Democratization and Europeanization of the Spanish Foreign Service on the Way to Accession into the European Economic Community, 1975-1986

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

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Today it has been forgotten to what extent entry into the [European Economic] Community led to a reorientation of the organizational and conceptual structures of Spanish foreign policy. The Spanish administration in general and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in particular adapted so much and so quickly to the particular requirements of Communitarian coordination that the previous period seems almost prehistoric.

Ángel Viñas, Al servicio de Europa

Introduction: democratization, modernization and Europeanization in post-Franco Spain

The words of the diplomat and historian Ángel Viñas that head this article remind us of the deep and rapid change experienced by the Spanish Foreign Service following the
dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1939-1975) in order to accommodate to Spain’s membership of the European Communities as from 1 January 1986. As this author states, entry into the EEC was a strong incentive to modernization in the machinery of Spanish foreign policy. However, the changes introduced did not emerge from nowhere: they were preceded by ten years of reforms in the structures and personnel of the Foreign Service under the dictatorship to being the tool of a democratic foreign policy.²

The democratization of the Foreign Service was an aspiration shared by the major political forces and the Spanish government.³ A democratic Foreign Service was considered a basic requirement of the new foreign policy of democratic Spain. At the same time, the inner democratization of Spanish diplomacy was seen as part of a larger process of modernization and rapprochement to Europe after forty years of dictatorship.⁴ The links between these processes were sometimes only implicit and indirect, but they were often explicitly claimed. For Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja, “democratization and Europeanization were complementary phenomena” to the extent that “the transition could not be terminated until Spain was fully homologated” by other European democratic countries, a goal that would be achieved only by joining the EEC.⁵ Furthermore, for Oreja himself, Spain could have a democratic foreign policy only if it had a modernized Foreign Service.⁶

During the transition to democracy, the democratization of foreign policy was a widely discussed topic in political and academic circles. For the main political forces, it was a matter of leaving behind Franco’s authoritarian model, characterized by the incomplete international integration of Spain; arbitrary policy in accordance with the theory of a “foreign power” that was autonomous and not subject to legal and political controls; the concentration of that power in the hands of Franco and his ministers; poor coordination and planning and personalized decision-making; secret diplomacy that could compromise security and national sovereignty, as the Spain-US agreements of 1953 had done; and the existence of a largely closed, elitist, endogamic Foreign Service in need of thorough modernization. This Foreign Service was monopolized by a diplomatic elite forged in the dictatorship: they should now offer a new face of Spain under the monarchy of King Juan Carlos I.⁷

The king’s first goal in foreign affairs was “to incorporate Spain into international life without the limitations inherited from Franco”, as Roberto Mesa states.⁸ Other actors expressed their views on this issue. In his speech before the United Nations General Assembly on 27 September 1976, Oreja claimed that “respect for human rights and individual freedom” would be the “cornerstone” of Spain’s new foreign policy. In a speech at the School of Diplomacy (26 May 1977), Oreja highlighted the three main features that a democratic foreign policy should have: first, be the expression of internal democratic change; second, be effectively controlled by Parliament; third, be deployed by a modernized Foreign Service.⁹ For the Socialist member of Parliament Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo, a democratic foreign policy should have three features: universalism; to be a State policy defending the national community above private interests; and to be overtly conducted through democratic procedures of information, decision and control.¹⁰ Similar thoughts were published shortly after by the Socialist Party’s expert in foreign policy, Fernando Morán.¹¹

In a formal sense, Spain’s foreign policy was democratic since the 1977 elections and passage of the 1978 Constitution insofar as it was formulated and executed by representative governments in a democratic system. The Constitution clarified the
institutional structure of the State and the decision-making process in foreign policy. In sharp contrast with the purely decorative Cortes under Franco, effective parliamentary control by the lower house of the Cortes, the Congress of Deputies (Congreso de los Diputados), and the Senate (Senado) over the government was established, although over time the trend of presidentialization of Spanish foreign policy undermined the effectiveness of democratic controls.

Moreover, Spanish foreign policy after Franco’s death was full of gestures aimed at emphasizing the differences with the past, from signing international treaties on human rights to the establishment of relations with communist governments in central and Eastern Europe (1977) and with countries such as Mexico (1977) and Israel (1986).

In this framework, accession to the EEC was the most important objective in Spanish foreign policy, since “Europe” was seen as a guarantee for the consolidation of democracy as well as for the economic modernization of the country. In 1962 Spain asked the EEC for an association agreement, but because of its undemocratic regime it had to settle for a Preferential Trade Agreement, signed in 1970. This rejection showed the limits of “Francoist Europeanism” and reinforced the conviction that only a democratic Spain could fully participate in “Europe”.

The first Spanish government after Franco convinced the Council of Europe to allow it to be admitted in 1977, even though Spain had not yet approved a democratic Constitution. On 28 July 1977, it presented its application to join the EEC after the first meeting of the cabinet formed after the democratic elections of June 1977. From 1977 to 1985 Spain--and Portugal--entered into talks and then held negotiations with the EEC to become member states. The burden of the relations with Brussels fell mainly on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), which over the years made partial internal reforms, postponing major changes until Spain finally belonged to the European Communities. The prospect of entering into “Europe” therefore induced a number of changes in the ministry, which partially followed the model of other foreign ministries of European democratic countries.

International expansion and internal democratization within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

After almost forty years of relative isolation under the Franco dictatorship, democratic Spain from 1975 deployed a renewed and expanded international activity. Although Spain had relations with numerous countries, the dictatorship’s requests to join the European Economic Community and NATO were rejected, and it was excluded from the Council of Europe. By the end of the Franco regime, Spain did not have, or had broken off, relations with the countries of Eastern Europe, and its diplomacy created tensions with its main external supporters (United States, Vatican) and its nearest neighbors (France, Morocco). Even though Spain had participated in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe 1975, Franco—who as head of state had only travelled to Italy to meet Mussolini and to Portugal to meet Salazar, apart from his meeting with Hitler in Hendaye (France) in 1940—died in 1975 amid international condemnation.

In contrast, foreign policy under Juan Carlos I—who traveled to seventeen countries in 1976-1977– Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez (1976-1981) and Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja (1976-1980) set a target to achieve the normalization and recognition (homologación)
of democracy in Spain, equating the internal political system and the external activities of the country to the model of European democracies and ending the relative isolation. This objective included universal relations, which required expanding diplomatic and consular representations abroad. In 1975 Spain had diplomatic relations with 122 countries, with 144 in 1982 and 158 in 1989; the number of Spanish embassies rose in the same period from eighty-one to ninety-one and then to ninety-three, and the number of general consulates increased from sixty-one to eighty and then to eighty-seven. The number of career diplomats in the Spanish Foreign Service increased from 545 to 627 between 1975 and 1986. In addition to extending its international relations, Spain joined thirty-five international organizations between 1975 and 2001.

The needs and tasks multiplied proportionally for the Spanish Foreign Service, both in bilateral and in multilateral forums. At the same time, the decentralization of the State brought about the creation of seventeen autonomous regions (Comunidades Autónomas) from 1979 to 1983, many of which began deploying their own paradiplomatic activity abroad outside control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This, together with EEC membership in 1986, made management of Spanish foreign policy increasingly complex.

Early democratic governments were convinced that the tools of diplomacy had to be renewed, even though to a large extent, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked during 1975-1985 with the structures and staff it had inherited from the Franco regime - a state of affairs that the then diplomat and later Foreign Minister Fernando Morán came to characterize as “handicraft diplomacy”. Although public spending on diplomacy increased in absolute terms, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ share of the national budget declined from 0.68 per cent to 0.52 per cent from 1975 to 1986. Nevertheless, modernization and democratization continued under the apparently motionless surface at the Santa Cruz Palace, the ministry’s headquarters.

The years 1975-1985 saw frequent reorganizations of the MFA, whose basic organizational structure was altered in 1976, 1979, 1983 and 1984. From the point of view of internal coordination, an important breakthrough came in 1979, when the figure of secretary of state was created as the second-in-command within the ministry. It was a figure equivalent to the vice-minister in many European ministries of foreign affairs, so its creation facilitated communication with them and was also a suggestion of convergence with the organizational models of other European diplomacies.

Democracy came to the consular service as well. As a country of emigrants, Spain had at least 2.5 million nationals living outside its borders. A significant number were political exiles who had migrated from 1936-1939 onwards, but the bulk of this diaspora consisted of workers who arrived in Latin America before 1945 and in Western Europe after that year. Under the dictatorship, the consulates, besides giving these migrants administrative and social assistance, had also played a crucial role in the political surveillance and control of Spaniards abroad. Many Spaniards, especially those contrary to Franco, distrusted consular offices for that reason.

Since the arrival of democracy and the simultaneous development of the welfare state, consulates had to reorient their activities to strengthen the delivery of public services and to project an image of a civil administration informed by democratic principles. In September 1977 the prime minister called for an internal democratization of the Directorate General of Consular Affairs of the MFA. The MFA renewed the personnel serving at the consulates, opening jobs to Spaniards living abroad and their associations – many of whom were on the left, especially in Europe. In the following years, the
Directorate General of Consular Affairs tried out two participation models: the Consular Boards (Juntas Consulares) created in 1978, and the Councils of Spanish Residents (Consejos de Españoles Residentes), created in 1983. Along with these bodies, the logistical support provided by consulates for the participation of migrants in democratic elections starting in 1979 helped change the relationship of Spanish communities abroad with the Foreign Service.

16 Diplomats had to build a new relationship with citizens and political activities not only abroad but also at home. This required a new relationship with the mass media. Politics and diplomacy seemed more intertwined now than under Franco. The democratic model of foreign policy also required the end of secrecy, which was the norm under the dictatorship. Thus, after 1975 information policy became a major concern of diplomats, who needed to properly convey foreign policy to the public, and to a new generation of journalists, who were often very critical of the government. There was a reciprocal influence among journalists and diplomats, which resulted in stronger democratic control of public authorities.

Accordingly, the MFA strengthened the Diplomatic Information Office (Oficina de Información Diplomática), and the prime minister’s cabinet (Presidencia del Gobierno) enhanced its information policy on international issues under the leadership of diplomats such as Alberto Aza, José Joaquín Puig de la Bellacasa, Máximo Cajal, Antonio Oyarzábal and Inocencio Arias.

New faces for a democratic Foreign Service

17 Adaptation to new democratic practices also affected the Foreign Service's personnel policy. The transition to democracy involved no break with the Francoist State, but rather a step-by-step adaptation of its norms and institutions. Many diplomats argue that the Foreign Service adapted smoothly to democracy thanks to its high degree of professionalism and because –through their experience abroad– its members were convinced that the future of Spain was democratic and “European”. But according to the academic and former diplomat Angel Viñas, many of the old “men, attitudes and deep-rooted patterns of behavior” persisted after 1975. The highest positions in the ministry and embassies during the transition were in the hands of diplomats who had made careers during the dictatorship. “Some of them, perhaps a minority but in positions of responsibility, were sincere Francists”, states Viñas. Nevertheless, while “most of them were deeply conservative”, he admits that “they were disciplined and imbued with a deep sense of service to the State”. The vast majority had no problem transferring their allegiance from one regime to another, perhaps because they genuinely favored a Western-style democratic system. For the reluctant ones, the monarchy served as a “bridge institution” that made it easier to transfer their loyalty from Franco to democracy.

18 Personnel policy proved to be a critical instrument for the renewal of Spanish diplomacy. The democratic governments did not purge diplomats and senior officials, neither at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor in any other branch of the administration. However, in 1976-1977 the government rehabilitated some diplomats who had been separated from the diplomatic service under the Franco regime for their political activities in favor of democracy, such as Vicente Girbau and Julio Cerón. Some of the younger diplomats who began occupying intermediate positions in the MFA, such as Fernando Morán, Manuel Marín and Carlos Westendorp, were even open members of the Socialist Party (PSOE,
At the same time, the new minister of foreign affairs, Marcelino Oreja, promoted the gradual replacement of diplomats, particularly in top and intermediate positions in the ministry and in strategic embassies to give a fresh image of the monarchy abroad. In December 1976 the government established a new procedure to provide jobs within the Foreign Service. Ambassadors were appointed by the Council of Ministers, as before, but all the lower ranks of the Foreign Service would now be approved by a board (Junta de la Carrera Diplomática) composed by elected representatives from the different categories of the diplomatic service. The new mechanism would have to be bureaucratic, regulated and predictable, putting an end to the arbitrariness of the previous period, but most important, it should also guarantee, according to Oreja, democratization within the Foreign Service.

The socialist governments from 1982 onwards undertook a more determined renewal among diplomatic personnel. The new foreign minister, Fernando Morán, entrusted some key positions to progressive collaborators and to non-diplomatic staff —such as Ángel Viñas, Francisco José Mayans and Helga Soto— and renewed the key embassies with new faces in 1983, as Oreja had done in 1976. This caused strong criticism from conservative diplomats and politicians, who accused Morán of “politicalizing” the MFA, though in fact seven non-career ambassadors were appointed in 1975-1982 versus nine in 1982-1989. This suggests that there were enough diplomats the government could trust politically and that the diplomatic career had become diverse and liberal enough since the 1960s. As Matthieu Trouvé notes, since the 1960s diplomatic circles were considered as progressive within the Franco regime; even though most diplomats acted as strict and neutral servants of the State, there was a minority close to social democracy and to the PSOE —Morán, Westendorp— as well as a wider group of young moderate reformers, supporters of liberal democracy who were close to Christian Democracy, such as Oreja, Juan Antonio Ortega, José Luis Navarro and Gabriel Cañadas. However, and quite surprisingly, the socialists, like their center-right predecessors, made a very restrained use of “political” (non-career) ambassadors, a relatively atypical figure in the Spanish diplomatic tradition.

A crucial tool for personnel renewal was lowering the mandatory retirement age for diplomats, which dropped in 1984 from 70 to 65. This measure was part of an administrative reform affecting all public servants, and to some observers it was critical to “democratize vital sectors of the Administration inherited from Francoism.” The eldest cohorts, who had entered the diplomatic service in the 1940s, disappeared overnight, while younger officials were promoted very rapidly. In just one decade (1980-1990), the average age in most ranks fell by between two and eight years, as was the case of minister-counselor (ministro consejero) from 48.7 to 40.9 years, or first secretary (secretario de primera) from 39 to 33.3 years.

There were also changes in the recruitment of new diplomats. The democratic governments tried to open up the Foreign Service to Spanish society, as they wanted a less elitist diplomatic corps. Although we lack sociological studies of Spanish diplomats in these years, scholars agree that the new generations were less endogamic and more socially diverse. From 1968 to 1988 new students at the School of Diplomacy (Escuela Diplomática) belonged to increasingly varied strata of the middle classes, with a downward
trend in terms of social class; especially the upper classes and the aristocracy, once so well represented in the diplomatic corps, experienced a very marked setback.\(^{51}\)

The School of Diplomacy, responsible for training new diplomats, also modernized its courses and its academic staff. The access system created in 1968 was partially amended in 1977, when a transitional regime was established, and in 1982, the diplomatic profession was opened to the broader Spanish society. Since 1968 future diplomats had to hold a PhD or another graduate degree, obtain the diploma of international studies issued by the School of Diplomacy, take a competitive examination with demanding requirements in language and law and, once admitted, complete a two-year course at the same School of Diplomacy. The system favored candidates from middle- and upper-class families with sufficient resources to support themselves during this long formative stage. The reform of 1977 opened entrance to a wider range of graduates—candidates from technical schools were now admitted—and reduced the course at the School of Diplomacy to one year. The 1982 reform also eliminated the prerequisite of the Diploma of International Studies, to the benefit of candidates from lower social classes.\(^{52}\)

As for the ideological and political adaptation to the new times, an internal report in 1979 by the Commission to Reform the School of Diplomacy called for changes in the curriculum and recruitment of professors in order to “reflect the current historical and constitutional situation of the country”.\(^{53}\) According to the diplomat Máximo Cajal, in 1980-1981 the undersecretary of the MFA ensured that several senior diplomats underwent a process of “democratic reeducation” as part of a so-called “recycling” policy. It consisted in taking “veteran diplomats, many of them heads of mission, who returned to the ministry headquarters in Madrid after two or three foreign appointments”, and making them familiar with “a Spanish society that was very different from the one they had left long ago” in the years of the dictatorship.\(^{54}\)

At the same time, “occupational legacy” dropped: the ratio of incoming diplomats who were sons or daughters of diplomats went from 1:4 to 1:6 between 1975 and 1990.\(^{55}\) The admission of women into the diplomatic service contributed to this renewal. Here, change preceded democracy, since it was in 1964 when a reform of the labour law allowed women to enter diplomacy.\(^{56}\) Slowly overcoming many prejudices from their male counterparts, women broke through: in 1971 a woman entered the diplomatic service for the first time since the Second Republic (1931-1939); by 1975 there were six female diplomats out of 570 in total, and in 1985 the first female ambassador was appointed.\(^{57}\)

Labour relations within the Foreign Service in its broadest sense were also aligned with the new democratic framework. Members of the Foreign Service were allowed to organize into unions in 1977, and in 1983 the first strike in the history of diplomacy in Spain took place—another sign of democratic normalcy.\(^{58}\) Some irregular situations in the working conditions of many Spanish missions abroad, inherited from the 1960s, were also amended to align with workers’ rights achieved under democracy.\(^{59}\)

The impact of “Europe” on the Foreign Service

Many of the adaptations discussed so far can be considered as the result of a general process of modernization and democratization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But in a more concrete sense, the prospect of membership in the EEC moved the Spanish government to make reforms throughout the administration and particularly in the
Foreign Service before 1985 in order to adapt to “Europe”. The impact of these reforms was threefold: they prompted changes in the ministerial structure of the government, in the staff of the Foreign Service, and in the working culture of some circles within the Spanish diplomatic service.

In February 1978, given the complexity of the negotiations with Brussels affecting all areas of the State, Prime Minister Suárez entrusted this function to a specific Ministry for Relations with the European Communities (MREC). This ministry carried out its task from 1978 to 1981 amid frequent bureaucratic infighting with the MFA, whose top diplomats were unhappy about losing control of negotiations with Brussels. The MFA tried to retain some power to influence the negotiation process through the Coordinating Council for Relations with the European Communities (Consejo Coordinador de las Relaciones con las Comunidades Europeas) chaired by the foreign minister (even though the effectiveness of this forum was null) and through the Directorate General of International Economic Relations (Dirección General de Relaciones Económicas Internacionales) of the MFA, which channeled information between Madrid and the embassies. With the change of government in February 1981 the MREC was abolished and the MFA regained full control of negotiations with the EEC. These were entrusted to a secretary of state for relations with the European Communities under the supervision of the foreign minister.

The rivalry for control of the negotiations was closely related to issues of inner coordination within the Spanish government and with the kind of negotiating strategy chosen by Madrid. But it was also a matter of which department had the best experts in European politics, an intra-governmental competition in which the MFA had many advantages. Since the early years of democracy, the Santa Cruz Palace was aware of the need for staff who knew the EEC well. In 1976, it promoted the idea of a specialized training center on European issues. As of late 1979, the ministry trained specialized personnel for the negotiations with Brussels.

The MFA actually had a small but very influential group of experts in European institutions whose members had been a driving force of the Europeanization of Spanish diplomacy and administration since the times of the Franco dictatorship. They were a handful of young diplomats and senior officials linked since the 1960s to José Luis Cerón and Alberto Ullastres, the two key officials in the negotiations for the preferential trade agreement signed by Spain and the EEC in 1970. They were the first specialists in European affairs anywhere in the Spanish administration and were considered the predecessors of the so-called Magníficos (“the Magnificent”), the officials who from 1981 to 1985 negotiated Spain’s entry into the EEC from three strategic positions: the MFA, the Spanish diplomatic mission in Brussels and the Spanish negotiating delegation. These officials were initially centred in the MFA, but as of 1970 they were also working in other ministries such as the Ministry of Commerce (Ministerio de Comercio), in order to implement the trade agreement. In the years when Spain negotiated its entry into the Common Market, their everyday collaboration with the European Commission was a kind of “school of European affairs” for all branches of the Spanish administration.

It would be impossible to overstate the effects of this experience, together with the increasing socialization of international diplomats and high-level senior Spanish officials as of 1975. In the final years of the Franco regime, according to a Belgian diplomat in Madrid, Spanish diplomats were still living “in an old-fashioned world of bilateral diplomacy” that contrasted with the everyday multilateralism practiced within the framework of European Political Cooperation (EPC), the foreign policy coordination.
mechanism of the Ten. It is not far-fetched to assume that the working culture of many of those Spanish diplomats and civil servants in international organizations converged with those of their European counterparts through formal and informal processes of acculturation and transfer. Even if the enhanced socialization of the elite Spanish civil servants in European institutions really began in 1986, there were two pioneering areas where first steps were taken some years before: NATO and EPC.

In the years that followed Spain’s accession to the Treaty of Washington in 1982, the Spanish military underwent a deep process of reform, modernization and collaboration with the armies of the other members of the Alliance. This contributed significantly to the consolidation of democratic values within its ranks and helped reinforce the supremacy of the civilian authority of the Ministry of Defense on military matters, following the model of European democratic countries. As regards the EPC, Spain and Portugal joined in 1982 as associate members. From 1982 to 1986 EEC statements on international issues were thus signed with the formula, “The Ten along with Spain and Portugal”. Through daily cooperation with the EPC, Spanish foreign policy gradually converged with that of EEC members, which resulted in Madrid increasingly adopting common positions with the Ten in sensitive areas such as East-West relations, the Palestinian issue, the search for peace in Central America, or sanctions against the South African apartheid regime. Spanish foreign policy was more “European” every day, and it slowly walked away from any temptations of isolationism and “third-way” solutions inherited from the Franco dictatorship.

The challenge of membership

It was under the socialist governments headed by Prime Minister Felipe González (1982-1996) that more consistent reforms of the Foreign Service were implemented. These were a direct result of the accession of Spain to the EEC, since they sought to prepare the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the new condition of member state that Spain would take up on 1 January 1986. Foreign Minister Morán (1982-1985) wanted to reform the ministry at the beginning of his term, but González advised him to wait until Spain had entered into the European Communities, because this would require additional adjustments affecting the whole government. Thus it was Morán’s successor, Francisco Fernández Ordóñez (1985-1992), who promoted the most significant changes.

In August 1985, only two months after Spain signed the accession treaty to the EEC, the MFA adopted three significant innovations. The first was the creation of a Secretariat of State for the European Communities (Secretaría de Estado para las Comunidades Europeas), which coordinated Spain’s administration in EU institutions, ensured contact with the Spanish representation to the EEC and was also responsible for Spain’s bilateral relations with the member countries. The second was the creation of a Secretariat of State for International Cooperation and Latin America (Secretaría de Estado de Cooperación Internacional e Iberoamérica), responsible for managing policy that was hitherto scattered across different ministries. The third novelty was the creation of a Secretariat General of Foreign Policy (Secretaría General de Política Exterior) with the rank of an undersecretariat and the mission of helping the foreign minister plan, propose and carry out foreign policy. This secretariat general was also responsible for coordinating the activities of all the directorates general (Direcciones Generales) and for participating in regular meetings at the level of political directors in the framework of the EPC. Within
this office an under directorate for the EPC was created with the mission of taking part in the meetings of the European Political Committees and of analyzing and channeling the flow of political information among the foreign ministries of Spain and of the other members of the EEC. The importance that European issues had acquired for Spain and the close cooperation between the capitals of the Twelve were firmly anchored in the organizational chart of the MFA.

The effort to adjust to the EEC was not limited to the MFA; it also extended to the whole government, the administration and Spanish society. Implementation of the Treaty of Accession of Spain to the EEC meant, according to the former Minister of Economy Pedro Solbes, “a revolution, perhaps the greatest revolution in our history”. The government and the administration –at the State, regional and local levels– made a huge effort to adapt to Community legislation, with special emphasis on foreign affairs, finance, commerce, agriculture, industry and labour. The Cortes played a major role in the process by means of a Joint Congress-Senate Committee on European Union Affairs (Comisión Mixta Congreso Senado para Asuntos de la Unión Europea) that monitored compliance of national rules with EU directives. This committee came to play three key roles: it was a central scene for parliamentary debates on Europe, it was the main organ for parliamentary control of the government, and it became a forum where politicians effectuated pedagogical work regarding European issues aimed at the mass media and Spanish society.

The impact of entry into the EEC on the Spanish administrative structure was also evident through the appointment of Spanish personnel to European institutions. On 1 January 1986, Madrid sent to Brussels the two Spanish members of the European Commission (Manuel Marín on behalf of the PSOE and Abel Matutes on behalf of the conservative party Alianza Popular) along with over a thousand diplomats, senior officials and academics. This meant an authentic brain drain and it implied the dismantling of much of the organizational chart of the Secretariat of State for the EEC after the departure of a large majority of its members to Brussels. Other departments were emptied of many of their specialists in European issues. This challenge was intensified shortly after by the Single European Act in 1987, which led to further adjustments not only in the MFA but throughout the Spanish administration.

Conclusions

The prospect of joining the European Community spurred post-Franco Spain to build a democratic system. For the generation that started the transition to democracy, “Europeanization equaled modernization in the social and political orders”, and the terms Europeanization, democratization and modernization came to be used interchangeably in political culture and political practice as well as in the administrative reform of those years. “Europeanization –as the political scientist Ignacio Torreblanca said– must be understood as part of a more general process of Westernization, standardization or homologation of Spanish foreign policy”.

The recovery of freedom in Spain demanded a new democratic model of foreign policy that would replace the Francoist model and would fit in better with the new domestic political situation. As part of the building of this new foreign policy, democratic governments introduced partial adjustments and changes in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some of the changes were derived from the needs and expectations created by the
negotiations for membership of the EEC, but most were simply an expression of wider modernization of Spanish diplomacy and adaptation to democratic process. Significantly, a more comprehensive reform of the Foreign Service had to wait until the entry of Spain into the EEC.

39 In order to assess the impact of the negotiations on the Spanish Foreign Service between 1977 and 1986 we must adopt a double perspective. On the one hand, the direct impact was limited to the handful of diplomats and officials who led the talks with Brussels. On the other hand, “Europe” as a whole exerted a much broader and deeper impact in inspiring the democratization of standards, personnel and procedures within the Spanish Foreign Service. Only a democratic Spain could belong to “Europe”, and only a renewed Foreign Service could bring the country to this collective goal.

40 Any final assessment of the changes must be qualified in any case, particularly with regard to diplomatic staff, a group which as a whole retained many features of a traditional, reserved and conservative body. Although minority groups favored democracy from before 1975, diplomatic practices could be democratized only after the death of Franco, when institutional structures of foreign policy adapted to political change. The reforms initiated as of 1976 by Oreja gave an initial impetus in this direction, but despite the structural adjustment and the arrival of a new generation of diplomats, there was a marked continuity between the Franco period and the democratic transition in personnel, practices and habits. The socialist ministers Morán from 1982 and Fernández Ordóñez from 1985 continued the reformist spirit in the MFA, as was reflected in a vast white book issued in 1986. The most profound changes, however, would occur through Spain’s participation in the EU from 1986 onwards.

NOTES

1. “En la actualidad ya se ha olvidado hasta qué punto el ingreso en la Comunidad conllevó una reorientación de las estructuras organizativas y conceptuales para la acción exterior española. La Administración, en general, y el Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, en particular, se adaptaron tanto y tan deprisa a las peculiaridades exigencias de la coordinación intracomunitaria que el periodo anterior casi parece prehistoria”. Ángel Viñas, Al servicio de Europa. Innovación y crisis en la Comisión Europea, Madrid, Editorial Complutense, 2004, p. 14.


10. As stated during a foreign policy debate in the Cortes, 20 September 1977: Diario de Sesiones, Biblioteca del Congreso de los Diputados, Madrid.


14. Mexico was the seat of government of the Second Republic in exile and had never recognized the Franco regime; Israel had rejected relations with Spain since 1948 because of Franco’s support for Hitler during the Second World War, Juan Carlos Pereira and Fernando García Sanz, “Relaciones entre España e Israel: los condicionantes para un entendimiento”, in Francisco Ruiz Gómez and Manuel Espadas Burgos (ed.), Encuentros en Sefarad. Actas del Congreso Internacional “Los judíos en la historia de España”, Toledo, Instituto de Estudios Manchegos, 1987, p. 369-392.


17. José Luis Messia, Por palabra de honor. La entrada de España en el Consejo de Europa, Madrid, Parteluz, 1995.

18. For the diplomat Javier Rupérez, a close collaborator of Oreja’s, the normalization marked the end of isolation and meant the consecration of the new Spanish diplomacy; see Javier Rupérez, “La política exterior de la transición”, Cuenta y Razón, No. 41, 1988, p. 56-57. The diplomat Juan Durán-Loriga refers to this period as “moments of euphoria for Spanish diplomacy” because “as the political reforms advanced, we were passing through doors previously closed or ajar”. Juan Durán-Loriga, Memorias diplomáticas, Madrid, Siddharth Mehta Ediciones, 1999, p. 211.


20. The regions of Catalonia and Euskadi were the forerunners in the creation of official, para-diplomatic missions abroad, a practice that all the other regions imitated in the 1990s. See Carlos Fernández de Casadevante de Romaní, La acción exterior de las Comunidades Autónomas, balance de una práctica consolidada, Madrid, DILEX, 2001; Pablo Pérez Tremps, La participación europea y la acción exterior de las Comunidades Autónomas, Madrid, Institut d’Estudis Autonòmics/Marcial Pons,


28. The General Director of Consular Affairs, Evaristo Ron, to the Director of the Cabinet of the Prime Minister, Alberto Aza, Madrid, 30 September 1977, Archivo Central de Presidencia del Gobierno (ACMP), folder 1875.

29. Without denying their plurality and divisions, Fernández Asperilla characterizes the “political subculture” of Spanish emigrants in Europe as “democratic, anti-Franco, working-class, nationalist, heavily masculinized, not necessarily secular, anti-monarchist or federalist”. Ana Fernández Asperilla (ed.), *Gente que se mueve..., op. cit.*, p. 18-19.

30. The Consular Boards were consultative bodies chaired by consuls and formed by democratically elected representatives of associations and centers of Spanish emigrants. They were responsible for distributing the collective subsidies of the Spanish Institute of Emigration among Spaniards’ associations and centers. They were regulated by Circular No. 28/1978 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; see also Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración-Dirección General de la Ciudadanía Española en el Exterior, *Acta de la reunión del Consejo del IEE*, No. 10, 27 April 1978, p. 8-10. The Councils of Spanish Residents had a similar purpose and composition but their functions were broader and included guaranteeing civil and labour rights, educational, social and cultural matters, and participation of migrants in the political life of Spain. Royal Decree 1339/1987, 30 October (Boletín Oficial del Estado, No. 262, 2 November 1987), on institutional channels of participation of Spaniards abroad.


37. Javier Rupérez emphasizes that there was “absolutely no cleansing” in the diplomatic corps after 1975 and argues that diplomats were “more liberal” than most of the Franco regime. Interview with GHistRI, Madrid, 29.06.2010.

38. Marcelino Oreja, Memoria..., op. cit., p. 208. Vicente Girbau, who joined the PSOE, participated in numerous anti-Franco activities and had extensive contacts with opposition groups in Spain and in exile. Julio Cerón in July 1958 founded the Frente de Liberación Popular (FLP), a group of anti-Francoists that wanted to reconcile Marxists and Catholics. They were expelled from the diplomatic service in 1959 and 1961, respectively. See Julio Antonio García Alcalá, Historia del “Felipe” (FLP, FOC y ESBA): de Julio Cerón a la Liga Comunista Revolucionaria, Madrid, Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 2001; José Luís Pérez Ruiz, Las depuraciones de la carrera diplomática española (1931-1980), Burgos, Dossoles, 2005, p. 184.


40. Ángel Viñas, “Una política...”, op. cit., p. 134. In 1976 Oreja appointed new ambassadors to the USA (Juan José Rovira), the United Kingdom (Luis Guillermo Perinat), France (Francisco Javier Elorza), the Holy See (Ángel Sanz Briz), Portugal (Fernando Rodríguez-Porrero), Belgium (Nuño Aguirre de Carcer), Italy (Carlos Robles Piquer) and Argentina (Enrique Pérez-Hernández); he also appointed a new head of the trade delegation in Moscow (Rafael Ferrer Sagreras) and sent Amaro González de Mesa to Mexico to pave the way for the establishment of relations. In 1977 Oreja sent a new ambassador to Morocco (Alfonso de la Serna) and established diplomatic relations with Mexico (with Luis Coronel de Palma as ambassador) and the USSR (with Juan Antonio Samaranch).

41. Interview with Oreja in El Correo Catalán, 31 December 1978.


44. Morán appointed, along others, new ambassadors in the USA (Gabriel Mañueco), France (Joan Raventós), the United Kingdom (José Joaquín de la Bellacasa), the Soviet Union (José Luis Xifra de Ocerin), the Holy See (Nuño Aguirre de Carcer), Morocco (Raimundo Bassols), Italy (Jorge de Esteban), the Federal Republic of Germany (Eduardo Foncillas), the Netherlands (Jorge del Pino) and Argentina (José Luis Messía Jimenez).

48. Máximo Caja, Sueños..., op. cit., p. 133.
49. Other ranks remained the same, whilst a few others increased a bit. Rocío Valdivielso del Real, La carrera..., op. cit., p. 206.
50. Ángel Viñas, “Una política...”, op. cit.
51. See Rocío Valdivielso, La carrera..., op. cit., p. 48-49 and Ángel Ballesteros, Diplomacia y relaciones internacionales, Madrid, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1995, p. 139.
53. Note of the Commission to Reform the School of Diplomacy, 26.06.1979, Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y Cooperación (AMAEC) R 17314/1.
54. Máximo Caja, Sueños..., op. cit., p. 114.
55. Rocío Valdivieso, La carrera..., op. cit., p. 49.
56. Spain had some female diplomats during the Second Republic, but under Franco this profession was banned to women.
64. José Luis Cerón Ayuso between 1964 and 1970 was director of relations with the European Communities in the MFA and secretary general of the delegation that negotiated the trade agreement of 1970 with the Common Market. From 1970 to 1974 he was director general for international economic relations. Alberto Calvo Ullastres was ambassador of Spain to the European Communities from 1965 to 1976; starting in 1977 he gave courses on the European Union at the School of Diplomacy.
65. The “Magnificent” had a particularly central role from December 1982 under Fernando Morán as minister of foreign affairs and Manuel Marín as secretary of state for relations with the European Communities. Among the members of this group were Carlos Westendorp, Fernando
Mansito, Santiago Gómez-Reino, Ramón de Miguel, Carlos Bastarreche, Gabriel Ferrán, Camilo Barcia, Enrique González Sánchez, Francisco Fernández Fábregas and César Alba. See Matthieu Trouvé, L’Espagne..., op. cit., p. 378-381.


68. There is extensive literature on this issue within European institutions. See for example Hélène Michel and Cécile Robert (ed.), La fabrique des “Européens”. Processus de socialisation et construction européenne, Strasbourg, Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2010.


71. For a discussion of Adolfo Suárez’s “third way” or Third World (tercermundista) foreign policy see Charles Powell, El amigo Americano. España y Estados Unidos: de la dictadura a la democracia, Madrid, Galaxia-Círculo de Lectores, 2011, p. 492-564.


73. Royal Decree 1485/1985, 28.08.1985, Boletín Oficial del Estado, No. 207, 29.08.1985. The Decree that created this under directorate for the EPC evokes “the European Political Committees” in general terms. In fact, the under directorate for the EPC had almost exclusively relations with the Political Committee, which was created in the framework of the Single European Act signed in February 1986. The 1985 Decree could obviously not foresee its name and functions. See Carlos María Bru (ed.), Diccionario de la Unión Europea, Madrid, Universitas, 1999, p. 53.

74. Pedro Solbes, Recuerdos, 40 años de servicio público, Barcelona, Deusto, 2013, p. 71.


76. Pedro Solbes, Recuerdos..., op. cit., p. 72.

77. Pedro Solbes, Recuerdos..., op. cit., p. 73; see also Matthieu Trouvé, L’Espagne..., op. cit., p. 490-492.

78. Vanessa Núñez Peñas, Entre la reforma..., op. cit., p. 158.


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