

Introduction

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Introduction

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- 1 The 1970s represented for Portugal, Greece and Spain a new beginning which allowed them to leave behind years of non-democratic rule and embrace democracy. Over forty years have passed since 1974, when authoritarian regimes began being overturned in Southern Europe. During that same time period, the former European Economic Community (EEC), now the European Union (EU), actively sponsored the consolidation of democratic rule and grew to include more European countries. In recalling these facts, we turn our attention to two rounds of Mediterranean enlargement: The first occurred in 1981, with the accession of Greece; the second, five years later, with the formal accession of Portugal and Spain.
- 2 Enlargement strengthened Europe's strategic position not only in the Mediterranean but also in Latin America, thus offering a new geopolitical dimension to the EEC. It also expanded Europe in terms of population, territory, market and culture, contributing to the reconfiguration of the EEC, its mission and its scope.
- 3 From the candidates' perspective, individually and as a whole, EEC membership brought many benefits, such as access to European common policies and the EEC budget, a very significant expansion of trade with EEC countries and the enhancement of foreign investment. In addition to participating actively in the construction of the EEC/EU since 1981/1986, the three countries have contributed to the development and implementation of both the Single Market and the Economic and Monetary Union. Yet, before Mediterranean enlargement was concluded, or even imagined, very different processes occurred in each country's transition to democracy: while Portugal experienced a revolutionary upheaval in 1974's *25 de Abril*, Greece witnessed the fall of the seven-year Greek military dictatorship a few months later that year, and Spain underwent a slow evolutionary process from Franco's corporatist republic to King Juan Carlos I's democratic monarchy. Their path to EEC accession was also somewhat diverse, as past and recent studies have shown.
- 4 Although political transition to democracy in all three countries has been analyzed extensively, and the role of the EEC has been questioned in some instances, we still know too little about the relationship between democratic transition and EEC

accession. How did those states and the EEC manage to deal simultaneously with the transition to democratic regimes and Greece's, Portugal's and Spain's applications to join?

- 5 This issue of the *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* aims to assess the role played by different actors in this process –from parties, political movements and armies, to European institutions and individual member states. It will look at the normative effects on the accession process of the Community's rules, enlargement policy and institutional settings, and study the extent and the specific ways in which European integration influenced the political transition to democracy and accession in those countries. The issue includes articles based on archival research and it also discusses recent literature.
- 6 The first papers address the transition to democracy in Southern European countries during the 1970s and 1980s. Alice Cunha's article focuses on the linkage between democracy and accession to the EEC, assessing the role that democratic principles played in the Portuguese accession negotiations at a very early stage. Antonio Moreno Juste analyses European strategies in the uncertain new era after Franco's death and their connection with the agenda to relaunch the European integration process by looking at the impact of the temporary suspension of economic negotiations on the transition process and on democratic consolidation. Vanessa Núñez Peñas also looks at Spain, focusing her analysis on Spain's integration and linking it to the broader history of EU enlargement. Her work takes into account the social, economic and political changes in Spain after Franco's death, Cold War dialectics and the permanent clash of interests among European institutions. Carlos Sanz explores the impact that EEC accession negotiations had on the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other branches of the Spanish administration and also delves into the scope and limits of democratization and Europeanization within the post-authoritarian Spanish Foreign Service. Concerning Greece, Eirini Karamouzi analyses the political dimension of accession by looking at the motives behind the Greek decision to apply for EEC membership and showing that beyond evident geostrategic and economic motivations, Karamanlis' government greatly capitalized on the EEC opportunity as part of a transition strategy to safeguard democracy. Regarding post-accession, Akis Kalaitzidis and Nikolaos Zahariadis argue that although Greek membership produced results in terms of democratization and political stability, the Greek economy has not fared as well, despite infusions of large EU sums. They point out that, ultimately, the Greek case shows how, without a robust economic plan stemming from membership, democratization may succeed but membership will ultimately fail. Lastly, Mohammed Zakaria Abouddahab analyses how the European Union has influenced the democratization process in Morocco and how the evolution of European institutions creates side effects outside of Europe. This last contribution shows that EU integration is still very attractive. It is a model, of sorts, and this positive judgement should be kept in mind to counterbalance current "Euro-bashing" trends.
- 7 Lisbon and Nice, 10 February 2015

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