

Summary

Up until now, studies on Spain's transition to democracy have focused on the leading actors involved – both individuals and groups. Although the historiography of Spain tends to give priority to agents within Spain itself, it is actually hugely interesting to analyse external participation through cooperation programmes – participation which fits in with the foreign-policies and geopolitical context of the Cold War and of the building of the European Union.

It is crucial to examine the foreign policies both of the Spanish State and of the political actors, in order to explain the process of Spain's democratisation and adaptation to the European environment, which proved immeasurably important in its integration into Europe, and ultimately became a fundamental identifying element of Spain today. A number of recent studies have shed a certain amount of light on the view held by various administrations of the twilight of the Franco regime and of Spain's transition, and also on Spain's relationships with other European countries, although there is still a lot of ground to be covered in this field.

The bilateral relations between Spain and Germany during the transition have not been widely studied; this is surprising, given their extensiveness and transcendence during the Franco regime's reign and particularly during the transition. German political actors – parties, political foundations and trade unions – came to play a protagonistic role which they never had before, with the aim of helping to organise Spain's political forces and consolidating the democratising process after forty years of the Franco dictatorship. Up until now, only the role played by one of the two main political parties in Germany – the Social Democratic Party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*) – has been examined. However, the other German parties – particularly the major Christian Democrat party, the CDU – also sought to involve themselves in supporting Spain in its transformation into a democratic system.

With a view to filling this historiographic void, this thesis examines the Spanish–German relations between political parties and the influence of Germany's powerful

Christian democrat movement on Spain's own CD movement and indeed on the whole of the transition process.

The presentation of the work is divided into two parts. The first, made up of five chapters, lays down the introductory framework regarding the ideology and Christian democrat parties in post-WWII Europe, and the bilateral relations between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Spain. This first part is intended to help understand the reasons and methodology behind the study, and introduces the agents who established the dialogue between various German and Spanish Christian democrat groups. The first chapter offers a general approximation of the origin, characteristics and development of the Christian democrat ideology, with a view to analysing the conditions in which various parties emerged, who, after WWII, drove forward the new idea of integration into a democratic Europe. The chapter also introduces the general analysis of the circles of this ideology in Europe, which were the forerunners of the European People's Party.

The second chapter analyses the evolution and fundamentals of the GDR's foreign policy, which were crucially important in determining the course of action taken by the Federal Government, but also by the major parties. In this chapter we see the true interest of the GDR and its various political actors in helping to consolidate the *Iberian Transitions* in the 1970s. Cooperation took place through the political foundations, which were considered to be characteristically-German political agents, essential in providing foreign aid in solidarity, as they managed to surpass the limitations of the bilateral diplomatic relations between those countries.

It would make little sense to study the relations between German and Spanish Christian democrats without putting the study in the general context of the bilateral relations between the two countries. In Chapter 3, the development of Spanish/German relations from the birth of the GDR onwards is examined closely, with the aim of gaining a clear view of how the friendship between the countries in the mid-1970s came about, which largely explains why the Germans wished to involve themselves in helping Spain's transition along.

The analysis of Christian democracy in Spain is performed in Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 deals with the long years of Francoist rule, focussing on identifying the Christian democratic groups in opposition to Franco's regime, and their necessary

convergence to form the *Equipo Demócrata Cristiano del Estado Español* (Spanish Christian Democrat Team), to legitimise their recognition by the Christian democrats of Europe and their participation in the European Christian democrat platforms (NEI and EUCD). The appearance of other groups with Christian democratic leanings, which were not recognised by the *Equipo*, is also examined. Understanding the fragmentation of Spain's Christian democratic movement helps to explain its evolution during the first few years of the transition.

This evolution, once the movement had cast off its veil of clandestinity, is analysed in Chapter 5. We see the complexity of the Christian democratic situation created during the first year-and-a-half of the transition, showing the extent to which the transcendent decisions taken at that time directly affected the possibility of a future solid Christian democratic party in Spain. This is the framework in which the relations with the German Christian democratic movement were forged.

The second part of this doctoral thesis, formed of the largest two chapters, is devoted exclusively to the bilateral relations established between the Spanish and German Christian democrat movements. Chapter 6 analyses the CDU's decision to become involved in Spain, and thus its search for a long-term Spanish partner, whilst the KAS began providing aid to its new Spanish partners who were still operating below the radar. These relations developed over the course of the complex year 1976. Our analysis focusses on the controversies surrounding the selection of the Spanish partner, the type of support provided and the approaches taken to bring it about. The chapter closes with an analysis of Germany's Christian democratic movement toward the campaign in the first general elections and the results of those elections.

An extension of the previous chapter, Chapter 7 looks at the relations forged after the general elections between the CDU, the KAS and the recently-founded UCD, its Christian democratic sector and the *Fundación Humanismo y Democracia*. We examine the aid provided by the German partners to help consolidate the party, and also the constant challenges which the UCD had to face. Particular attention is paid to the cooperation of the CDU/KAS for the achieving of the electoral triumphs in both the general and municipal elections of 1979, but also the reaction to the signs of crisis and disintegration of the centrist party which culminated with their disastrous electoral defeat in 1982.

The whole of the work supports the view that the Christian democrat movement played a decisive role in the consolidation of Spanish democracy and the movement's rise in the centre-right of Spanish politics through the involvement of a number of Christian democratic personalities.

Conclusions

The transition from the Franco dictatorship to the democratic regime instituted in the Constitution of 1978 was a multifaceted process which brought together initiatives, propositions and agents with widely varying attachments and directions. Although it is essentially analysed with the national scene considered as the only arena of action, the transition also had an external projection of prime importance: not only because of its repercussion in what Huntington successfully called the “third wave of democratisation”, but also primarily because of the transcendence attached to it by the authorities in the geopolitical reconstitution of a Europe shaken to its core by the crisis and looking to expand to the south to compensate the problem of Britain's joining, all within the context of the Cold War. In this scenario, the Iberian transitions – with historical parallels but opposing methodologies – inevitably attracted the interest, and also the concern, of the major European countries: especially that of a Germany attempting to use the general crisis to rid itself of the inherited prejudices and begin to establish itself as one of the leaders of the community. Amply covered by the media, the institutional instruments of cooperation up until full democratisation, the parties and political foundations were those who were first in charge of supporting the process, providing guidance and backing up related personalities.

After Franco's death, the GDR wholeheartedly helped Spain to leave behind the dictatorial system to which it had been subjugated for the past 40 years, with the main objective being that the country could become a democracy capable of joining the two main international organisations in the western bloc: the Atlantic Alliance and the European Economic Community. The GDR's aim in this was to strengthen the course of action which it had maintained in terms of foreign policy, “more Europe”, whilst attempting, for its own benefit, to preserve the balance of power between the East and

West, preventing the spread of communism in the south of Europe through countries that were politically unstable because of the downfall of their dictatorships. In this involvement from the GDR, there was a sense of post-war responsibility. Germany was perfectly well aware of what the privation of freedom, dignity and rights meant, and these experiences gave rise to a powerful spirit of international solidarity. In the achievement of these goals, the federal government became involved directly and also indirectly through the main German political parties: the Christian democrats of the CDU/CSU, the social democrats and the liberals sought, in Spain, to find their appropriate partners and helped, both with their own resources and those which the German State made available to them, in the construction of the democratic system. Unlike the SPD, though, which soon found and decidedly supported a sister party, the CDU had a great deal of trouble in determining with which Spanish interlocutor it should align itself.

Outside of Administrations throughout the 1970s, the CDU considered it essential to strengthen Christian democracy in Europe, and therefore, saw in assisting the *Iberian transitions* the possibility of serving its own interests. To foster the creation of homologous parties in two countries with a Catholic tradition, just emerging from right-wing dictatorships and with a high percentage of the populace holding conservative view, was a unique opportunity, given the seemingly high portion of the vote that a party with Christian democratic ideology would potentially command in both countries. When those two countries joined the EEC, the new Christian democratic parties would have to be admitted as members of the EPP, so the CDU's objective would be achieved.

Germany's Christian democrat movement held a twofold interest in Spain's transition: helping to consolidate the process of democratisation, and preventing a drastic swing from one end of the ideological spectrum to the other, as appeared to be happening in the Portuguese revolution. In Portugal, German and European Christian democrat movements initially placed the emphasis on supporting democratic change and keeping the communists out of power. In terms of political parties, though, their support came too late, and they found themselves having to support a different partner to the one they had wanted. Therefore, they wanted to prevent history from repeating itself in their dealings with Spain. The predictable nearing downfall of the Franco regime and the promulgation of the *Estatuto Jurídico de Asociaciones Políticas* (Legal Statute of Political Associations – December 1974) showed Germany's Christian

democrats the opportunity to find a partner in Spain with whom they could find agreement both on their essential principles and their strategic objectives. Up until that point, the relations with Spain's clandestine Christian democratic groups had been pursued discreetly in the context of the EUCD and had not been very fluid. Officially, this remained the case until the Franco regime's final fall but, unofficially, from mid-1975 onwards, Germany's Christian democratic movement began to tighten up its links with the *Equipo Demócrata Cristiano* of the Spanish State. This decision was not unrelated to the voices within the EUCD – particularly that of its president, Kai-Uwe von Hassel – and other international Christian democratic organisations, urging the CDU to become involved in strengthening Spain's precarious Christian democratic group, given that political change appeared to be imminent.

The advantage which the Germans theoretically had in Spain, through having a partner that had been selected by the EUCD in 1965, was soon countered by a series of negative factors which characterised the *Equipo*, beginning with the fact that its members did not hesitate to capitalise on their position of exclusivity in the European forum to prevent any new Spanish group with Christian democratic leanings from being recognised as a partner of the EUCD. Thus, whilst *Democrazia Cristiana* in Italy or the party in Belgium always defended the exclusive status of the *Equipo*, the CDU wished to be more flexible on this aspect, influenced by the changing political landscape in Spain in the early years of the transition, or by their doubts about the *Equipo* itself, and defended the option of facilitating entry to the EUCD for other Spanish Christian democratic parties, though without success.

Before the first general elections, the German Christian democratic movement had difficulty in establishing a single criterion as to whether it was necessary and prudent to maintain the exclusive relationship with the *Equipo*. These doubts were precipitated by the very nature and contradictions of the EUCD's partner, the fragmentation of Christian democracy in Spain and the refusal of the *Equipo*'s members either to lead or to join a united centrist party. In late 1975, with strong support from its president, the EUCD had officially opted to support its partner unconditionally, although they encouraged the *Equipo* to join with the rest of the Christian democratic groups to form one large party. For its part, the KAS, in July of the same year, had also made the decision to firmly support the *Equipo* and, some months later, expanded this to include support for Fernando Álvarez de Miranda's new party – a splinter group from *Izquierda*

Democrática. This course of action in Spain came in the wake of the foundation's strategic decision to solely support political forces which had had no affiliation with Franco's regime. This stance was not always shared by the group's political patron, the CDU; within the party, there were two positions on this matter: there were those who agreed with the decision taken by the KAS from the very start, and a conservative group who relativised the importance of a Christian democratic party being captained by reformist leaders who had actually been active within the Francoist machine (which essentially materialised in the case of the UDE). For this latter sector of the German party, it was more important to prevent the *Equipo* from veering to the left because of agreements with groups composed of communists, and they viewed the union of the *Equipo* with UDE as a way of resolving this fear and encouraging the creation of a solid Christian democratic party in Spain. In fact, as early as January 1976, the most conservative sector of the CDU opted to support a major project: for Spanish Christian democracy to move past its internal conflicts and to form a centre-right party as a united entity. For this reason, this group were always open to the idea of maintaining contact with other centrist- and centre-right politicians outside of the *Equipo*.

As the partite system in Spain gradually took shape during the latter half of 1976, the whole of German Christian democracy came together on the decision to support the creation of a centrist party, which did not yet exist, by the joining together of all the groups and parties occupying that political space. With the right being occupied by AP, and the left by the PCE and the PSOE, the emergence of the CD in January 1977 and its appropriation of the centre territory was vitally important. In parallel, the results of the opinion poll conducted by DATA confirmed the views of German Christian democrats about the significant possibility that a centre party might win the first general elections; in addition to the opinion data, interest in centrist alliances followed the example of the CDU as a party which included different interests from distinct political groups. The conditions for the creation of a centrist party in Spain were very different, but the idea of the German Christian democratic party as a popular integrative party was presented and promoted.

The efforts made by German Christian democracy with the *Equipo* to try to convince them of the need to join a centrist coalition were in vain. Nonetheless, even when they knew the negative consequences that their partners' decision would have in the elections, the Germans respected the *Equipo*'s desire for isolation, and continued to

provide them with support. However, the German Christian democratic movement did not feel obliged to maintain a status of exclusivity with the *Equipo*, and therefore, in parallel, they continued to offer support to the party led by Álvarez de Miranda. Gil Robles and Ruiz Giménez were never keen on the idea of sharing the friendship of the German Christian democrats in Spain with the former member of ID.

The degree of discretion in the relations between the German and Spanish Christian democracy movements experienced two different stages up until the first general elections. Initially, it was fairly high, because the groups began to cooperate during the last few months of the Franco regime's rule, and the members of the *Equipo* had to carry out their activity either in secret or in exile. Throughout 1976, that discretion slowly transformed into caution; on the part of the Germans, there were two significant reasons for this: firstly, the lack of a unanimous decision between the different German Christian democratic sectors regarding the need to preserve their exclusive relationship with the *Equipo*; secondly and more importantly, the explicit respect for their Spanish counterparts' independence and decisions, with the Germans limiting themselves to an advisory capacity, based on their own experience. There were moments, such as a great international gathering of Christian democrats, held in Madrid a few months before the first democratic elections, where the *Equipo* would have liked to profit from the public support of the CDU, but the noted absence of members of the upper echelons of the German Christian democratic party merely served to demonstrate the significant doubts that the Germans still had about working with the *Equipo*. Nor did the *Equipo*'s nationwide parties have the public presence of German Christian democratic leaders during the electoral campaign or the pre-electoral acts. In fact, during the only visit that Helmut Kohl ever made to Spain, in late May 1977, he denied the *Equipo*'s status of exclusivity in a statement to the German media, confidentially showed support for Suárez in his leadership of the centrist coalition and reiterated the pressing need for the whole of Spain's Christian democratic movement to unite after the elections to lead a solid centrist party.

When cataloguing the type of aid which the German Christian democrats provided to their Spanish counterparts, we must make a series of clarifications. During Franco's rule, direct support was not possible; the demonstrations of solidarity with the *Equipo* were made through the EUCD, and were essentially moral gestures, based on public declarations against the Franco regime. The European forum did not have its own

financial resources which it could offer its partners in Spain, and the most the *Equipo* could do was to count on the presence of the EUCD at the meetings of the *Bureau Politique* (which meant the Spaniards were able to maintain frequent contact with the highest European leaders), or to invite them to this or that seminar, essentially funded by either the German or Italian Christian democrat movement. Simple recognition as a partner of the EUCD gave the *Equipo* visibility in Europe and, after Franco's death, on the national stage as well. This projection was crucially important, meaning that, even months before the dictator breathed his last, the CDU already had the *Equipo* as Spanish partners, regardless of the question of exclusivity. From that point on, in addition to moral support from the German party (which was sometimes greater or lesser in intensity, depending on whether the decisions made by the members of the *Equipo* were felt to be more or less sensible), they began to receive material aid from the Christian democrat movement in Germany, which constituted a crucial contribution for the Spaniards.

The cooperation of the German Christian democrats materialised mainly in the actions of the KAS, and affected different areas. The most important of all was the political formation: significant collectives (of course political groups, but also housewives associations, journalists or university professors) were frequently invited to visit the GDR, and the offices of the party and the political foundation. Explicitly, a common objective was being pursued in all of these trips: that the Spaniards learn what democracy was and how people live in a democratic society. Equally important in the bilateral relations were the meetings and training days for the politicians of the *Equipo* – consummate leaders, but also outstanding young figures – which were organised in the KAS's various installations in Bonn, using the CDU as an example of a Christian democratic political party. Yet it was in Spain where the German foundation staged a whole range of courses and political training seminars which were brought to fruition by using a legal structure created for that purpose: the political training institute INDESP (which later changed its name to CES and SES), through which was channelled the assistance to the *Equipo* and to Fernando Álvarez de Miranda's party. Initially, the Institute had a direct relation with the KAS headquarters in Bonn. In October 1976, the German foundation set up a delegation in Spain – its first subsidiary in Europe. Its representative, Manfred Huber, became a key figure in those times, acting as advisor to the *Equipo* and as a direct link between the KAS and the Institute, with a very close link

being forged. The 100+ courses and seminars on political preparation organised by the Institute, designed to deal with the initial phase of transformation which was occurring in Spain, had the same objective as the meetings organised by the KAS in the GDR: to offer instruction on democracy in every possible aspect. This included assistance in the consolidation of a solid Christian democratic political party.

In addition to all the support for political training provided by the German foundation, it also covered the majority of the expenses needed to get the Institute up and running, until late July 1977. The money to fund this whole aid programme, as in the case of the social democrats and liberals, came from the BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), and therefore from the German State. Just in terms of political training, up until the first general elections, the German Christian democrats invested at least 385,000DM (approx. 10,000,000 pesetas) in their Spanish partners. The equivalent in today's money would be 100,940,000 pesetas (€606,661). Alongside the aid channelled through the KAS and some loans guaranteed by the CDU to help contest the general elections, the *Equipo* and Fernando Álvarez de Miranda's party received financial support from the German Chancellery. They were not the only Spanish political groups which enjoyed this type of assistance; with the approval of the Bundestag, a financial stipend which the Chancellery divided between all of Germany's political parties was considered a special contribution to help their various international partners in cooperation to lay the foundations of democracy in countries coming out of dictatorships. During the years of the Spanish transition, the CDU received somewhere between one and two million German marks a year, which it distributed between its international partners at different times, depending on their needs. These funds were always very carefully monitored the German party's auditors.

The fragmentation of Christian democracy in Spain and the movement's inability to reach agreement are essential axes which explain its disappointing role in the transition. In this work of research, we have also seen the interest of the Spanish Christian democrat movement in receiving aid from their German counterparts, although the significant division existing between the parties of this ideology, even since the days of Francoism, did little to facilitate foreign aid. Europeanism and the desire to become members of the EUCD were the factors which helped Christian democratic groups with irreconcilably-different tenets – such as the PNV, the Catalan UDC, DSC and the UDC (later the ID) – actually come together in 1965 to form the *Equipo Demócrata Cristiano*

del Estado Español; however, as became apparent over time, this alliance ultimately proved to be based on minimal agreement to take control of the exclusivity of the “Christian democrat” brand in Spain and to gain visibility on the international stage, but the individual inclinations of each group were never overcome at national level. The complicated nature of that *Equipo* and its status of exclusivity were two key factors that massively hampered the possibility of creating, in Spain, a unified Christian democratic party during the first few years of the transition, as the groups were unable to take advantage of the potential that Christian democracy had been predicted to have since the mid-1960s. During the transition, the strategy to be followed to establish a democratic system, the question of federal integration of its members and the differences of opinion as regards the relations with the PCE were only some of the issues which accentuated the differences between its members. Disagreements took place even within the parties themselves; the friendship of the leader of ID, Joaquín Ruiz Giménez, with the communists was the reason why a sector headed by Fernando Álvarez de Miranda decided to break away and create a new Christian democratic party alongside the *Equipo*.

Other parties with Christian democratic leanings attempted, despite the *Equipo*'s objections, to gain acceptance into the EUCD, but without success. The shielding created by the *Equipo* hampered the possibility of generating a solid Christian democracy in Spain which would unite the associations which had emerged under the protection of the *Estatuto de Asociaciones Políticas* of December 1974. Especially significant was the blocking of UDE and other majority Christian democratic groups headed by leaders who had, at some point, collaborated with the Franco regime, such as the group *Tácito* and, later on, with greater variety of ideologies, the *Partido Popular*. Partiality aside, their denial to join a centrist coalition and ultimately their inflexibility isolated the *Equipo* on the political state in Spain, and led to its own fragmentation when faced with the electoral process, as the regional parties had decided to stand in the elections alongside the national parties. Another element was that the abundance of leaders lacking charisma, as opposed to the image presented by young leaders such as Adolfo Suárez or Felipe González, proved equally negative for the national parties of the *Equipo*. The youngest members did not have sufficient strength to impose on the elders a direction and political activity more in tune with the times and correct the errant electoral strategy adopted by the old leaders. Many of those youths, trained in the

seminaries supported by the German Christian democrats, ended up in the seats of the UCD after the general elections.

Despite the efforts of both parties, no harmony could be reached in the discourse and methods employed by the German Christian democrats and the members of the *Equipo*, running in different streams. Whilst the CDU offered its support as a “Spanish Christian democratic” brand, its advice and the financial aid from the German government for the structuring and consolidation of a solid Spanish Christian democratic party, the national parties of the *Equipo* demonstrated their strategic knowledge with regard to the dimension of the first democratic general elections, showing themselves to be incapable of adequately managing the aid they received from their German partners. They were glad of the support of the German Christian democratic structure, and of the financial aid, which they distributed as they saw fit without the interference of their German partners; but the Germans’ suggestions regarding the need to look at the big picture and think long term ultimately rubbed the Spanish up the wrong way – the Spaniards considered their German partners’ comments, which ran counter to their own way of working, an unwelcome interference on the part of the CDU. The national parties of the *Equipo* were not able to take full advantage of the significant organisational and doctrinal support from the Germans, received by the leaders and activists to help in preparing for the elections. Nor did they wish to re-examine their electoral position in light of the opinion poll carried out by DATA. The regional parties – particularly the PNV – were able, in the long run, to take advantage of the support from European and German Christian democrats in the 1970s, with both playing a crucial role in their respective autonomous governments for decades; however, the frivolity with which the national parties took the German aid conducted them directly to their well-publicised downfall. For their part, the Christian democrats of the PDC, led by Álvarez de Miranda, demonstrated both willingness and capability to adapt to the political circumstances of the time. In their decision to join the centrist coalition and contribute to the formation of the UCD, making up its Christian democratic sector, the advice of the CDU and the KAS was hugely important. Thus, the bitterness and impotence which the German Christian democrats felt at the electoral collapse of the majority of members of the *Equipo* – which they had predicted and warned of months before – were partially mitigated by the electoral success of the UCD.

After the 1977 elections, the landscape of Christian democracy in Spain became much simpler, and the strategic input of the CDU changed significantly. The *Equipo*, as such, ceased to exist, and the national parties making it up barely survived. The majority of their members joined the UCD – either directly or through its Christian democratic sector. The PNV and UDC remained members of the EUCD, but they ceased to be the CDU's partners in Spain. As regards the role played by the German Christian democrats, the elections marked a “before-and-after” point in their interests. Cleverly, during his visit to Spain in May, Helmut Kohl began to lay the foundations for a new relationship in Spain with the UCD, and ensured that Suárez would not impede a union of Christian democrats once the elections were over. However, the political map that emerged in Spain in mid-June forced the CDU and KAS to rethink their strategy. The strong electoral performance of the PSOE and the consequent potential that the party might obtain the majority in the next general elections, alongside the dreadful results of the national parties of *Equipo*, steered the Germans' objective towards a new goal: supporting Suárez's great dream of uniting all the forces in concert with the UCD, creating a strong, solid centrist party. The CDU, identifying with this massive centre-right project – which they felt would bring stability to the system and would, in time, ultimately lean towards their Christian democratic tenets – offered all of their support to Suárez who, for all his political history, had no experience in the edification of a modern political party. In this way, the German Christian democratic movement helped consolidate the UCD (then still in an embryonic state), from which the whole government apparatus drew strength. The idea of giving up their individual identity was not popular with the Christian democrats of the UCD; the first major contribution to the centrist party came from the CDU, attempting to convince the Christian democratic wing that this was the best solution. From then up until the party disintegrated in 1982, the CDU maintained its exclusive cooperation with the UCD. Its ultimate objective was to see the UCD join the EUCD and become an observer member of the EPP, until finally it could become a full member once Spain joined the EEC.

Adolfo Suárez gladly accepted the help offered by the CDU, especially as he knew about the aid the German social democrats were providing to the PSOE. No secret was made of the affinity which began to grow between the two parties, and in fact, the CDU strongly supported the UCD in the international arena, although initially there was an atmosphere of prudent discretion, so as to prevent the different ideological families

within the centrist party from being upset by its closeness to the CDU. In time, a truly strong bond was formed, thanks largely to the good relations that were established between the international-relation secretaries of both parties: Henning Wegener and Javier Rupérez. The moment when the affinity between the two parties became most apparent was during the UCD's first national assembly. Of the international Christian democratic leaders, once again Helmut Kohl was absent, never ceasing to mistrust the UCD's ideological multiplicity; however, German Christian democrats lent strong support to their Spanish partner, sending to the conference a healthy representation of the party at its highest level. The significant presence of international Christian democratic leaders did not go unnoticed by the media, despite the fact that the party attempted to balance it out with the presence of noteworthy European political leaders of other ideological tendencies. After the 1979 elections, while the UCD was dealing with its own internal crisis, relations with the German Christian democratic movement began to cool, as the UCD members were more focussed on their own problems and internal struggles between ideologies than on promoting international relations. However, throughout the UCD's crisis, the German Christian democrats maintained firm support for Suárez and the directorship of the party, and continued to trust that they could solve the clashes between the different ideological families. In view of the PSOE's gathering strength, the only political alternative which the CDU considered supporting in Spain was, indeed, the centrist party. Hence, the fact that a group of Christian democrats from the UCD was contributing to the destabilisation of the party was viewed as genuinely irresponsible by their German counterparts.

Whilst the CDU's interest in helping to consolidate the UCD had the ultimate objective of the centrist party joining the European Christian democratic fora, Suárez's stance on this issue varied over the course of his successive governments. Initially, his level of commitment to Europe's Christian democracy movement was slight, although he hinted at his preference for this ideology to his German interlocutors. Whilst it is true that he was willing for the UCD to be an observer in the EUCD and the EPP, he also showed interest in Liberal International. His commitment to European Christian democracy grew gradually over time, and he declared to his German correspondents his intention to have the UCD join the EPP once Spain became a member of the EEC. In actual fact, two days before his resignation, he confirmed to Leo Tindemans (president of the EPP), Javier Rupérez and Alberto Aza his final decision to have the

UCD join the EUCD. As in other areas of policy, Suárez showed himself to be very pragmatic, drawing closer to the German and European Christian democratic chapters at the times when it was most to his advantage strategically: long before the UCD's first assembly, in the months leading up to the 1979 elections or when under most internal pressure during the party's internal crisis – especially when that pressure originated from the “critical” sector and the Christian democratic members. After Suárez's resignation, although the relationship between the UCD and the CDU held whilst the party was disintegrating, there was a temporary flirtation of the new heads of the centrist party with the German liberal party.

The contribution made by the German Christian democrat movement to the consolidation of a strong centrist party, once again, came through the KAS. Suárez readily accepted the idea that a foundation should be set up in Spain to channel the aid from the Germans, but he asked that it should include representatives of all the ideologies within the UCD. The *Fundación Humanismo y Democracia* (FHD), whose expenditure was covered by the KAS, staged hundreds of talks, courses, seminars and round tables throughout Spain. Up until the 1979 elections, political training activities were given priority, with the aim of consolidating the UCD not only as a political party, but also as the party in the Spanish government. The seminars focussed on doctrinal education of the UCD activists, with definite weight being given to the training of regional politicians, mayors and councillors to contest the first municipal elections, courses on the Constitution and its contents, and instruction on how to organise general elections in a democratic system. As happened in the run-up to the first general elections, the KAS continued to organise meetings, courses and seminars for politicians, journalists, university professors and trade-unionists, at its headquarters in Bonn; at the same time, in Spain, it began organising round tables and conferences open to the general public about topical issues, which were very well received and lent the German foundation visibility in Spain. The strong results gained by the UCD in the 1979 general elections can be considered recognition of the solidarity projects run by the CDU to strengthen the party in the government and help edify the nascent democracy in Spain. The funds which the BMZ had made available to the KAS to help the UCD in 1978 and 1979 were at least 104,400,000 pesetas (approx. 2,750,000DM), which, in equivalent value today, would be some 660,747,600 pesetas (€3,971,173). However, the BMZ also allocated to the KAS, in late 1979 and for the next three years, approx. 158,814,000

pesetas (4,300,000DM), whose value today would be around 705,134,160 pesetas (€3,237,941).

As the UCD's crisis gestated, a series of problems began to manifest themselves between the party and the Spanish foundation, caused primarily by the mistrust of the liberal and social-democrat sectors in the Christian democratic management of the FHD and by the party's lack of foresight as regards its needs for training. What is certain is that in spite of the ideological multiplicity, the Christian democratic sector always held a majority of weight in the leadership and most relevant positions in the FHD. The problems were solved in 1980 when the FHD relinquished responsibility for the political training of members of the UCD, with the party itself taking charge of this, first signing an annual agreement with the Spanish foundation. Thereafter, the FHD focussed on the training of the party's young members, and expanded both the target audiences and the contents of its courses; in parallel, it diversified its activity to include economic research, political education and social politics. Many of these youths trained by the FHD went on to hold positions of political responsibility in later years, though no longer under the banner of the UCD – which was mortally wounded by Suárez's exit – but instead in the body which ultimately brought the centre-right in Spain together as a cohesive group: the *Partido Demócrata Popular*, set up by Óscar Alzaga, coaligned with the *Alianza Popular* and finally subsumed by the *Partido Popular*. Although this goes far beyond the time period analysed here, this thesis points out the vectors which demonstrate the contribution of the German Christian democratic movement in training the leaders of the *Partido Popular* of the 1990s and in shaping the Europeanist and Atlantist outlook of the party.

As a final summary of this doctoral thesis and validation of the hypothesis adopted, let us look at the words of Fernando Álvarez de Miranda in an interview with the author in February 2013; Álvarez de Miranda was part of both national groups of the *Equipo* at different points in time, belonged to *Tácito*, founded the *Izquierda Democrática Cristiana*, joined the *Unión de Centro Democrático* and finally was the Speaker of the Spanish Parliament (the *Cortes*) during the process of constitution. He summed up the role played by the cooperation of the German Christian democrat movement during the transcendental period of the transition: “You see, what they wanted was for the transition to happen in Spain... that we should be a democracy. That is the major debt which the Spanish transition owes to the *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* and the other

German foundations". The CDU, mainly through the KAS, tried to explicitly influence the process of democratisation, contributing to the development of a similar formation in Spain. If only this point were considered, the efforts of the German Christian democrats must be deemed a failure. However, the story of their cooperation is not that of a failure by any stretch of the imagination. Breaking free of the limitations of the exclusive affiliations, their work of political training touched a great many leaders, journalists and academics, contributing undeniably to the formation of a democratic mindset and to the knowledge of various methods for political action, at State-, regional- and municipal levels. This transcendental contribution was not limited to the period of transition and subsequent stabilisation, but rather was maintained in later years, bringing Christian democratic strategic objectives into the major governing party of the time, the UCD and – following the UCD's collapse and crushing defeat by the PSOE – the reformed *Partido Popular*. Paradoxically, the initial failure of the electoral bid actually became the greatest contribution to democratic consolidation and development.