employers in a big city (Barcelona, Valencia, and Madrid were the scene of the most important of them) with the additional aims of giving internal cohesion to the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie by means of its massive mobilization and obtaining the respect of Government as a differentiated power (Aguilar, pp. 62-63).

The period 1979-1980 means the institutional consolidation of the employers organizations, a consolidation that would be corroborated through the years 1981/1984, even if the political scene was much more complex (Pérez Díaz, 1985, p. 11).

Two were the most significant signs of consolidation through the mentioned period: on the one hand, the incorporation, in March 1980, into the CEOE' ranks of CEPYME, the Spanish Confederation of Small and Medium Firms, which enhanced the hegemonic position of the first and put an end to the most important division in the employer associationism. Although all firms were theoretically represented by the CEOE. The CEPYME presented itself as the defender of the specific interests and views of smaller enterprises, even if on the whole its mutual relations were more complementarial than adversarial. While the formula adopted gave to the CEPYME "a unique position as neither a sectorial nor provincial or regionally-defined intersectorial (territorial) affiliate, but, rather, as a State-wide peak affiliate for smaller firms" (Martínez, 1984, p. 31), it was practically absorbed inside the CEOE (Aguilar, 1985, p. 63). On the other hand, the signing of the Basic Interconfederal Agreement (AMI) of January 1980 by the CEOE and the Socialist union, UGT (Unión General de Trabajadores) which had the character of a public bilateral agreement between both organizations facing such significant questions as salaries, productivity, collective bargaining and labor conflictivity (Martínez and Pardo, 1985, p. 84). This pact

represent the triumph of a policy already expressed by the July 1979 agreement between the same two organizations, a strategy tending both to avoid the emergence of a syndical block and to produce the decrease of the labor union "of communist inspiration" CCOO, in favour of UGT, through the introduction of social pacts of bilateral nature with those unions accepting the terms proposed by the employer organization (the AMI was later signed by USO, the third largest union, to some extent then close to the UCD, at that time the party in government). However, the triumph of this operation, materialized in the effects of the AMI implementation -basically, a slow down in the labor conflictivity and a substantial rising of UGT in the following unions elections-, was not an exclusive merit of the CEOE. Two external factors contributed to it: first, the objective interests of the major political parties at the time, UCD and PSOE, respectively interested in reaching a distension in, the labor word as well as in emphasizing bipartidism, and -in the case of the PSOE- in winning a significant union basis that would be extremely useful in the then hypothesis of an electoral victory; second, the presence of increasingly weighty reformist sectors in the Spanish worker movement that consequently showed a certain receptivity to that strategy (Aguilar, 1985, pp. 81-83, and Pérez Díaz, 1981).

The signing of this type of social pacts between the employer organizations and the trade unions as well as the tendence to corporatist intermediation was going to shape a certain pattern in Spain, apparently interrupted in 1987. The Moncloa Pacts signed in October 1977 by the major political parties were the first essay along these lines and the sole occasion in which the CEOE, by this time a weak organization which hadn't even existed for four months, was excluded (as a matter of fact it would take advantage of the circumstance, stirring up the entrepreneurs and achieving its first affiliates through the attack on the contents of these agreements). Although the unions were formally excluded too, the workers's commissions and the UGT -the two big trade unions- in fact respected this comprehensive political pact that put strong emphasis in economic measures because of its close links with the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, respectively (the labor organizations) were initially against the deal, arguing that they had not been consulted but in the end they gave their consent -withdrawn by CCOO the following year-basically because of the need "to consolidate democracy".

Still prior to the AMI -to be applied through 1980/1981- the already mentioned July 1979 agreement between the CEOE and the UGT was sighed. The first three-part agreement, the Acuerdo Nacional sobre el Empleo (ANE), was reached in 1981 by the Government, the CEOE and both the UGT and the CCOO. But we must pay attention to the fact that this first purely neocorporatist agreement of the Spanish transition had an immediate and clear motivation: the attempt of coup d'état of 23-February (Hence, once again the protection of the democratic system was playing a decisive factor in obtaining the unions consensus) (Cf. Forewaker, 1987, pp. 66-67).

While the Interconfederal Agreement (AI) signed in 1983 -the year following the Socialist Party's access to the State government- between the CEOE and the UGT had the same character (and the same protagonist) as the AMI, a more complicated agreement was reached in 1984 to be applied through the next two years: the Economic and Social Agreement (AES). Its text includes three parts: a statement made by the Cabinet (declaración del Gobierno) on fiscal pressure, public deficit, financing of the private sector, etc., in which the idea of a pact was not explicitly present; a three-part agreement (Government, CEOE and UGT) containing economic concessions by each signatory part; and a new interconfederal agreement where both the Government and -more significantly- the workers' commissions were absent. Just as the AMI, the text was inserted in the Boletín Oficial del Estado, the official state journal, trying to give it further efficacy and a certain institutionalization (Sagardoy, 1984, and Antón, 1984). No other large social agreement has been achieved since then in spite of some government efforts in this sense through out 1987, the main change in the political panorama being the open differences between the Socialist government and the UGT as well as the approximation of the Socialist labor union to the CCOO resulting February 1988 in a return to the old days of the "unity of action" as can be seen in the defence of common platforms in most firms and sectors by the two major unions. Late in that year (December, 14th) the convergence of both unions in the successful convocatory of the first general strike against a PSOE cabinet represented the peak of a process subsequently attenuated, mainly because electoral differences in the union field.

The high organizational continuity is one of the more characteristic feature of the present Spanish employer associationism. While the CEOE superstructure was completely new, the same can't always be said of its member associations, even if the forms of continuity varied, going beyond Francoism in regions with a longer industrial tradition, particularly Catalonia (Martínez, 1984, pp. 20-21, 83-84 and 484-485). That continuity has been measured through survey techniques, offering the following results: a 59% of the employer organizations existing in 1982 had worked -in different ways- in the framework of the Organización Sindical; 9% were created under Francoism, although operating outside the vertical union; 10% were associations older than the Francoist regime operating de facto independently from it during that period; and, finally, one association was born before the civil war, maintaining itself in a latent state through the dictatorship and emerging during the transition. Thereby, only 21% of the organizations were created ex-novo after the breakdown of Franco regime (Martínez and Pardo, 1985, pp. 99-100).

Regarding the structure and effective of the Spanish hegemonic employer association, the CEOE, in March 1985 it was integrated by 114 sectorial organizations (state-wide), 48 territorial intersectorial organizations (provincial or regional) and CEPYME, which amounted to 163 associations/federations affiliated.

The CEOE statutes don't allow either lower level base organizations or individual firms to become direct members. According to its own sources, the Confederación would represent 3.500 base organizations and almost 1.100.000 firms, although the last number seems to be exaggerated (Rijnen, 1985, p. 116). By this time the CEOE had a staff of 78 employees, including 45 graduates, most of them lawyers and above all economists. While there is a certain tendency to expansion in these effectives, the Confederación doesn't seem to want to follow the British or the German pattern in this point. It would prefer to opt for specific contracts or external professional services when it is necessary besides strengthening the affiliate organizations.

### **III.2. Business attitudes and behaviour**

According to the methodology used in the research, the approaches to this topic are mainly two: on the one hand, those approaches based on the analysis of the daily press and journals as well as the employers organizations' documentation (statutes, memories, etc.). On the other hand, those others making a direct investigation through survey techniques among both individual entrepreneurs and association leaders.

An example of the first line of research is the one by Aguilar (1985) who made three main considerations regarding "actions and attitudes" of organized management concerning the democratic system during the transition: a) its amazing low definition, at least until 1981, on such a significant question as the political -and consequently labour- framework; b) its immediate reaction in favour of the democratic system in the days following the "golpe" of February 1981, although the clearly majoritarian statements made by employer leaders alternated with some others of opposite sign; and c) the purely instrumental view of the democratic system shown by the employer organization to the extent that the patronal aligns itself with that system (as it would be otherwise the case in other advanced capitalist countries) (pp. 71-73). The same author emphasizes two outstanding functions assumed by the organized management through those years: the attempt to create a stable and hegemonic political right and the task of giving a certain cohesion to the business class. Consistent with this double aim the CEOE had to play an intense and unusual interventionist role in the political system, and it did indeed (pp. 73-77).

Regarding the specific and peculiar relations between the CEOE and the UCD while the last was the party in government, three phases could be distinguished:

a) 1977-1978, characterized by the above mentioned "actos de afirmación empresarial" in protest against the Moncloa Pacts and the governments economic

policies in general; b) 1978-1979, a phase -defined by an important employer leader as "critical collaboration"- in which the relationship was more functional, and that it seems to show a beginning of acceptance of the UCD as the hegemonic party of the Spanish right-wing, the conflicts with the executive being strategically selected; and c) the phase of a definitive deterioration, opened in 1980 coinciding with the political failure of the UCD policy in Andalucía with relation to the referendum on an autonomous regime for that region and the poor results obtained by the party in the regional elections held in March in Catalonia and Euskadi; a phase in which three were the key moments, unvariably registering a clear intervention of the CEOE: the first minister resignation in January 1981; the so called strategy of la gran derecha applied through that year pursuing a coalition of the UCD and the Popular Aliance (AP) under the leadership of Fraga; and the definitive collapse of the UCD as a result of the October 1982 parliamentary elections in which the party vote descend from 35.1 to 6.8%, loosing 156 deputies of a total of 168 (the employer organizations had already openly -and efficiently- supported AP in the regional elections held in Galicia and Andalucía) (pp. 74-77).

As for the other approach that allow us to learn about other specific aspects of employer opinion and behaviour is concerned, we are using -as was already mentioned in my introduction- the studies by Robert Martínez (1984) and Víctor Pérez Díaz (1985), registering business attitudes in 1981/82 and 1984 respectively, therefore before and after the substitution of the UCD by the PSOE as the party in government.

The first of these works examines the way in which the transition to a democratic system had affected the Spanish business sector. At the same time, it analyzes the role played by this social sector, both via the aggregate of individual decisions and through the activities of its collective interest groups (the employers associations), in the evolution and consolidation of the democratic regime. Emphasis is made in continuity with business attitudes in earlier periods as well as in organizations continuity as a significant element in order to explain current positions.

For the purpose of this paper, and in this point, the analysis made in chapter five is particularly useful. There, the researcher attempt to asses the degree of support among Spanish business elite (1) for the previous regime and the level of acceptance of both the political opening and the consolidation of democracy. His main conclusions on these matters could be summarized as follows:

-Employers and their collective interest organizations represented by this time a conservative segment of the Spanish society which overwhelmingly supported the manner in which the issue of political change was undertaken (through legal reform rather than open rupture, the so called "reforma pactada"), as well as the establishment of a legal framework for the new system. Hence, when asked it they

felt that viable alternatives to the reform existed at the time of the transition, most chiefs executives and employers organizations leaders (70.4% and 65.2%, respectively) rejected the possibility of political options other than the reform. By province (2) there were similar proportions in Madrid, Sevilla, Barcelona and Valencia of individuals who believe that viable alternatives to the reform existed (slightly over a quarter of them, against a fifth in Vizcaya, in the Basque Country). Nevertheless, when asked to elaborate their answers the number of such individuals describing non democratic options varied, being much higher in the two first provinces mentioned -34.8 and 33.3% respectively- than in Barcelona or Valencia -17.2 and 16.7% respectively- while non a single individual in the Basque province, already revealing the lowest percentage of respondents expressing belief in alternatives, chose an option classifiable as undemocratic. Indeed, attitudes on the reform were closely related to sentiments regarding the previous regime, but not all those favorable to Franco who believed alternatives to the reform existed preferred antidemocratic options in its stead.

-Both heads of firms and leaders of associations participated in the referendum on the Constitution (December 1978) at levels far exceeding those registered among the population as a whole: once excluded foreigners from the samples, over nine-tenths of both groups, compared to a national participation level of slightly above two thirds. The distance was much larger in the Basque case where, in a context in which the influential Partido Nacionalista Vasco supported abstention, businessmen's participation rates almost doubled the overall rate for Vizcaya province which was only 43.9%. The traditionally strong identification of the Basque upper bourgeoisie with Madrid, that is to say, the Spanish State, could explain this significant departure.

However, looking at the actual votes cast on the Constitution there were not any significant differences with the data for the population at large, except for the proportion of no votes among the leaders of associations which was around five points higher (12.6% compared to 7.7%). Otherwise, size of organization appeared very important in determining leaders support for the Constitution. The more elite the association, the closer hierarchically to the CEOE leadership, the less likely was to find "no" voters, a tendency that seems to be explained by the emphasis placed by the men that led the transition on the idea of a consensual approach negotiated at the elite level.

-Despite strong and vocal criticism of the Suárez Government by significant sector of business opinion -particularly in the banking sector- and certain business leaders, partially attributable to a perceived failure of the Government, both to accord enough priority to economic policies -comparing with the attention paid to political matters- and to deal adequately with economic problems, they gave a very strong electoral support to UCD, at least until the 1979 elections.

-A significant portion of businessmen found themselves among the wide sector of the Spanish population which, without identifying itself ideologically with the previous regime, had given Francoism its passive support, or was completely despoliticized, consequently, given the aims of the regime, contributing to its surviving. Even though the degrees of approbatory assessments drawn regarding Franco were very high throughout (3), high levels of absolute approval were found only among AP supporters or individual more closely implicated in the regime, and along party lines only it is among AP voters that one finds overwhelming approval of Franco without any significant level of criticism.

-Regarding to electoral behaviour, businessmen showed high levels of participation and strong support for the UCD in the 1977 and 1979 parliamentary elections, the strength of the UCD being significantly greater among individual heads of firms than among their associational leadership, which emerged as somewhat more conservative than their constituents. Indeed, the two major regional parties -the Catalan Convergència i Unió and the Basque PNV- garnered important degrees of support in their respective regions. While levels of support for AP stand at roughly twice their levels among the whole population, this party was not widely perceived as a viable and natural alternative over the early years of the democratic system. Growing support for AP by important sectors of the CEOE' peak leadership, beginning in 1980 and accelerating over 1981 and 1982, contributed significantly to the erosion of UCD as well as to the shift of business vote to the other party whose platform was consistent with conservative business interests.

-Businessmen were willing to deal with the Left if faced with economic problems in their own firms or sectors. The chief executives of large firms were particularly open to the possibility of addressing Left deputies or parties representing workers in order to seek solutions (71%, compared to 53.2% for the whole sample). Likewise, the chief executives of public sector firms were much more open to the possibility of dealing with Left representatives if the need arose.

-As for the business sector view on a then hypothetical Socialist Government, it was found that substantial majorities of both head of firms and leaders of associations were not worried about the materialization of that possibility in the Spanish policy. So, only roughly a third of the first and under a quarter of the leaders believed that a PSOE parliamentary absolute majority would actually lead to extensive socialization of the country (it would be necessary to emphasize that the 1982 date of the association survey may have contributed to the diminished fear of absolute majoritarian Socialist electoral victory). Hence, it appeared already much more likely that with moderate policies, both González -whose image among chief executives was very favorable when compared to Suárez or even Fraga- and the Socialist party would benefit from a rather extensive degree of maneuverability

granted by the business sector.

-On the negative side, there did exist a significant minority of chief executives who faced with Government policies damaging business interests -specifically through approved legislation- stated that they would turn to particular actions which could be typified as virtually anti-system measures: i.e., "bring about a Constitutional change which would make such legislation impossible" (23.7%) or "support political sectors willing to bring about fundamental changes in the system" (32.3%). Moreover, while there was considerable openness to deal with a wide range of political leaders and institutions, relatively scant confidence that desired objectives could be reached through networks of existing contacts appeared. In this respect, the roles to be played by employer organizations seemed to be decisive in order to shape future attitudes towards the legal means of effecting desired policy outcomes.

In short, business positions during the transition -which I would say reach an end when the alternance in power was materialized in October 1982 without any trouble- could be qualified in general terms as moderately conservative. Likewise, by the time those positions were evaluated it seems already foreseeable that this social sector will support rather than oppose the continuing consolidation of democracy in Spain, provided that once the Socialist were in Government they didn't adopt a radical policy.

The above mentioned Pérez Díaz ' work -and, indeed, the real evolution of politics in Spain- clearly confirm that foresight. In fact, the results of his 1984 employer opinion allow us to register the evolution of the businessmen opinion (4), measuring it after more than fifteen months of Socialist Government. There was various findings in that study which would be pertinent to point out here:

-An overwhelming majority of the employers considered favourably the PSOE access to power from the point of view of the stability of the political system (specifically, 80%, compared to an other 20% who were still worried about it).

-While the businessmen's attitude with respect to the PSOE economic policy had significant components of criticism -particularly regarding public expenditure- their criticism seems to be less virulent than it was with respect to the UCD economic policy. They even showed their agreement with some substantial aspects of that PSOE policy, such as the wage policy, the measures of temporary hiring and the new lines of industrial reconversion. Most of them thought that González economic policy was closer to the pragmatism of the German chancellor Helmut Schmitt (during most of the seventies) than of the economic policy of François Mitterrand (during his first two years as French President). An outstanding data reflecting the "smooth" attitude of the employers in this regard was the favorable

image obtained among them -on a 0 to 5 scale- by the then powerful Socialist minister of Economy and Finance, Miguel Boyer (2.8, less than a point under the highest scores obtained by Fraga and González -3.68 and 3.66, respectively- and over other centre or centre-right leaders such as Suárez or Garrigues -2.61 and 2.46, respectively).

-The employers substantially maintained their negative view with respect to the Spanish Public Administration, which was criticized for its lack of rationality and neutrality, and was typified as incompetent. Although the 1982 Socialist electoral campaign and program put a particularly strong emphasis on the "rationalization" of the Spanish Public Administration as a crucial aspect of the necessary "modernization of Spain", only 26% of the interviewed thought that its running had improved, while 23% stated that it was getting worse and 46% declared that there wasn't any change.

-As for the electoral behaviour; in 1982, coinciding with the UCD collapse, a strong shift of the centre-right businessmen votes was registered as well as some minor readjustments in their preferences for regional parties, or even the PSOE. According to these survey data, 46.5% of the employers voted for AP, compared to roughly 25% in 1979, while the UCD and the CDS -the new Suárez party- only obtained 8 and 4%, respectively, (the UCD business vote in 1979 rose to 44%). Centre-right regional parties votes rose from roughly a fifth of the business vote in 1979 (12.4 for the Catalan *Convergència* and 8.4 for the Basque *PNV*) to 27% (only *Convergència* won almost six points because the virtual extinction of UCD in Catalonia). Finally, the PSOE vote went up from 4.4% -only 2.2 and 2.6% among employers and leaders of associations, respectively, in the Martínez' surveys- to 8%, while the extreme right-wing vote (1% in 1979) disappeared.

-By this time, the business class seemed to have dropped both its initial defensive attitude and consciousness of vulnerability, adopting a more solid position. The constitutionalization of the free market system, the relatively moderate position of the labor unions and the partial success of the social pacts, the gradual improvement of the economic scenario, the changes operated in the political language and strategy of the PSOE, as well as the development and consolidation of the own employer organizations were undoubtedly among the most important factors accounting for this substantial change from the early days of the transition.

On the other hand, regarding the question of businessmen's direct political participation in the post-Franco Administration, there is full evidence of a massive presence of unequivocal representatives of the economic power in the two first Governments of the Monarchy, that is to say, the last Arias Cabinet and the first Suárez Government (G. Campos, 1976). It appears that in the Government presided by Arias Navarro the usual correspondence between the group holding the economic

power and those individuals exercising political power at the highest executive level become even stronger. Its main particularity was given by the fact that while numerous Cabinet members were linked to private corporations -in which wasn't any thing new-, these firms were almost invariably characterized by a high percent of foreign capital participation. As a matter of fact, the conditions set by the foreign banks -particularly the USA banks- in order to grant limited credit to the new Administration -basically the liberalization of the traditional obstacles to its entry in Spain and the Spanish private banks' full opposition to it could be among the decisive factors explaining the fall of this Government (Cf. Campos, pp. 107-108). With respect to the first Suárez Government, it has been usually typified as "propagandista", alluding to the dominant presence in it of members of the ACN de P (Asociación Católica Nacional de Propagandistas), a paraeclesiastic organization politically protagonist in Spain from the 1920's (Sáez Alba, 1974; and Jerez, 1982, pp. 28 8 ss.) and closely bound to some industries and, above all, certain private banks (specially, the Banco Español de Crédito, Banco Central and Banco Urquijo, ranking second, third and sixth, respectively among the Spanish private banks). At least, six cabinet posts -Presidency, Foreign Affairs, Treasury, Public Works, Information and Tourism, and Justice- were covered by men coming from this organization, most of them showing those economic connections in their biographies. And, indeed, they were not the sole ministers personally linked to the banking or the industrial system, as it was respectively the case for the holders of the Commerce and Industry portfolios (Campos, 1976, p. 114).

Considering the period going from July 1976 to January 1981, which include the five Suárez Governments, it has been found that at least 38 cabinet members from a total of 58 had occupied elite positions in industrial firms, and many of them held direct relations with the banking sector. Naturally, the picture of this political elite shows an intricate network of relationships with different industrial sectors as well as the banking system (S'. del Campo et al., 1982, pp. 45-61). Although I don't know any study covering the Calvo Sotelo Cabinet -the last UCD Government-, it seems highly improbable that this pattern changed substantially, the Prime Minister being himself a prominent man of the industrial and financial bourgeoisie. Indeed, that pauta was broken with the Socialist Governments, even if some of its members maintain excellent personal relations with the business world.

Much less important was the presence of employers and businessmen in the Spanish parliament. Thus, in the 1977 Congreso de los Diputados the rate of entrepreneurs and businessmen was 16.4 (18.3 including farmers), but only roughly a 10% of the deputies were identified as members of the board of directors of any firm. Two years later, in the 1979 Congreso these proportions were even lower, 10.6% and 2.5% of deputies appearing as "industrial and agrarian entrepreneurs" and "traders and small industrialists", respectively (Vid. S. del Campo et al., 1982, pp. 39-46).

## NOTES

- (1) **The 1981 employer -chief executives or head of firms- and the 1982 leader of associations surveys included 12% and 9% of foreigners respectively, all of them obviously considered her a as members of the Spanish business elite. The "elite" nature of even the employer survey arise from the elimination, of firms under fifty workers (the bulk of Spanish enterprise).**
- (2) The two business surveys were conducted in industrialized Spain covering provinces of Barcelona, Madrid, Vizcaya, Valencia and Sevilla, ranking first, second, third, fourth, and eight, respectively provinces by industrial values added.
  - (3) 70% among employers and 67% among leaders were generally favorable, but only 5 and 6%, respectively, gave it their total approval.
- (4) It must be indicated that the criterium used to select firms, since the sample covered all of them larger than 20 employers it was less restrictive than that in the Martínez' head of firms survey. All the provinces of any industrial importance were included too. Interviews were distributed as follows: 30% in Catalonia, 28% in Madrid, 16% in the Basque Country and 26% in the rest.

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