

A la Recherche du Temps Perdu

THE SPANISH PEOPLE ARE NOW BEGINNING TO PASS JUDGMENT ON THE legacy of Francisco Franco to his country. But we non-Spaniards cannot emphasize enough how much we feel that these forty years of quarantine (the pun is accidental) in which Franco kept Spain – of forcible separation between the western world and one of the greatest cultures in history – have been, on both sides, a terrible waste. If between 1936 and 1938 Spain was the magnetic centre of all the hopes and despairs of an entire generation of the western world born in the 'Angst' of totalitarianism, after the end of the Civil War the paths of Spain and of the western world drifted further and further apart. The second world war was in many respects 'the continuation by other means of the Spanish Civil War': would international fascism already victorious in Spain conquer the whole of Europe? But the second world war which ravaged the whole of Europe stopped at the Pyrenees. Beyond them lay Spain, dramatically silent, like the 'great graveyards under the moon'.

And so it remained, in spite of constant and symptomatic outbursts of social and political revolt which sounded to the absent-minded western world rather like a family quarrel next door, until the day of liberation approached as the iron law of mortality brought Franco's final bow nearer and nearer. But this was after almost four decades of 'accelerated history' for the west, while Spain was submitted to Franco's own cure of historical deceleration.

For, during these four decades, the Francoist regime had used, as a complement to the police terror essential to its viability, a permanent campaign of persuasion of the Spanish people that they should be grateful for the fact that the regime 'protected' them against the terrible things which were happening in Europe. Unamuno's passionate belief in the uniqueness of the Spanish genius was parodied by these people (who in the exercise had broken Unamuno's heart – he died on the very last day of the

annus terribilis 1936) to show that by representing that specific genius they had managed to extricate Spain from the successive agonies of the western world.

During the war the regime's spokesmen insisted that they were keeping Spain 'neutral', and answered their democratic critics by arguing that their neutrality, which amounted to letting down their friends, Hitler and Mussolini, was in the interests of the western allies. Then having shrewdly survived the three years which elapsed between the end of the second world war and the beginning of the Cold War, they fell with gusto upon the arguments of the west in their denunciations of Stalinism and used them *pro domo suo*. During the whole of the Cold War the Francoist regime, and especially the Falangist Party, presented Spain as the one European state which, thanks to the foresight and determination of its Caudillo, had never faltered in the supreme duty of Christian civilization: to fight against the latter's irreconcilable enemy, the Soviet Union.

In the mid-1950s the Cold War was replaced by *détente*. At the same time modern western capitalism was enjoying an unprecedented 'boom'. The Francoist regime, under the inspiration of the technocrats of the Opus Dei, then opened the doors to trade with the west and to western capital investment in the hitherto fiercely autarkic and traditionalistic economy. Spain, potentially one of the richest countries in Europe, well endowed with raw materials, showed at once how apt and eager she was for industrialization and modernization. In less than a decade the country was transformed. Whether all the new wealth thus created went back to where it belonged, to the Spanish people itself, or indeed how much of this wealth was retained by the lenders of foreign capital, and by the national establishment, is another matter. The fact that the nation as a whole benefited only marginally from this industrialization was metaphorically embodied in the way in which the whole of Spain's coastline was festooned with sky-scraper hotels full of two-week holiday-makers, while these same holiday-makers hardly ventured inland to get to know the country and the people.

Since the mid-1960s the refrain has changed again. Although apprehensive of the darkening horizon of the western economy, the Francoist regime, and especially Falangist circles, did not hide a certain amount of *Schadenfreude* at seeing at least some highly industrialized countries of western Europe at bay when faced with

the new and acute problems of the affluent society, and of the economic, regional and especially social centrifugalism which it generates. The Francoist regime like, for that matter, the communist regimes, took comfort from the fact that it had never loosened the arch-centralistic controls of economic, regional and industrial relations. This was coupled with the regime's claim that it had also, and above all, defended the Spanish traditional virtues and especially that national foundation of society, the family, against the moral corruption which had overwhelmed western society – its licentiousness, its commercial pornography, its obsessive sexualism, its addiction to drugs.

While all this was proclaimed at home to a captive audience, the genius of Spain was kept alive abroad by its 'exiles' – Pablo Picasso, Salvador de Madariaga, Pablo Casals, Jorge Guillén, Severo Ochoa and the tens of thousands of Spaniards adopted by other countries – thus fulfilling a strange prophecy by Unamuno himself. 'Emigration will become the deepest form of patriotism. But Spain will become depopulated! Well, what is there to be done about that? It will not be the fault – if fault it is – of those who go, of the emigrants, but of those who made them go, the begrudgers. Those are the only ones who can live, like moss, on the ancestral rocks, clinging to the cliffsides. Oh to be young! To be young so as to put Spain in order to clean her!'¹

At the same time opposition within the country was mounting, bringing increasing pressure to bear from below on the shrinking layers at the top of the system of communicating vases of the different hierarchies: the hierarchy of the official trade unions, of the Church, of the universities, of the economy, of provincial administration, etc. But the opposition movements which attracted most attention and were best known abroad were the Communist Party on the one hand, the nationalist movements on the other. This was in great part to be explained by the fact that the tight organization of communist parties is particularly well suited to illegal underground life, and that much of the news from Spain reaching the outside world came through international communist channels. On the other hand the world learnt more of the separatist Basque opposition, in part because the Basques benefited more than the Catalans from the instant if macabre publicity which the mass media throughout the west accord to acts

¹ M. de Unamuno 'Los salidos y los mestureros', in *España y los Españoles*, 1942.

of terrorism. But few people were really aware of the major changes which were taking place in the real positions of power within the structure of Spain – with the gradual erosion of the regime under strong and silent pressures from within.

Spain was of course in contact with the outside world. Representatives of the Spanish opposition travelled widely in the 1960s and 1970s and established contacts with international organizations and western governments. Diplomats, economists, rectors and deans of universities, dignitaries of the Catholic Church, artists, were increasingly in contact with their opposite numbers in Spain. This was true also of many categories of scholars, from historians to physical scientists. The most difficult contact was that between social scientists and, I believe, especially between political scientists. This was understandable for several reasons. It is the doubtful privilege of students of politics that authoritarian regimes frown upon their work, precisely because it consists of the analysis in depth and the critical definition of political processes. Political science cannot begin to be a science if it is forbidden to call a spade a spade. The double talk which was inevitably used by political scientists in Spain was at variance with the analytical methods of the west. On the other hand, some of the rash assessments sometimes made by insufficiently informed or partisan western students of politics left Spanish political scientists unconvinced. If one adds to this the suspicions with which social scientists from Spain were at times received in the west ('is he a Franco man?', 'are they collaborators?'), and the suspicion with which Spanish social scientists received their western colleagues ('are they sympathetic to the regime, and if not with what Spanish opposition groups are they linked?'), one can realize how students of politics of all people had the greatest difficulty in keeping in touch during the Francoist quarantine.

Some two years before Franco's death a group of social scientists from Spain approached us with the idea of publishing a special issue of our journal in which Spanish and British experts could examine the options facing Spain at the end of the Franco regime. The rhythm of this kind of transnational collaboration is usually slow, especially when it is effected in the unusual conditions described above. Thus, although the project was well under way before Franco's death, and much of the material was already in our hands, the first articles could appear only in January 1976.

* * *

One view held in common by most of the contributors of the seven articles which we have published² on the evolution of Spanish politics after the death of Franco is that, given the idiosyncratic background, evolution must be assessed by bearing in mind the fact that if all people are special, the Spaniards are more so. Our comparative analyses based on analogies run the risk of being utterly out of focus. 'Spain is not Portugal' is one of the remarks most currently heard in Madrid.

Another view common to the seven articles is that most of the *dramatis personae*, collective or individual, of the current Spanish crisis are divided within themselves on two major issues. The first is the question of how far and how deeply should the social, administrative and economic reforms go before a new political order can be established? A frail constitutional consensus, even if it could be attained, would have very little chance of lasting if it were superimposed on a profound and violent social, economic and national dissensus. And deriving from this, and yet forming perhaps *the* most important simple political question, there is the issue of what is called 'The timing of the decompression': how slowly and gradually should the 'lid put on the opposition' (to use Lenin's famous formula of 1921, applied since then by most modern dictatorships) be lifted in order to prevent the pot from boiling over and exploding in the process.

Joaquin Romero Maura deals with the two *dramatis personae*, the king and the armed forces, about which least is known. The king is still an unknown quantity and few have seen him as yet at work. The Spanish armed forces are still an almost forbidden subject for the social scientist and must be judged by their deeds not their intentions. Nevertheless, Romero Maura believes that 'it is improbable that the military will, in the near future, act politically in any but a collective way. . . . No sympathy for Right-wing or Left-wing solutions could easily crystallize into active factions prepared to take actions which do not conform to the military's collective psychology.'

The slogan 'Spain is not Portugal' is particularly apposite in the

² Three of these articles appeared in our preceding issue (Vol. 11, No. 1): Joaquin Romero Maura, 'After Franco, Franquismo?'; Paul Preston, 'The Dilemma of Credibility, the Spanish Communist Party'; and Pedro Schwartz, 'Politics First, the Economy after Franco'. An eighth article, by Ernest Gellner on 'Revolution and Liberalization', will appear in our next issue (Vol. 11, No. 3).

case of the armed forces. The Spanish armed forces did not have to fight a protracted and losing battle in defence of a crumbling empire while its young officers and soldiers were being contaminated by the ideas and ideals of those whom they had been sent to repress. And Franco had managed to keep the armed forces in a kind of dignified autonomy, which neither the Falange, nor especially the police, had been able or willing to observe. If the 'timing of the decompression' is not fraught with violent explosions the armed forces may effect their own transformation, and assist the transformation of the country, without themselves splitting into opposing groups.

But otherwise, such opposed quarters as the Catholic Church (in Fierro Bardaji's study) at one end of the spectrum, and the Communist Party of Spain (in Paul Preston's study) at the other end, all bear the marks of the dilemma facing them, of a choice between massive structural adjustments and slow constitutional reforms. Maravall's study on the students shows how the same cleavages affect the younger generation of Spaniards; Kenneth Medhurst draws our attention to the immanence, and imminence, of regional centrifugalism – a point made very strongly also by Pedro Schwartz in his lucid examination of the divisions created by the same two problems among those thinking of the Spanish economy as a whole.

Pedro Schwartz takes us a little further by throwing the ball back into the court of politics, in his conclusions as well as in his title 'The Spanish Economy: Politics First', and then by showing how all these quarters and groups, split as they are into opposed fragments, according to the issues they consider, prefer to think of solutions which would reconcile all viewpoints and solve all problems. He frequently uses the adjective 'confusing' or 'confused' when he examines the solutions proposed. One example he gives of these kinds of indiscriminating and therefore inapplicable programmes is that of the Church hierarchy which, he says, called for the 'curbing of inflation and a full integration with Europe, while proposing a reduction of wage and salary differentials and denouncing the excesses of a consumer society'!

Most of the contributors agree that one common thread runs through all the groups concerned in the Spanish crisis, namely the expressed hope of joining the European Community. The Spanish Communist Party, as Paul Preston points out, adopts here, too, the attitude of the Italian and French Communist Parties.

This point is especially developed in Manuel Medina's paper on the possibilities of Spain joining the European Community. This is of course a very natural solution. Europe needs Spain, once so closely associated with the Holy Roman Empire, on whose map the hard core of the present European Community is now situated, for her distinct contribution to the genius of Europe; for her important strategic position; and for her resources in economic wealth and in manpower which might make her, one day, when the Francoist feudalism will have been forgotten, one of the richest countries on the continent. And Spain needs Europe for the technological capital and know-how indispensable for her economic progress; and for the major political reason that through membership in the Community her political stability would be strengthened. In other words, in so far as the principal condition for membership of the club is the political democracy of members and candidates, those who, like most of our contributors, believe that Spain should join have a further incentive to press forward with putting her constitutional house in good parliamentary order. Moreover, it could be argued that membership of the European Community might serve later to restrain Spain from falling into a dictatorship of the Right or of the Left, since such a development would jeopardize it. (This reasoning is somewhat akin to that of the Italian central parties whose passionate interest in the European Parliament is in part motivated by the hope of finding a source of political stability at the supranational level.) Finally, it is also surmised that European integration could have the effect of 'defusing' some acute national problems, and specially the regional ones, by opening new and more feasible solutions on the future organization of Western Europe as a whole.

But this harmonious and logical story will, alas, not reach its happy ending so soon. The reservations on both sides are very strong. On the side of the Community, both Council and Commission have little hope that the passage to constitutional-pluralism of a political system held down under a dictatorship for more than forty years will be as easy as it seems to have been in Greece, where of course the dictatorship lasted a much shorter time. Europe might also wonder whether political order can be achieved with such antiquated social and economic structures; and whether structural reforms should not come first, and how long then will it take? Then it is known that the Commission, more than the Council, has found that the collaboration with

underdeveloped parts of Europe, while broadening the territory of the Community, slows down the rhythm of its economic progress and its integration as a whole. Unlike the Council, the Commission has made clear reservations on this score against inviting not only Portugal and Spain, which are also politically still unqualified to join, but even Greece.

From the Spanish point of view one must reckon also with the traditional narcissism and isolation from Europe deeply engraved in Spanish political psychology, and aggravated by the forty years of Francoist quarantine. Since the end of her empire, Spain has turned her eyes away from Europe and has rather fixed them on herself – the Civil War was an exercise in adoration of opposing images of Spain. One should reread Unamuno's essay of December 1906 on 'Europeanization' and ponder his 'profound conviction, arbitrary though it may be (but all the more profound for being arbitrary, because this is the way with articles of faith) that the true and intimate Europeanization of Spain, that is to say our absorption of that part of the European spirit which can become our spirit, will begin only when we Spaniards shall have tried to impose our spiritual order on Europe, to make her swallow what is ours, essentially ours, instead of what is hers, when we shall have tried to hispanify Europe!'

* * *

Like the crisis which it analyses, this analysis is only incipient. Developments are only now beginning, some will be fast, some, on the contrary, profoundly slow.

In these first six months, nothing unexpected has happened. The pieces have taken up their places on the chess-board, and the opening gambits were to be foreseen: some violence in the Basque Provinces and Catalonia, an increasing rigidity in the Ministry of the Interior (and in its Minister) as well as a pronounced determination of the police to show that it was still in control of public order. But not all the pieces are yet on the chess-board: for instance the political parties are not yet legalized. Moreover, these few months have shown very clearly the various contradictions and tensions within the two camps themselves, that of the regime and that of the opposition.

The regime is divided on the question of whether to go ahead, even at a moderate pace, with constitutional reforms, such as the

legalization of the political parties, abolition of the censorship, preparation for elections by universal suffrage. It is faced with the resistance of the so-called Bunker which according to our colleague on the Advisory Board, Enrique Tierno Galván, is most strongly entrenched in the Council of the Realm, and in the Cortes themselves. Thus do Franco's careful constitutional improvisations bind his successors. While most of the Church and the most important financial groups favour democratization and the army on the whole stands on the sidelines, the last ditchers in the Bunker can put an effective brake on progress. The slow pace of change has led to a disbelief not only in the capacity but in the sincerity of the government's desire for change. Delay can only further exacerbate a critical situation. At present, in a climate of tremendous expectations some 60% of Spaniards would vote for the Centre and the Right. But if elections were to be held in an atmosphere of turbulence and extreme centrifugalism, a very different pattern might emerge. We are back to the problem of the timing of the decompression, but minus six months.

But nor has the opposition all the answers. For instance on the supremely important question of the autonomy of the regions, when the national political parties are finally legalized, will they be able to bring together in support of their national ideologies, programmes, or platforms the sections and branches located in the centrifugal regions? Or will regional Chauvinism sweep the board in each region, leaving the major problem of the rebirth of Spain herself, as a democratic country, unattended?

Then there are ideological and strategic divergencies within the Left itself. The Popular Socialist Party and the Communist Party of Santiago Carrillo may achieve an alliance similar to the Socialist – Communist alliance in France (in which the Socialists are gradually emerging as the victors in the game). But this alliance may prove fragile under the double pressure from the Right and the Radical Left, i.e. the other fractions of the Communist Party itself, the Maoists, the Trotskyists, and last but not least, bearing in mind the Spanish political tradition, the Anarchists and Anarcho-syndicalists. Though not much is heard of this great movement now, it is not difficult to foresee that the Anarchists may once again penetrate the syndicates, the universities, some regional industries. On one end of the spectrum of the traditional Spanish ideologies there is, on the Right, the absolute and mystical hispano-catholicism, and at the other, on the Left, the absolute and

inadaptable hispano-anarcho-syndicalism. These are the ultimate passions of a passionate people. The search for order at one end is as intransigent as the search for freedom at the other.

Thus, as we watch the difficult journey of the future Spanish democracy across what Juan Linz has called the 'eight Spains', we might well recall the words of Salvador de Madariaga, written in 1942:

When therefore we approach Spain with our plans, charts, statistics and history manuals, let us bear in mind these natural facts which in a nation correspond to the physical and chemical indexes whereby we define metals and metalloids. No one expects mercury to behave like platinum, nor carbon like sulphur. . . . Spain is a heap of rough-hewn granite blocks touching each other at as few points as possible and hurting each other as much as possible to the square inch of contact. . . . What is, then, the use of preaching liberty to Spain? Liberty comes naturally to the Spaniard. . . . The chief need of the Spanish people is to learn to create order, i.e. to grow and feed the social tissue of institutions.

PS

Since we have still not received any reply to our enquiry from the High Commissioner of India as to the present whereabouts of our colleague on our Advisory Board, Mr Asoka Mehta, we are reproducing from *The Times* of 8 March 1975 the following information:

'Mr Mehta, now aged 65 and a former minister in Mrs Gandhi's Cabinet, was one of the first detained. He was served with a detention order which states that his arrest was necessary to prevent him from acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order. For the first four months in jail he was allowed no visitors.

But on November 6 last year the High Court in Delhi ruled that he should be allowed a visit. The same day the Government renewed the detention order against him, and he was denied the opportunity of appealing to an advisory board against the order, something he could have done before the declaration of the emergency.

He is now held in solitary confinement at Rohtak jail.

Mr Mehta, who was educated at Wilson College, a Scottish missionary university in Bombay, was once a favourite of Mrs Gandhi. A founding member of the Socialist Party with Mr Narayan, he was known in the Lok Sabha for his highly analytical and closely reasoned speeches.'

G.I.