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José V. Casanova

The Opus Dei ethic, the technocrats and the modernization of Spain

Two historical facts form the point of departure of this study. First, the modernization of Spain in the 1960s. On the basis of practically every relevant socio-economic indicator, in the last two decades, Spain may be said to have become a modern industrialized country. Second, the leading role of members of the Catholic organization known as Opus Dei in the modernization of Spain, or at least in the change in economic policy which made possible such modernization. Both facts have already been well documented and will therefore be taken as historically given.

The main purpose of my sociological investigation is not historically descriptive but rather interpretative, that is, an attempt to show the adequacy at the level of meaning between the economic ethic and world-views of the Opus Dei and the socio-economic transformations of modern Spain. In so doing, I hope to offer an explanation as to why the Opus Dei members were the "adequate carriers" of the Spanish modernization process.

Looking at the existing literature on Spanish modernization, I can foresee two main objections to my interpretation. The first one coming from those who, while not denying that Spain underwent the series of socio-economic transformations which usually go under the name of modernization, would argue that such a change was basically "exogenous", that is, not an instance of Spanish modernization but rather the modernization of capital in Spain —

This article is an excerpt from my doctoral dissertation "The Opus Dei ethic and the modernization of Spain". The paper was presented at the Columbia University Seminar on Content and Method in the Social Sciences in September 1981.

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at best a spill-over from the general Western economic boom and at worst, a change imposed from without by imperialism.

A second main objection to my interpretation may come from those who while not denying the active role of some members of the Opus Dei in formulating Spanish economic policy from 1957 on, would question the relevance of such a factor. Some, following the official Opus Dei line, would argue that the "technocrats" who directed Spanish economic policy "just" happened to be members of the Opus Dei, a chance or accident of which not much should be made, let alone be used in an explanatory understanding of Spanish modernization.

Others, mainly critics of the regime, would argue that the Spanish economic transformation happened not thanks to but despite the economic policies of the "technocrats" and that the role of the technocrats in the modernization of Spain was therefore negligible.¹

The primary aim of my study has not been to write a sociology of the Opus Dei, which still remains to be written. My primary intention has been to offer a sociological interpretation of the modernization of Spain. Only insofar as I consider the members of Opus Dei to be the typical representatives of the Spanish modernizing elite is a sociological interpretation of the Opus Dei intended. Such an approach implies a purposive delimitation of the perspective from which I analyze the Opus Dei.

My approach is not primarily organizational or institutional; that is, I am not interested in the Opus Dei organization as such, but rather in the economic ethic typical of the Opus Dei members and its possible significance for the Spanish modernization.² The analysis of the organization is of importance, however, as the strategic place in which the new ethic is institutionalized before it is extended to the society. In this sense the Opus Dei organization came to play a very similar role to the one which Weber attributed to the Protestant sects in his thesis (see Berger, 1971).

The basic question which I try to answer is: how could a fundamentalist Catholic reaction to the modern world be instrumental in the modernization of Spain? For centuries the Spanish Catholic Church had bitterly opposed, or at most uneasily consented to, anything "modern". Now, the Opus Dei, a Catholic organization, was sponsoring the modernization of Spain in the face of the reluctance of some of the established socio-political forces that had won the Spanish Civil War. What the liberal and progressive forces had

been unable to achieve after more than a century of confrontation with traditional Spain, was now being championed by the Opus Dei, allegedly a "conservative" and "reactionary" Catholic group under a political regime which was, at least in its official ideology, anti-capitalist and anti-modern. It is the purpose of my study to explain this paradox by analyzing three interrelated transformations.

There was first the transformation in the Spanish economic ethic and the role of the Opus Dei in such a transformation. The Opus Dei ethic is presented as a Catholic version of innerworldly asceticism, the form of being in the world conducive to a rationalized life conduct which according to Weber has elective affinities with modern rational capitalism. The Opus Dei introduced for the first time in the history of Catholic Spain the typically Protestant notion of sanctification of work in the world through the professional "calling". This new economic ethic contributed to the formation of a new breed of Spaniards who imbued their professional work with a religious meaning that could ultimately serve to legitimize their professional activities.

This innovation of the Opus Dei is to be seen as part of the general transformation of Catholicism in the direction of the "aggiornamento", i.e., the adaptation or up-dating of Catholicism to the modern world. It can be shown, however, that the Opus Dei model of "aggiornamento" was unique and significantly different from the official Catholic model which was legitimized by the Second Vatican Council.

A second transformation took place in the civilizational identity of Spain in the modern world and Opus Dei ideologues such as Calvo Serer and Pérez Embid played a crucial role in such a transformation. The Opus Dei model of Catholic and Spanish "aggiornamento" was conditioned by its ambivalent attitude towards modernity as expressed in Pérez Embid's formula "Hispanization in the ends, Europeanization in the means". Such a formula similar to the ones put forward by almost every non-Western civilization when faced with the problem of Westernization, amounts to an attempt to further the process of instrumental rationalization while trying to freeze the process of substantive or practical rationalization at the traditional level.

Only in Spain, among Western European countries, did the general cultural conflict between "ancients" and "moderns" take on a form in many respects similar to the one it took in Eastern European countries, especially in Russia, and in non-Western coun-

tries. The conflict revolved around the issue of Westernization, or Europeanization as it came to be known in Spain. From such a perspective the process of modernization is experienced as the individual and collective loss of civilizational identity and its replacement by a new identity imposed by Western cultural imperialism.

Since the time of the Christian "Reconquista" of the Iberian peninsula from the Muslim conquerors, Spaniards had developed their inner self-identity in opposition to the outsider. From that time on religious and national identity were supposed to coincide. First, it was Christians against Moors and Jews; then, during the Counter-Reformation, it was Catholic Spain against Protestant Europe; finally, with the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, it was traditional, absolutist, Catholic Spain against liberal, revolutionary, Masonic Europe. From this time on, however, the religious conflict was transferred to within the country itself and one finds a purist Hispanic Spain facing a Europeanizing Spain. The phenomenon of the "two Spains" was born. In the recent Spanish Civil War, the victors offered the ideological interpretation of the War as a religious crusade of liberation against the international "Protestant-Masonic-Jewish-Communist" conspiracy. The Cold War, however, brought about a new international realignment and now for the first time in its modern history Catholic Spain could identify itself with the modern Christian capitalist West.

Opus Dei ideologues offered a revisionist interpretation of Spanish history, of European history, and of the modern world that made possible the redefinition of Spanish identity without loss of face.

Finally there was the transformation of Spanish capitalism towards a modern rational form and the role Opus Dei technocrats played in such a transformation. This role should not be reduced, however, to one of economic acculturation, namely, to the notion that the technocrats were the ones to have introduced economic policies and well-tested economic techniques from abroad. Such a role, while important, was not the crucial one.

Even after the Spanish Catholic Church had reconciled itself with the economic tenets of liberalism, the Church and the Spanish oligarchy had continued fighting its political and cultural principles. The transformation from nineteenth century liberal capitalism to twentieth century organized corporate capitalism and the related Keynesian revolution in economic doctrines legitimized

the government's intervention in the economy. Now advanced capitalism offered the possibility of a model of economic development which promised to leave intact the authoritarian and oligarchic structures of traditional and fascist Spain.

It was the key role of the Opus Dei ministers to offer the Franco regime such a model of development and to transform the regime from a traditional fascist one into an "Entwicklungsdiktatur" (modernizing dictatorship).

This fact suffices to explain the securing of power by the Opus Dei without the need to resort to a conspiracy theory of history which portrays the Opus Dei as a secret organization endowed with extraordinary powers to manipulate the drama of Spanish history from the backstage. It was not that Opus Dei members became modernizers because they happened to be in power. Rather they gained power because they were a "modernizing elite" with a project of modernization which promised to solve the contradictions of the Franco regime without radical changes and ultimately, the contradictions of modern Spain without changing its traditional structure.

Opus Dei ideologues and fellow travellers (López Rodó, Navarro Rubio, Ullastres, Fernández de la Mora, Siguán Soler) took up and further elaborated Western technocratic ideologies of development and the end-of-ideology thesis in order to legitimize the Spanish economic modernization from above and the authoritarian political system.

It is the central thesis of my study that there is an elective affinity or an inner relationship between the Opus Dei ethic, the Opus Dei ambivalent attitude towards modernity and the model of technocratic development which the Opus Dei members institutionalized.

In this paper I will only analyze some aspects of the role of the technocratic group of López Rodó in Spanish economic development.³ No other person can be said to symbolize and represent the modernization of Spain, what I have termed the technocratic model of modernization, as well as López Rodó. He was born in 1920 in Barcelona, into a Catalan industrialist family. Around 1940, while a student of law at the University of Barcelona, he joined the Opus Dei, becoming one of the original members of the Barcelona group. In 1942 he finished law as well as commercial studies. A year later, he obtained a Doctor in Law Degree from the University of Madrid, specializing in administrative law. In 1945 he obtained the

position of Professor of Administrative Law at the University of Santiago de Compostela. Soon thereafter he set up a law practice with a fellow Opus Dei member Amadeo de Fuenmayor, who was a professor of civil law at the same university. Their law firm soon became well established serving the Galician upper classes, especially the business community.⁴

In the early 1950s, López Rodó along with other Opus Dei members who were teaching at various provincial universities came down to Madrid in order to defend themselves against the policies of liberalization introduced by Ruiz Gimenez and to organize the political counter-offensive. Before they secured high positions either in government or in business, the CSIC (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas) served as their temporary job placement centre.

In December 1956 López Rodó was appointed Technical Secretary General to the Presidency, a newly-created post which López Rodó himself had recommended in his manifesto "La reforma administrativa del estado", published in September 1956 in the Opus Dei journal *Nuestro Tiempo*. Once in this position he began to work on the two great political projects of his life, the institutionalization of the monarchy and the rationalization of the Spanish administration. These two concepts, "legal institutionalization" and "administrative rationalization", sum up the direction of his professional career as an administrative lawyer and of his political career as a technocrat.

It was not until 1956, however, that he became involved in the politics of monarchic restoration. The immediate context of his political appointment was the monarchist reaction to the Fundamental Laws Bill of the Falangist Arrese. It was in these circumstances that he became the legal and political advisor of Iturmendi, the Minister of Justice, and of Carrero Blanco, both of whom later became his political protectors. López Rodó and Carrero Blanco began a 17-year long political collaboration that was to become the most influential force in the politics of Spain. Their common interest in monarchical restoration formed the basis for this collaboration, which López Rodó also used to gain the necessary political support for his policies of modernization.

Through shrewd political cunning, using the mediation of Carrero Blanco and Camilo Alonso Vega, both of whom had direct access to Franco, and through his extraordinary legal, administrative and organizational skills, López Rodó secured the power to in-

fluence directly the most important political decisions of the regime.⁵ (He played a significant role in the drafting of the most important bills of the regime after 1956, among them "La Ley de Regimen Juridico de la Administracion" (1957), "La Ley de Principios Fundamentales" (1958), "La Ley Organica del Estado" (1966).)

López Rodó had always been convinced of what he called "the formative force of the law", its power to form and shape social reality through the institutionalization and rationalization of political and social structures.⁶

One may be tempted to dismiss such convictions as a lawyer's occupational ideology or as a superstructural illusion, but it would be difficult to analyze certain crucial features of what Weber called the Western process of rationalization, especially the institutionalization of the modern rational state, without taking into consideration such convictions.

Many of López Rodó's endeavours were directed towards the transformation of the charismatic-traditional authority of Franco into a legal rational type of legitimate authority.

Critics may also dismiss his endeavours to institutionalize what he called an "Estado Social de Derecho"⁷ in an attempt to institutionalize "Francoism". Yet one should seriously take into consideration the fact that, as López Rodó pointed out, "the successional mechanism functioned as a clockwork" (1977, p. 10), that the dissolution of Francoism was accomplished legally and that the monarchy played a crucial role in the transition. There was, moreover, an important qualitative difference between Franco's standard expression: "Everything is well taken care of" ("Todo está atado y bien atado"), an expression which attested to Francoist confidence in the survival of the regime after Franco's death, and López Rodó's attempt to institutionalize not so much the regime as the modern rational state. Francoist confidence was based on the personal loyalty of Carrero Blanco and, ultimately, on the naked power of the repressive apparatus.

It is true that there was a blatant contradiction between the arbitrary irrationality of the regime and the rationality of the formal-legal state which López Rodó wanted to build upon this irrationality. Consequently, his attempt to use the regime instrumentally in order to further the process of political rationalization was ultimately doomed to failure. If the successional mechanism functioned as a clockwork and the transition to constitutional

democracy went smoothly, it was not due to some kind of magical-consubstantial power of the institutions and the laws but rather, because the ideal and material interests of the forces opposing the regime coincided with the interests of López Rodó and the technocrats in at least one of the general characteristics of the modern rational state, i.e., in its formalism. A "formalism" which, according to Weber, "is promoted by all the interests which are concerned with the security of their own personal situation, whatever this may consist in. Otherwise the door would be open to arbitrariness and hence formalism is the line of least resistance." (Weber, 1978, p. 226)

Weber also acknowledges, however, that there is another tendency in the formation of the modern rational state which may even be in contradiction with this formalism, namely the democratic tendency. This democratic tendency has been precisely the basis for all the critiques of formal-legal rationality within the Marxist, the liberal and the populist traditions. These traditions have pointed out that formal legal rationality may well be used to create and defend substantive irrationality.⁸ (I take this to be the essence of the Frankfurt School critique of Max Weber's conception of modern instrumental rationality and of the liberal critiques of Weber's conception of democracy.)

This would indicate the need to go beyond the formal analysis of rational bureaucratic structures into a study of their content and especially of the direction taken by the process of rationalization. Ultimately, as Weber himself points out (1978, p. 224), "the question is always who controls the existing bureaucratic machinery" and to what purpose. Thus, we need to know the goal of bureaucratic rationalization.

The political goal of López Rodó's institutionalization was the restoration of the monarchy. Paradoxically, the monarchy has historically been the symbol and instrument of the routinization of charismatic authority and of its institutionalization into traditional authority rather than into a modern rational one. In López Rodó's conception of the monarchy, however, one cannot find any elements of sacred or traditional legitimation. For him, the monarchy is not a person, but the institution par excellence, i.e., an impersonal office. The monarchy becomes an institutional necessity which guarantees the instrumental rationality of the system, that is, its efficient functioning as an impersonal mechanism. In this sense his conception approaches Weber's ideal type of "monocratic

bureaucracy", the purely bureaucratic type of administrative organization. For López Rodó, as for Max Weber, the needs of a modern mass administration make this type of monocratic bureaucratic administration totally indispensable. López Rodó believed that modern industrial societies are complex, yet extremely fragile and that therefore political instability is too costly. Since democracy introduces precisely this element of instability, the democratic tendency has to be curtailed whenever it runs counter to the efficiency of the system. Thus the functioning of such a system should be carefully managed by the experts (see note 6).

It is true that the very rational functioning of the system requires a certain democratic participation, at least the cooperation of the subjects. But the limits to such participation are set precisely by the ultimate goal of the system which is: to run "efficiently". Thus modern societies require a regime of authority ("un régimen de autoridad") and a strong state ("un estado fuerte"). The monarchy is the symbol of both. Yet in López Rodó's conception the monarchy is neither the authoritarian power needed to conserve a hierarchic traditional society (monarchic traditionalism), nor the despotic charismatic authority needed to bring about social justice and the social revolution against the established interests (Falangist plebiscitarian "regencialismo"), nor the constitutional guarantee of a "Rechtsstaat" (the Christian Democratic and Liberal defense of a "estado de Derecho"). The monarchy simply becomes the apex of the purely bureaucratic type of administration. The ultimate goal of such a rational bureaucracy is not primarily "political", that is to say, to guarantee the smooth efficient functioning of the polity, but rather economic, that is, to promote the efficient rational administration of the national economy.⁹

López Rodó's goal was not merely the institutionalization of a "Rechtsstaat" that would guarantee formal legal rationality. His aim was the institutionalization of an efficient "Sozialrechtsstaat" which would serve to rationalize the Spanish economy. This economic instrumentalization of political institutions and of the political sphere is the very essence of technocracy. At this point technocracy coincided with the substantive rational tendencies of welfare patrimonialism. This coincidence may have been the main reason for López Rodó's appointment by Franco as Technical Secretary General to the Presidency.

Unlike Carrero Blanco and Iturmendi, Franco was not interested in López Rodó's plans of monarchic restoration, not even in its

legal disguise as the institutionalization of the regime. Franco had always tried to postpone the institutionalization as long as he could. He viewed it as a limitation to his arbitrary power of decision. For that reason Franco postponed the Organic Law of the State and the nomination of a successor as long as he could. The fact that he became interested in López Rodó's projects of administrative reform does not mean that he was interested in the rationalization of the administration as such. The last paragraph of López Rodó's programmatic essay "La reforma administrativa del estado" is, I believe, the key to Franco's interest and serves at the same time to illustrate the technocratic division of labor between the technocrat and the political decisionmaker. This paragraph was obviously added with the sole purpose of enticing Franco. López Rodó writes:

The administrativists, said M. Gearard when he delivered his memorandum on the administrative reform in Belgium, have exerted an extraordinary effort with the best of goodwill. Now it remains for the political power to simply exercise an act of will. It has always been so. All the great administrative reforms have been achieved under the auspices of a great political figure. Yet it was the administrative work which endured the later political changes. Richelieu, in creating the Intendants; Colbert, in reforming the public finance; Napoleon, in promulgating the Administrative Constitution of the 28th of Pluiose of the year VIII — all of them left a permanent mark upon France. Nothing remains today of the Napoleonic empire, but there are still the Prefects and the State Council as living testimony of his mark upon the history of France. (1970, p. 137)

For somebody who like Franco thought himself accountable only before God and History, this was indeed a tempting proposition. Franco called on López Rodó to explain his projects in more detail. Soon thereafter, he was appointed Technical Secretary General with a mandate to begin the administrative reform. The reform amounted to a transformation of the Spanish "government" into a modern "administration", into the kind of administration needed to direct the development of the Spanish economy, without undermining the absolute authority of Franco. López Rodó even found "scientific" legitimation for this absolute authority:

In his well-known work *The stages of economic growth*, Rostow points to the presence of an extraordinary man who knows how to catalyze the latent energies of a people, giving it back its self-confidence as one of the decisive factors in the economic take-off. The Caudillo is to be credited with making us Spaniards regain our confidence. (1970, p. 53)

It was no doubt López Rodó's great political achievement to have instilled in Franco the idea that this would be his great historical role. Thus López Rodó was able to sell his new policies of modernization as a continuation of the policies of the 18th of July. Soon he became the speechwriter of Carrero Blanco who in turn was the speechwriter of Franco. The most important and influential speeches of Franco throughout the 1960s were drafted by López Rodó. One only needs to compare the speeches and writings of Franco and Carrero Blanco in the 1960s with those they wrote in the 1950s to realize what a radical transformation this entailed (see Franco Bahamonde, 1943, 1960, 1975; further, Carrero Blanco). Throughout the 1950s, under the respective pseudonyms of J. Boor and Juan de la Cosa, Franco and Carrero Blanco wrote a series of essays expressing the most traditionalist and anti-modern ideas. All the manifestations of modernity, with the sole exception of the technological ones, were totally rejected. The world-view and the view of history manifested in those essays are dominated by the notion that from the sixteenth century on there has been a Protestant, Masonic, Jewish, Communist international conspiracy directed against Spain. In this manifestation of the eternal struggle of the forces of good against evil, it is Spain's historical mission to represent the forces of good (cf. Boor, 1952; Cosa, 1954, 1956).

Similar ideas appeared frequently in Franco's official speeches throughout the 1950s. But in the 1960s his speeches served to legitimize López Rodó's policies of economic modernization, bureaucratic rationalization and international economic integration. It is true that López Rodó could accomplish such a feat only because he promised that none of these processes would entail any form of political or cultural liberalism, that is, democracy, ideological pluralism or freedom of expression. It was a remarkable feat, nonetheless.

López Rodó subsequently wrote:

All of us who participated in those tasks (the administrative reform) felt a deep satisfaction and encouragement upon hearing in 1960 the traditional end of the year message of the Caudillo. The Caudillo then affirmed: "The Public Administration has to adapt itself to the modern organic and functional techniques. The old conception of an administration which is always dilatory and a hindrance due to excessive bureaucratism has to be replaced by a new sense of entrepreneurial service. This is the direction taken by the administrative reform as it moves forward day by day". (1970, p. 40)

Indeed it was a radical change of direction for the Spanish state. It signified the transformation of the Falangist state into a technocratic state. Perhaps the actual socio-historical transformation was never as radical as my ideal-typical analysis seems to indicate. Franco's authoritarian regime did not correspond exactly to the ideal type of a fascist state, nor were the technocrats so successful in instituting the kind of technocratic state which would correspond exactly to their ideal model. Yet the two extreme types help indicate the direction of the change.

There were, to be sure, many elements which both the Falangist and the technocratic states had in common which helped facilitate the transition. First of all, both systems were based upon a monocratic authority at the top which, at least potentially, left Franco's absolute authority untouched. Both also shared the notion that polity and economy are interdependent. That is to say, both rejected the liberal-bourgeois conception of the separation of civil society and state, which was the basis for nineteenth century liberal capitalism and for liberal democracy. Finally, putting aside the question of whether they actually pursued this ideal or not, both states had in common the substantively rational goal of furthering social justice and the welfare of its subjects. In López Rodó's words, "If the state does not take specific measures to ensure the welfare and social justice for all the Spaniards, the very juridical order of the state's institutions becomes meaningless" (1970, p. 11). Thus, both states rejected the formal legal rationality of the liberal state. This also coincided with Franco's self-conception as a welfare patrimonialist ruler.

Nevertheless, there was a significant difference between the Falangist and the technocratic state in regard to the form of the juridical order of the state's institutions and with the direction of this order. The Falangist state was created with the intention of regulating and controlling the Spanish economy, putting it at the service of the norms and values of the state. A "greater nation" became the ideal to which all other values were subordinated. The Falangist state was a bureaucratic welfare state leaning, at least constitutionally, towards the stratification of the civil society and the economy. The technocratic state, on the contrary, was created with the intention of building an efficient administration which could be put at the service of the national economy. The goal of economic growth became the ultimate goal of the new state. It was taken for granted that economic growth was the most efficient and therefore

the right way to social justice. The state gives way to administration and the professional politician is replaced by the technocrat.

It should be self-evident that this transformation was not accomplished singlehandedly by López Rodó. But there is no doubt that he and his team of collaborators and advisors were the architects of this transformation. Two months after his appointment as Technical Secretary General, he drafted a bill which would institutionalize the main tendencies of his administrative reform. An important part of this bill "Régimen Jurídico de la Administración del Estado" was signed into law by executive decree by Franco himself on 25 February 1957, the same day on which a radical change of government took place with the appointment of twelve new ministers, among them Navarro Rubio and Ullastres.

When the entire bill was later presented for discussion in the Cortes a "procurador" stated that: "Under the humble appearance of a simple administrative law, a bill is being presented before us today which is going to profoundly alter the basis of the regime" (López Rodó, 1970, p. 26).

The decree-law created a central organ of coordination, providing the first step in the reorganization of the administration and creating the possibility for accomplishing the other reform objectives. Thus, López Rodó created for himself an administrative power centre from which he could carry on his projects of rationalization. His power, however, was of a special kind since it was not autonomous but delegated power, under the personal protection of Carrero Blanco.

The Spanish administration had grown on an ad hoc basis since 1834 when the new liberal regime reconstituted the secretariats of the ancient regime as ministerial departments, those which originally included the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, War, Finance, Justice and Internal Affairs ("Gobernación"). There was properly no executive department in the modern sense. Each minister was permitted to administer his own department in his own way and there was only coordination at the level of cabinet meetings. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was the one which came closest to a centralized executive.

As the state's intervention in the civil society and the economy grew progressively, especially in the twentieth century, the Ministry of the Interior relinquished many of these functions in favour of more specialized departments, such as the Ministries of Public Works, Agriculture, Industry, Commerce, Education and Science,

Labour, Information and Tourism and Housing. Thus the government became more specialized, more decentralized, but also more fragmented into water-tight compartments devoid of any significant coordination.¹⁰ Paradoxically, the Franco regime, a dictatorship which combined in the person of the Caudillo the offices of Chief of State and President of the Government, lacked executive coordination other than that of Franco presiding over cabinet meetings. The first step in the direction of creating an executive department was taken in 1951 when the Subsecretary of the Presidency, Carrero Blanco, was raised to the ministerial level, thus creating for the first time an autonomous executive department. The decree-law of 1957 institutionalized this tendency, adding important power and functions to Carrero Blanco's office.

An important goal underlying López Rodó's administrative reform was the eventual institutional separation of the office of Chief of State from that of President of the Government, thus opening the way for the restoration of the monarchy. As already indicated, this goal was the basis for the political collaboration between López Rodó and Carrero Blanco. Moreover, the institutional differentiation of the two offices necessarily worked in the direction of reinforcing the autonomous power positions of Carrero Blanco and consequently the administrative power position of López Rodó. The unofficial delegation of the functions of the presidency to Carrero Blanco had begun in the 1950s and grew progressively from 1957 on. In 1967, Carrero Blanco became Vice-President and finally, in 1973 President of the Government.

Such a power plan however, if there was one, could only succeed given the absolute and unquestioning loyalty of Carrero Blanco to Franco.¹¹ Thus López Rodó's power was ultimately based upon Franco's confidence in Carrero Blanco's loyalty and his influence over Carrero Blanco was ultimately dependent on his unquestioning acceptance of Carrero Blanco's loyalty to Franco. This situation explains the precarious political position of López Rodó and the technocrats. It was a situation combining vast administrative power with almost complete absence of political authority. It also explains most of the contradictions in the technocrats' political behaviour. They were partially successful in rationalizing the Spanish administration despite the resistance of established bureaucratic forces. They were also partially successful in directing the economic modernization of Spain, despite the political resistance of the Falange and the critiques by opposition intellec-

tuals. But they totally failed to bring about the political modernization, that is, at least the partial democratization and political liberalization which they had promised and which they themselves had defined as a dependent variable of economic modernization.

The rise to administrative power of the technocrats culminated in 1969 with the formation of the "mono-chromatic" government, so called because it was composed solely of "technocrats" and a few coopted individuals without any independent political base, i.e., without a potential political constituency. For the first time in the history of the regime, Franco had formed a government that was not a coalition of the different political "families" composing the regime. Ironically the technocrats' hegemonic position within the government also signified their total identification with the regime at a time when the regime, by now in its final downfall, was opposing any political change. After having promised that democracy would come automatically when Spain reached first the \$1 000, then the \$2 000 per capita level, the technocrats found themselves helpless to bring about democratization. In January 1974, following the assassination of Carrero Blanco, Franco dismissed all the technocrats and they disappeared from the Spanish administration as quietly and as suddenly as they had originally appeared on the scene. But from 1957 to 1973, the period when they were in the limelight, they were instrumental in bringing about one of the most radical transformations in modern Spanish history.

But who were "the technocrats"? The most important technocrats, López Rodó, Navarro Rubio, Ullastres and López Bravo, were Opus Dei members. But there were also many technocrats who were not. The Opus Dei ethic was especially helpful in predisposing a person to become a technocrat; one also had better chances of becoming a member of the technocratic power group in the administration if one was a member of the religious organization. Yet one could also have a technocratic mentality without the Opus Dei religious underpinnings and one could be a member of the technocratic power group without belonging to the Opus Dei organization.

It should be clear therefore, that membership in the Opus Dei cannot be a determining factor in identifying the technocrats. The Spanish sociologist Amando de Miguel (1974b, p. 145) has pointed to two main characteristics of the technocrats. He states that the technocrats were not professional politicians, that they "performed their tasks as pragmatic, aseptic and dispassionate executives" and

“exalted the cult of efficiency”. That is to say, they were first of all technical experts. This characteristic is the one most stressed by analysts. In the customary Spanish parlance, they were considered to be “tecnicos”. I believe, however, that this characterization of the technocrats is insufficient for several reasons.

First, because as many critics have pointed out, technical expertise was indeed part of the technocratic professional ideology, of their occupational mystique, even an important part of their claim to public office. Yet it could have been a false ideology. In view of the fact that López Bravo, a naval engineer, became Foreign Minister in charge of Spanish diplomacy; that Fernández de la Mora, a philosopher, was Minister of Public Works and that López Rodó, an administrative lawyer, was in charge of economic planning, Josep Meliá in his *Carta abierta a los tecnócratas*, asks whether we should not perhaps call them technocrats precisely because they were not true technical experts in their respective domains (pp. 20-21).

Second, even assuming that they were truly efficient technical experts, this was not a unique nor a specific characteristic of the technocrats since there were many other technical experts in the special corps of the Spanish administration. De la Cierva (1975, pp. 94-95) has also pointed out that Franco always preferred technical experts over politicians. Thus, if what characterizes the technocrats is their technical expertise, this would imply that they did not represent a new phenomenon in the Spanish administration. Moreover, even Miguel, following Jiménez Blanco, argues that the technocrats were basically a new version of an old recurrent phenomenon in modern Spanish history, that of the participation of the “Moderados” in different authoritarian regimes from the 1830s to the 1930s. According to Miguel (1974b, pp. 145-146), the technocrats are “the last version of that typical product of Spanish life throughout the nineteenth and part of the twentieth centuries, the ‘afrancesados’” (see also Jiménez Blanco, 1972).

On the contrary, I think that the technocrats were not the last, but rather the first version of a product which is not typically Spanish but global and which has become dominant only after World War II. Moreover, while it may well be predominantly a capitalist phenomenon, there are clear tendencies towards technocracy also in the socialist countries. It is true that López Rodó and the other technocrats were “afrancesados” even in the literal sense of the word. Many critics have pointed out that most of

López Rodó’s projects — the administrative reform, the School for Higher Civil Servants at Alcalá de Henares, the Development Plans, were almost carbon copies of French models. But this is not surprising since the French administration and economy come closest to the ideal type of state technocratic capitalism, the type of capitalist economy in which the boundaries between state and civil society, public and private power tend to disappear.¹²

Furthermore, there is a third reason why I think that technical expertise alone cannot be the identifying characteristic of the technocrats. López Rodó, the most significant technocrat, has consistently and I believe correctly, rejected classification as a technocrat, arguing that he had always been interested in politics and that he was first and foremost a politician. Indeed I cannot see how a person, who almost singlehandedly wanted to transform the Spanish state, can be classified as non-political. Critics are nonetheless correct inasmuch as López Rodó’s political project implied a radical change in the meaning of politics. Actually, politics in the classical sense of the term disappears altogether. The distinction between polis and oikos, between politics and economics, between the public and private realm, is no longer relevant.

It is true that economics and politics have always been historically interdependent and that neither the Aristotelian ideal type of differentiation between oikos and polis, nor the Hegelian ideal type of differentiation between civil society and state have ever been historically realized. But the formal distinction has always been maintained, at least for analytical purposes and, I believe, there was also an actual differentiation in practice. Now the technocratic model of politics wants to confuse both, the analytical and the practical differentiation.

According to the classical model of politics, speech, discourse and communicative interaction are the stuff out of which politics are made. But they are discarded by the technocrats as idle talk, inefficient at best, sheer demagoguery at worst. For the technocrats politics is neither the art of stagecraft in the Machiavellian sense, nor the science of state-building in the Hobbesian sense. Miguel is correct in saying that the technocrat looks down upon the role of the professional politician. The roles of the liberal parliamentarian, the plebiscitarian politician and the professional political ruler, are all rejected. The technocrat blurs the distinction between politics and economics by transforming both. In the technocratic model, private property no longer characterizes economics, nor is the

public realm the sphere of politics. Both are discarded as *passé* nineteenth-century phenomena. Economics and politics are now conceived of as the management of people and the administration of things. The most qualified class of people to direct both activities are neither the private owners nor public leaders, but a new professional class of managers and administrators. Thus the defining characteristic of the technocrats is not their technical expertise, but their belief that they have the right to manage private enterprise and to administer public bureaucracies because they are best qualified to run them efficiently and rationally (cf. Arendt, 1958; Habermas, 1970, 1973).

De Miguel's second main identifying characteristic of the technocrats as a "power elite", in C.W. Mills' sense, also needs further concretization (1974b, p. 145). The existence of such a power elite, moving back and forth between public office and private business, was not a new phenomenon, one which first appeared in Spanish history with the arrival of the technocrats. It could be argued that such a phenomenon was typical of the Franco regime from the outset. Many authors have pointed out the close interconnections, the interchangeability, between public office, military office and the seats on the boards of public and private enterprises, banks and economic concerns of all types (cf. Moya, 1975; Tamames, 1966, 1978; Equipo Mundo, 1970). Moreover, this interdependency of political and economic power has been frequently referred to as one of the basic characteristics of the politics of the Spanish "Restauración" (1876-1923). After all, the theory of the Spanish "oligarchy" goes back to the study of the power elite of this period.¹³ Valentin Almirall, the Catalan nationalist and critic of the politics of the "Restauración", wrote in 1886:

In Spain, the railroad companies hasten to introduce into their boards of directors the most important politicians of all the parties, regardless of whether their party happens to be in power or not. Those people proceed to take care of their interests in the ministry. They always win all the law suits against private individuals. Thus one can well understand why our politicians need not possess skills or special knowledge in order to be directors or board members of railroad and similar companies. It is enough if there is a possibility that they may one day become ministers. (Almirall, 1972, p. 51)

Thus it is not the interchangeability of public and private office as such that differentiates the technocrats as a power elite from similar power elites, but rather the direction of office management.

Politicians during the Restoration were conceded private office prebends not on the basis of their expertise and technical qualification but rather on the basis of their "influence" and their ability to wield power in the service of the interests of private business. This situation, reflecting the dependency of business on state regulations, was naturally exacerbated by the state interventionism of the Francoist autarchy. Personal connections and the right influence were often the only way of overcoming the myriad bureaucratic rules and regulations and, even more importantly, the arbitrary irrationality of state permits and concessions. The state of the autarchy was no less pro-business than the technocratic state, only it was so in a radically different way.

Juan Linz and Amando de Miguel, in their study *Los empresarios ante el poder publico*, have characterized the situation of private business in relation to the autarchic state as one of "privileged impotency". On the one hand, the Francoist state gave private business, especially certain sectors, free hand to exploit the workers, to defraud the fiscal authorities and consumers alike and to enrich themselves almost without limit. On the other hand, de Miguel points out that during the autarchy, Spanish entrepreneurs were also confronted with an administration which was "controlling", "centralist" and "inspective", affording little opportunity to exert positive influence on the promotion of industrial interests (see Linz and Miguel, 1966; and Miguel, 1970, p. 145).

Thus in order to understand the nature of the technocrats as a power group we have to understand the nature of the change in the Spanish administration which they brought about. The technocratic administration was not only a pro-business administration, that is, an administration serving the interests of the existing economic groups. It was an administration which found its purpose in furthering the rationalization of Spanish capitalism as a whole. I think that we are now in the position of identifying the two main characteristics of the technocrats as a power group. First, they were a parvenu power elite. Second, their goal, at least the direction of their activities, was the rationalization of the administration so that it could serve as an instrument of capitalist economic growth.

Their parvenu status is what distinguishes the technocrats from the other established power groups. The typical technocrat, at least at the beginning, rose not through the established political channels, nor through the normal administrative-corporate career lad-

der. For this reason technocrats were, at first, treated as "impostors" and as "opportunists". It is true that the Opus Dei, being identified with the technocrats, soon became one of the established political families of the regime and consequently the technocratic way became an established way of rising to power (see Meliá, 1973, pp. 29-30 and 1974).

I do not think, however, that the first Opus Dei technocrats who rose to high ministerial office were appointed as Opus Dei representatives, as if the Opus Dei would have been a political pressure group whose claims to participation in the spoils system had to be accommodated. The same can be said about their administrative experience prior to their appointment to high office. It is true that most of them belonged to various elite state corps and were therefore "ministrables", i.e., eligible to become ministers. However, the first technocrats did not rise to power through the normal bureaucratic-administrative ladder. It was only later on that what Miguel has called "el funcionariado" became established.¹⁴ That is to say, they were appointed to high office not because of what they were, but because of what they wanted to do. Thus, an analysis of the technocrats, or of the Opus Dei, as merely a power group is insufficient. Most critics have been satisfied with describing the meteoric rise to power of the technocrats, attributing it to the secret machinations of the Opus Dei organization. But the description of the conquest of power of a parvenu elite would not, in itself, help in understanding the Spanish transformation, unless it can be shown that they were not only a parvenu elite but also a historically "new" one. This is also the reason why membership in the Opus Dei should in itself be irrelevant in identifying a high official as a technocrat, unless it can be shown that there was an inner relationship, not just an accidental external one, between the Opus Dei ethic and technocracy.

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Notes

1. I have tried to counter these contentions elsewhere. The first chapter of my dissertation offers a general review of the literature on Spanish modernization as well as an exposition of my general sociological approach to the study of modernization.
2. The second chapter of my dissertation offers a review of the history and nature of the Opus Dei as movement-organization.
3. For a more elaborate treatment of these issues, see the section on "The technocratic group of López Rodó", in Chapter 3 "The Opus Dei groups", and Chapter 6, "The technocratic model of development", in Casanova, 1982.
4. Amadeo de Fuenmayor would later be ordained priest, offering spiritual as well as legal guidance to his clients.
5. López Rodó played a significant role in the drafting of the most important Bills of the regime after 1956.
6. See statements by López Rodó, pp. 322-323 in: S. Paniker, *Conversaciones en Madrid*, Barcelona, Kairos, 1969.
7. The term "Estado social de derecho" derives from the German concepts "Rechtsstaat" and "Sozialstaat". It could be translated as "modern rational welfare state".
8. I take this to be the essence of the Frankfurt School critique of Max Weber's conception of modern instrumental rationality and of the liberal critiques of Weber's conception of democracy.
9. On López Rodó's views see his *Política y desarrollo* and *Nuevo horizonte del desarrollo*.
10. On the Spanish administration, see Medhurst, 1973.
11. In the Spanish Cortes Carrero Blanco characterized himself as being "A man totally identified with the political work of the Caudillo... My loyalty to his person and his work is total, clear and pure without any nuance of conditionality, nor any mark of mental reservation." (Quoted from Miguel, 1975, p. 218.)
12. On modern capitalism in general and the French case, see Shonfield, 1965. On French technocracy, see Crozier, 1964 and Meynaud, 1969. On socialist technocracy, see Mallet, 1970; Ludz, 1975; Konrad and Szelenyi, 1979; Plyusch, 1980.
13. Cf. Mateo del Peral, 1974; Costa, 1975; Tuñón de Lara, 1975; Roldán and García Delgado, 1973.
14. For the meaning of "ministrable" see Miguel, 1970. "Funcionariado" could be translated as "rule by civil servants". See Miguel, 1974a.

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 Roberto Schwarz

The form of the novel on the periphery of capitalism

Machado de Assis (1839-1908) was not the first Brazilian novelist, but he certainly was the first great one. What were the historical conditions, literary and non-literary, at work in his achievement? How did they lead him out of a provincial tradition, tangibly derivative, to the seriousness of great writing? I hope to persuade you that the loose form of his novels is part of a vigorous composition which formalizes and reveals decisive dynamisms of Brazilian society. Literary quality depends upon contemporary history, although, of course, in unexpected ways.

Let me begin with a passage from the *Posthumous memoirs of Braz Cubas*, a novel he published in 1880. Its comedy, as you will notice, depends upon an unusual arrangement of terms, an arrangement that differs from the one a European — or a reader of European novels — would expect. After bringing out this difference, I shall consider it from two perspectives: first, in its relation to an original artistic pattern, and second, in its relation to the peculiar form of Brazilian society. In sum, I shall offer you an example of the dialectics of literary form and social process.

To get the passage right, keep in mind that the title is meant to provoke us, since it is not possible to write memoirs posthumously;¹ that the dedication, in the form of a tombstone, to the worms in the ground is an open act of disrespect; that in the prologue, the author

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