

The Francoist press during the first phase of the Spanish Transition (1975-1977). The cases of *Arriba*, *Pueblo* and *El Alcázar*¹

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Received: 28-09-15

Accepted: 7-10-16

Abstract

During the Spanish Transition, the press took on its role as political actor within the democratizing process. Also did the official press (*Arriba* and *Pueblo*), by opposing the pro-Francoism behaviour expected. Thus, both of them, owned by the National Movement and assimilated as propaganda organs during the dictatorship, embraced different ideologies—even opposite to the Government—and they finally abandoned their propaganda function. Opposite to that trend, the pro-Francoist press (*El Alcázar*) make the continuity of the Francoist system its main demand within the studied period, even radicalising its position from Franco's death onwards.

Keywords: Communication History; Francoist press; Movement press; *Arriba* newspaper; *Pueblo* newspaper; *El Alcázar* newspaper; Spanish Transition.

Resumen

Durante la transición española, la prensa asumió su función de agente político en el proceso democratizador. También lo hizo la prensa oficial a pesar del proceder propagandístico que se le presupone. Así, los diarios *Arriba* y *Pueblo*, ambos de titularidad estatal y asimilados como órganos de propaganda por el régimen franquista durante la dictadura, incorporaron diferentes ideologías, en ocasiones contrarias al Gobierno, y llegaron a abandonar su función propagandística. Sin embargo, la prensa afín (*El Alcázar*) no abandonó dicho rol, sino que hizo de su exigencia del continuismo del régimen su seña de identidad durante este período, radicalizando sus posturas desde la propia muerte de Franco.

Palabras clave: historia de la comunicación; prensa franquista; prensa del Movimiento; diario *Arriba*; diario *Pueblo*; diario *El Alcázar*; transición española

¹ This research present part of the results of the research project: «El papel de la prensa diaria en la transición democrática. Cobertura informativa y comportamiento político de diarios y periodistas», reference CSO 2012-36774, funded by the R&D National Plan I+D 2012-2015, led by professor Guillaumet i Lloveras (Universitat Pompeu Fabra of Barcelona, España).

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1. Introduction

This research analyses the political behaviour of the Francoist press between Franco's death, November 1975, and the general elections, June 1977. We have focused our study on crucial moments within this period, highlighting the inauguration of Juan Carlos I as King of Spain, the Government of Carlos Arias Navarro and its resignation, followed by the inauguration of Adolfo Suarez as president of the Government who, within a highly controversial political situation, called for the first general elections since the Second Republic. To these elections, even the Communist Party (PCE) run; after the elections, in June 1977, the first democratic government started in Spain.

This period has been studied through the analysis of the newspapers *Arriba*, owned by Falange Española until 1977, when it became part of the State Owned Media (MCSE in Spanish); *Pueblo*, property of the Vertical Trade Union until June 1978, when it was included in the MCSE; and *El Alcázar*, owned by the Ex-Fighters from the Civil War since 1969, and which radicalised its position during the study period (Rodríguez Jiménez, 1994). Therefore, our study object consists of three official dailies totally different amongst them.

Within the last 30 years, several authors (Montabes Pereira, 1989, Alférez, 1986, etc.) have highlighted that the Francoist press (both official and pro-Francoist) kept their discourse pro-regime even after Franco's death. However, recent studies have showed that the official press abandoned, under some circumstances and in punctual moments, its propaganda function, withdrawing its support to the Government and proposing PSOE as a feasible political alternative (Martínez Fábregas, Jezabel, 2014). In line with these results, in this article we aim at evaluating the political behaviour the official newspapers *Arriba* and *Pueblo* and the pro-regime *El Alcázar* during the first phase of the transition.

To do that, we assume the following hypotheses:

- The official press and pro-regime embraced different discourses and opinions concerning the power within the first phase of the Spanish Transition.
- Both the official and the pro-Francoist press coincided in criticising the governmental management carried out by Arias Navarro and Suarez.
- The three tabloids expanded their opinion diversity, thus gaining an own identity —sometimes critical or highly critical against the Government— within these two years (1975-1977).

2. Method

To study these newspapers at structural and ideological level, we have applied the biographical analysis proposed by Casasus (1985). To adapt it to our research, we have reworked the template proposed by Marcel Mauri in his PhD Thesis (2010). Thus, the final analysis grid consists of two parts: a) register and administrative data, which consists of the analysis of the structural evaluation of these newspapers; b) formal and content data, which compiles the quantitative and qualitative data.

Our study period consists of two big periods (Arias Navarro's and Suarez's governments), in which we also focused on the following sub periods:

Table 1: Moments selected for this study.

Government	Historic moments
Arias' Government (1975-1976)	Franco's Death (20/11/1975)
	Inauguration of the Monarchy (23/11/1975)
	General Strike (01/03/1976)
	Deaths in Vitoria (03/03/1976)
	Arias Navarro's resignation (02/07/1976)
	Inauguration of Suarez as president of the government (05/07/1976)
Suarez's Government (1976-1977)	Referendum for the Law for the political reform (15/12/1976)
	Black Week/ Deaths in Atocha (24/01/1977)
	End of the National Movement (01/04/1977)
	Legalisation of the Communist Party (10/04/1977)
	Pita da Veiga's resignation (11/04/1977)
	Call for general elections (12/04/1977)
	General elections (15/06/1977)

Source: Own elaboration from the data provided by Martínez Fabregas, Jezabel y Romero Domínguez, Lorena Rosalia. (2014).

To analyse the political behaviour of the selected newspapers, we have applied the content analysis following the model proposed by Krippendorff (1982). This allows us to make valid and reliable inferences according to the context in which the texts were produced. To deepen even more, we have opted for the analysis of the explicit content as, according to Laundry (1991), it refers to what is literally written or said, thus avoiding subjective interpretation.

As we aimed at showing the presence of different ideological points of view within these tabloids, we have opted for applying the content analysis to editorials, articles and columns, as they are the genres allowing highest diversity of opinion, according to Lopez Hidalgo (2012). For Martínez Albertos (1992),

columns and articles are spaces within the newspaper reserved for external highly reputed contributors (without contractual relationship with the media, as stated by Pineda, 2006), that are invited to interpret and choose freely the topic they will analyse under the only condition that they sign their text. Being external staff, they are contributors trusted by the editorial committee of the media that bring an expert point of view to the newspaper, thus enriching its pages by providing them with opinion pluralism (Núñez Ladeveze, 1995).

Based on the former, Martínez Fabregas (2014), following what stated by Meneses (2008) and Castro Torres (2010), argues that the comparison amongst these three kinds of text may reveal different opinions stated by each of the authors even within the same newspaper; as the editorial refers to the interests of the media itself, whereas the articles and columns have independence at presenting their opinions (Lopez Hidalgo, 2012). Precisely, it is due to this opinion pluralism that articles and columns are the guarantors of the opinion diversity (Borrat, 1989, Gómez Calderon, 2004 and Villalobos, 2010).

Bearing that in mind and after compiling the sample, we have analysed 385 texts published in the three selected newspapers between 1975 and 1977. These are, therefore, our units analysis, which are segments of content characterised for its classification within categories (Berelson, 1952). To classify them, we have opted for the construction of simple categories. For Berelson, category is a generic concept in which we can classify the units analysis. Considering our hypotheses and goals, we have focused on the kind of direction (aiming at proving an hypothesis) proposed by Krippendorff (1989). Considering that we have applied content analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, these are the categories and the sub-categories we have selected:

Table 2. Categories (quantitative content) and sub categories (qualitative content) applied to the sample.

Category (Quantitative Content Analysis)	Register Code	Subcategory (Qualitative Content Analysis)
Supporting behaviour	(+)	Praising the governmental management
		Asking for citizens' support to the government
Neutral behaviour	(0)	Ignoring the governmental management
		Not evaluation of the governmental management
Critical behaviour	(-)	Criticism against the governmental management
		Encouraging the citizens to withdraw their support to the government

Source: Martínez Fabregas, Jezabel (2015): «De pro Franquista a anti Gobierno. La evolución de *Sur* con respecto a la política nacional durante la transición española (1975-1978)», *Política y Sociedad*, Vol 53, No 2 (2016): Crisis, precariedad e inseguridad, pp. 485-507.

The categories selected for the quantitative content analysis have allowed us to confirm whether there is an homogeneous or an heterogeneous discourse about the political management of the country within each of the newspapers analysed, as expected in a propaganda chain of media (Pineda, 2006, Postoutenko, 2010). The qualitative content analysis, however, has enabled us to define the different discourses about the governmental management, if they are, thus showing the presence of ideological pluralism within the studied newspapers.

Until now, historians have agreed on that the official press kept on supporting the Franco's regime (Alferez, 1986, Montabes Pereira, 1989 y Redero y Garcia, 1991- 1992). Therefore, the presence of contradictory discourses about the central administration within the analysed newspapers would constitute opinion pluralism, as assumed by the hypotheses of this study.

3. Results

In the cases of *Arriba* and *Pueblo*, as they were propaganda organs serving the Francoist regime and were linked to the National Movement and the Vertical Trade Union, during the dictatorship they were the speaker of the Francoism. *El Alcázar*, on its side, stopped being a commercial afternoon newspaper in 1969—although keeping the catholic and Opus Dei scope—to become the vehicle of the Francoist leaders', military' and ex-fighters' opinion who, after Franco's death, aimed at protecting the political project personalised in the Head of State (the King Juan Carlos I, by then). Thus, it presented itself as a «national newspaper (ultra-nationalist), catholic, anti-Marxist and patriotic». From then onwards, the tabloid highlighted the extreme right-wing line even though its incomes for sales were decreasing considerably. Antonio Gibello succeeded Luis del Alamo as director in 1971, moment in which the newspaper rolling was slowly increasing.

Therefore, the three national scope newspapers analysed were very wide-disseminated, although their presence was being reduced considerably as the democratic process went ahead, as the reader can check in the following table:

Table 3. Diffusion of the newspapers *Arriba*, *Pueblo* and *El Alcázar*.

Period established by the Diffusion Justification Office OJD	Annual diffusion average of <i>El Alcázar</i>	Annual diffusion average of <i>Arriba</i>	Annual diffusion average of <i>Pueblo</i>
1975-76	14.832*	40.000	219.687
1976-77	51.007	26.750	200.000
1977-78	69.505	20.000	169.000

Source: Own elaboration following the data provided by Montabes Pereira (1989) and the Diffusion Justification Office (DJO).

*Annual diffusion average between July 1974 and June 1975. The DJO applied yearly natural measures rules from 1982 onwards.

Thus, the tabloid with highest diffusion during our study period was the syndicalist *Pueblo*, followed by *El Alcázar* from 1976 and, very far in distance by *Arriba*. We should not forget that the latter had been the flagship for the National Movement press, the propaganda organ created by the Francoism to auto-legitimize itself. However, in the study period this trend is inverted. While *Arriba* started to disappear, and *Pueblo* lost public presence, *El Alcázar* went on growing until 1982, when its annual diffusion average reached the 95,121 newspapers rolled per day, according to the DJO. This figure is not far away from the two main tabloids edited in the capital (Madrid): *ABC* (133,945) and *Ya* (109,530). In that moment, *Pueblo* rolled 40,000 newspapers per day.

3.1. Ideological diversity in the directive teams of the newspapers

The big picture of each of the newspapers analysed already tells us the first differences among them. *Arriba* and *Pueblo* counted on certain ideological pluralism inside the editorial organ, which allowed them to disseminate different opinions. *El Alcázar*, on its side, was ruled by different forces from the extreme right-wing, thus relating itself to several political groups, mainly traditional and Phalanx. Therefore, *El Alcázar* published public calls, news and articles signed by their directives and founders, as well as contributions by high level military staff (who sign them with a pseudonym) and representatives from the Phalanx surrounding the Ex-Fighters Brotherhood, which logo is in the header of the tabloid. The same reason accounts for the fact that these groups' representatives also published highly politically intense proclamations, calls, tributes and homages, editorialised news, and exhortations in the main pages.

On the contrary, people with different ideologies —socialists, as Jose Antonio Gurriaran, members from Phalanx,² as Pedro Rodríguez, deputy director,³ and Juan Blanco, chief editor between 1974 and 1979⁴ or pro-UCD, as Fernando Onega, editorialist at the national Movement's press chain and deputy director of the newspaper between 1976 and 1979,⁵ co-lived within the directive team in *Arriba*. Therefore, ideological pluralism was already present within the editorial organ.

In *Pueblo*, the ideological pluralism went even further. Thus, pro trade union as José M. Pérez de Castro, Chief of Supplements section between 1975 and 1977 and deputy director between 1978 and 1981,⁶ socialists as José Ramón Zabala,

² Source: www.psoe.es/ambito/fuencarral/docs/index.do?action=Print&id=426696 (Accessed on January 14th 2013)

³ Source: www.psoe.es/ambito/fuencarral/docs/index.do?action=Print&id=426696 (Accessed on January 14th 2013).

⁴ Source: www.infonacional.com/72012/02/ha-fallecido-el-periodista-y-escritor.html. (Accessed on January 14th 2013). It is a website made by Phalanx supporters.

⁵ He was head of communications during the Presidency of Adolfo Suárez.

⁶ According to *El País*, 29/01/1978: «En 'Pueblo' empataron los dos grandes», Manuel Pérez de Castro supported the trade Union UGT.

documentation, 1975-1978,⁷ pro-UCD as Manuel Cruz, editor in chief for the External Affairs section between 1974 and 1979 and deputy director since 1980,⁸ priests as Antonio Aradilla 'Erasmus', editor in chief between 1968 and 1977, and communists as Javier Martínez Reverte. Bearing the in mind, we could already state that due to the ideological pluralism existing inside the editorial team, the opinion pluralism may have existed in the newspaper's pages.

3.2. Changes during the transition

Between 1975 and 1977, *Arriba* experienced remarkable changes in its structure. In March 1976, the by then director since 1975, Cristobal Paez, left his position, which was taken on by Alejandro Armesto, who run the newspaper until it disappeared in 1979. In April 1977, due to the dissolution of the National Movement, the newspaper withdrew the yoke and the arrows that had been in the header during the dictatorship, which was the starting point of an ideological evolution that took it to withdraw the support to the government. In fact, from 1977 onwards we observe a considerable increase in the opinion pluralism.

Pueblo, on its side, experienced up to four director changes: the Falanx, Emilio Romero held the position until Franco's death, becoming then National Delegate for the Movement Press. In 1976, up to three people held the director's position: Luis Angel de la Viuda (from February to March 1976), Juan Fernandez Figueroa (from March to July 1976), and José Ramón Alonso (from July 1976 to December 1978). The landing of the latter to the newspaper coincided with the resignation of Arias Navarro and the arrival of Adolfo Suarez to the Government's Presidency. Although he kept the style and the layout of the tabloid, truth is that, from July 1976 onwards, the critical voices against the power started to arise in the opinion pages, even in the editorials.

Finally, a transcendental change happened in *El Alcázar* in July 1977, when Antonio Gibello gave the floor to Antonio Izquierdo. Apart from the renovation of the style and a re-structuration of the sections in order to modernise the layout of the newspaper, they carried out a renewal of the political ideas presented in the tabloid too. From then onwards, the constant references to the Civil War understood as the «Crusade for the National Freedom» as well as other expressions remarkably military will be the stars in national holidays in which the country commemorates an ephemeris.

3.3. The editorial identity of Arriba, Pueblo and El Alcázar

The following table summarises the behaviour of the three analysed newspapers about the political situation between 1975 and 1977:

⁷ Member of the UGT's executive and related to PSOE, according to *El País*, 17/03/2005: «José Ramón Zabala, sociólogo y miembro de la ejecutiva de UGT de Navarra».

⁸ According to *El País*, 23/04/1983: Reflexiones y expectativas ante el congreso de las Juventudes de UCD.

Table 4. Summary of the editorial behaviour of the three studied newspapers. Source: own elaboration.

TOPIC		BEHAVIOUR		
		<i>Arriba</i>	<i>Pueblo</i>	<i>El Alcázar</i>
Franco and Francoism		Franco led Spain to the tenth world power country, thus providing it with 38 years of peace and national reconciliation.		
The King of Spain		The King will keep Franco's work		
		Highlights the approaching between the King and the political opposition		Avoids references to the approach between the King and the left-wing parties
President Arias and his Government	Arias' confirmation	Ignores it		Celebrate his ratification
	Governmental management	Criticise its immobilise		Criticises its approach to the left wing opposition
	Arias' resignation	Applauds the spirit he showed on the 12 th February but criticises his immobilise		Criticises his approach to capitalism
Suarez President and his Government	Suarez's Inauguration	Applauds Suarez's arrival		
		Icon for a new generation	Accuses Suarez for breaching the system	Suarez considered as continuity of the Francoism
	Amnesty	Overcoming the «winners and defeated» from the Civil War		Considered as a mistake
	Political reform and referendum	A step forward towards democracy		
		Supports the Government	Accuses the Government of being residual from the Unique Party	Considers it as an attack to the Francoist organic democracy
	Political parties	Needed to go forward in the democracy		Its legalisation means a step backward in the organic democracy
	Trade Unions	No representation	Needed in the political regime	They aimed at revolution
	Communist Party	Consider its legalisation adequate and needed		
		Criticise their Marxist character	Competing with the centre in the general elections	The common enemy of the Francoism will never be considered a Spanish Party
	Army	Highlights the calm of the Army during the transition		Encourages the Army to keep the organic democracy
	Enforcement law agencies	The Government uses the Enforcement Law Agencies to disguise its irresponsibility		Casualties of the Marxist attacks without the governmental protection
	Legislative elections	Achievement of democracy		
		Supports the candidacy of UCD	Encourages the abstention as punishment for the governmental irresponsibility	The victory of PSOE-PCE means the defeating of the national forces
Criticises the control of the UCD over the drafting of the Constitution		Criticises the religious principles within the text		

The three analysed newspapers agreed on that Franco brought economic growth to the country, thus providing it with 38 years of peace, as well as reconciled the nation after the Civil War. Franco, therefore, foresaw that continuity in the political system that he founded to be continued after his death, and this was the rationale for appointing Juan Carlos I as king. Therefore, the monarch is aligned with the political regime coming from the Francoism, something not all of the studied newspapers agreed on.

In the same line, the three newspapers highlighted the continuity that the the King has as Head of the Armed Forces linked to the oath that he made, both when he was appointed as successor of Franco in 1974 and when he was inaugurated as King in November 1975. However, whereas *Arriba* and *Pueblo* applauded the approach between the monarch and the left-wing opposition, *El Alcázar* tried to hide this fact.

3.3.1. Breaching against continuity in the press during Arias' Government (1975-76)

After the inauguration of Juan Carlos I as King of Spain, Arias Navarro was confirmed as president of the Government. This was totally eclipsed by the spectacle that *Arriba* and *Pueblo* created around the monarch and the progress towards democracy that this entailed. Counterpartying that, *El Alcázar* considered Arias' confirmation in his position as prudential against the rumours spread by some writers that insinuated the necessity of a change. The continuity provided a «serenity element to go on with the instituted system».

Neither during his government, even though he was really welcome, was he free of opinions against his management in the official press. Thus, Fernando Ónega⁹ considered him guilty of what had happened in Vitoria in March 1976 during the general strike, and accused Arias' Government to use the Law Enforcement Agencies to defend themselves from the population for not having fulfilled their duties. Besides, they accused him of lack of authority and political immobilise in his management.

On her side, Pilar Narvion, in *Pueblo*, criticised those who stated that the strikes were instigated by the left-wing, highlighting that the Arias' government, and the right-wing was being more benefited from the demonstrations and the violence focused on the Basque Country than the left-wing, as the population moves towards conservatism when their moderation universe is under risk.¹⁰ In the moment of his resignation at the Government and within the first crisis of the Monarchy's Government, Raul del Pozo criticised him in *Pueblo* calling for that the next government was selected by sovereignty, thus abandoning the traditional appointment procedure.¹¹ Again *Arriba* was in favour of the Arias' government,

⁹ *Arriba*, 04/03/1976, pp. 1 y 2. Fernando Ónega: *El Péndulo*.

¹⁰ *Pueblo*, 06/03/1976, p. 5. Pilar Narvi3n: La democracia en autob3s.

¹¹ *Pueblo*, 03/07/1976, p. 2. Ra3l del Pozo: *El pa3s es un rumor*.

highlighting his work in the search for democracy, thanking his management,¹² and highlighting the the reformist spirit of the 12th February.¹³

And, whereas the official press considered Arias' Government as continuant of the Francoist regime, *El Alcázar* considered his resignation as an internal conspiracy: «due to the political ineptitude and chaos triggered by some political and economic pressure groups that have been leading the president to his end over the last two years».¹⁴ This is therefore a fight among political families.

3.3.2. *New behaviours in the press after the inauguration of Suarez as president of the government (July 1976)*

As it happened during the Arias' Government, the appointment of Suarez triggered different behaviours in *Arriba* and *Pueblo*. The official newspaper applauded Suarez's arrival to the Government,¹⁵ considering him as a reinforcement for the new political generation —that have not lived the Civil War,¹⁶ which would guarantee the overcoming of the «winners against the defeated»¹⁷ coinciding in this point with *El Alcázar*—.¹⁸ In *Pueblo*, Suarez was harshly welcome by Manuel Funes Robert, who accused him —as well as the King— of breaching the Francoist regime.¹⁹

Arriba and *Pueblo* reacted in favour of the first Amnesty (July 1976), considering it as a step forward to take distance from the «winners and defeated». However, *El Alcázar* considered it as an error, even if it was soft and limited, and was always encouraging to use the violence against the advent democracy. The newspaper had started by then to take on its position against the government.

The approach between the government and the left-wing opposition joined to the materialization of the process for the political reform triggered harsh opinions in the official press, in which winners and defeated co-lived. Thus, *Pueblo* focused on the social and economic problems that the country was suffering by then, whereas *Arriba* thanked and supported Suarez's government, not without some criticism. An example of this behaviour was P.R. who stated that the government was forcing the Spanish population to accept a democratic system when the Spaniards did not want it.²⁰

For *El Alcázar*, however, the political reform was a distraction manoeuvre, trying to take the economic, social and political problems out of the spotlight,

¹² *Arriba*, 02/07/1976, p. 7: *En la hora de un relevo*

¹³ *Arriba*, 03/07/1976, p. 7. *Nuestra esperanza*.

¹⁴ *El Alcázar*, 03/07/1976, p. 1. Antonio Gibello: «Lectiobrevis».

¹⁵ *Arriba*, 07/07/1976, p. 7. *Hora de realidades*.

¹⁶ *Arriba*, 04/07/1976, p. 7. *Un presidente para la paz civil*.

¹⁷ *Arriba*, 08/07/1976, p. 7. *Un Gobierno gestor*.

¹⁸ *El Alcázar*, 06/07/1976, p. 2 Antonio Gibello: «El primero de la Corona».

¹⁹ *Pueblo*, 06/07/1976, p. 2. Manuel Funes Robert: *Tribuna Libre*. Crisis de Gobierno y crisis económica.

²⁰ *Arriba*, 14/12/1976, p. 2. P.R.: *Vino tinto: Nombres propios*.

and also a breaching in the legitimacy of the Francoist model instituted in April 1939. For the newspaper, the government was backed up by traitors and rebels, that killed themselves to pass the political reform project in the Parliament. Even though it proposed to vote no in the future referendum in which the reform would be approved, its behaviour was soft compared to that taken on during the Constitution. «Liberal democracy has been born again inside the Spanish Parliament. God bless Spain!».²¹

Whereas *Arriba* and *Pueblo* considered the legalisation of the political parties as something highly needed for the democracy, for *El Alcázar*, they were not only unnecessary but also a risk for the organic democracy created by Franco, through which the citizenship participation was organised through the family, the trade unions and the municipalities. Democracy, understood at European level, is bourgeois and capitalist, a system totally unreliable for the newspaper. Therefore, the political ideas of the newspaper are closed to the classical Falanx.

In this sense, we can state that whereas the official newspapers were getting closer to the left-wing opposition, the pro Francoist press was approaching the extreme right-wing opposition, as it considered the legalisation of the political parties as the start point for a new revolution. It is another way of political opposition as the tabloid promoted the use of military violence to reinstitute the Francoist political regime and to recuperate the social order (Rodríguez Jiménez, 2012).

3.3.3. The legalisation of PCE (April 1977)

The Communist Party was the common enemy of the Francoism. Its legalisation was, however, a realistic step forward to democracy for the official press,²² (23), although they advised not to vote for it in the elections. However, in *El Alcázar*, the behaviour was clear: the PCE was the «black beast» for the newspaper during the transition. That party was considered as the responsible for the genocide occurred in the Civil War, that had come back from the exile to destabilise the country once Franco had died trying to destroy the country saved by the National Movement again.

For *El Alcazar*, most of the existing left-wing political parties are based on Marxism, anti-Christianity and revolutionary; this is, atheists and violent. Even if they try to take distance from the Communism, embracing the euro communism—as Felipe Gonzalez did in PSOE—, for *El Alcazar* what they were trying to do was joining forces to take revenge on the Francoism.

Up to some extent, *El Alcázar* coincided with the supporters of the Falanx present in the official press, when it harshly criticised that the PCE was inside the official press trying to the destroy the system from inside. And he was right, as the left-wing ideologies were leading the opinions spread in its pages (*Arriba y Pueblo*).

²¹ *El Alcázar*. 20/10/1976, p. 1: «Por la senda constitucional».

²² *Arriba*, 10/04/1977, p. 5: **Una decisión realista*.

Concerning the Army, different discourses also aroused. *Arriba* highlighted the neutral behaviour of the army during the legalisation of the PCE,²³ (whereas *Pueblo* focused on the Marine Ministry, Pita da Veiga, to whom they thanked that the legalisation of the PCE did not end up in another civil war.²⁴

Nevertheless, *El Alcázar*, far away from trying to keep the calm, opted for encouraging the Army to bring back the regime to the country through a military intervention which, considering the legal framework existing in the country at that moment, was not only legal but possible.²⁵

3.3.4. *The general elections (June 1977)*

After Pita da Veiga's resignation, the call for general elections arrived, to which all the political parties previously registered and regularised run, thanks to the law for the political reform, passed in the referendum held on December 15 1976.

However, neither during the first general elections held after the dictatorship, the government was free from criticism in the official and the pro-Francoist press. Thus, in *Pueblo*, Eduardo G. Rico harshly accused the centre-right option for trying to keep the Francoism by keeping politicians that had served Franco during the dictatorship; Alvarez de Miranda, for instance²⁶ However, *Arriba* supported the candidacy of UCD²⁷ for the elections in 1977;²⁸ on the contrary, Lavern encouraged to vote the conservatives and criticised UCD for having legalised the PCE, highlighting that «even if the government was the same after the elections, at least the Parliament will then be elected by sovereignty».²⁹ The editorial line, on its side, positioned in favour of the UCD, clearly betting for the moderation endorsed by the King Juan Carlos I,³⁰ and also calling for a conciliating spirit between the ideological and political extremes³¹ existing in the country.

In *El Alcazar*, however, the discourse was unanimous. With the elections, the worst expectations were confirmed. Antonio Izquierdo said: «We have lost the north: We can already talk about another Spain, neither better nor worse, but different».³² It is not UCD that has won the elections but the Marxist political par-

²³ *Arriba*, 14/04/1977, p. 7: *Un gran ejemplo.

²⁴ *Pueblo*, 13/04/1977, p. 3, Editorial: Con cabeza serena.

²⁵ *El Alcázar*, 10/04/1976, p. 2: «Pueden aceptar las Fuerzas Armadas un gobierno social-comunista». The text was not signed, but it is not presented as an editorial either, and it was written before the legalisation of the PCE, even though it was published the day after.

²⁶ *Pueblo*, 11/04/1977, p. 9. Eduardo G. Rico: No es la izquierda sino el centro.

²⁷ *Arriba*, 08/06/1977, p. 7. José Cavero: *Cambiar será inevitable y Arriba*, 15/06/1977, p. 5. Salcedo, Antonio (Columna *La Situación*):

²⁸ *Arriba*, 07/06/1977, p. 7. Félix Ortega: *El Candidato Suárez*.

²⁹ *Arriba*, 14/06/1977, p. 12. Lavern (Columna *Dicho y oído*):

³⁰ *Arriba*, 08/06/1977, p. 7: *Ponderar la moderación y *Arriba*, 11/06/1977, p. 7: *Se acertó en lo principal.

³¹ *Arriba*, 15/06/1977, p. 7: *El espíritu del 15 de junio

³² *El Alcázar*, 16/06/1977, p. 1: «No hay sorpresa».

ties, as they have more votes than the others. The victory of PSOE-PCE means the end of a trajectory.³³ However, as the newspaper had a new director he did not want to exceed in the interpretation: «wanted or not, we are obliged to walk it together».

Thus, whereas in *Arriba* and *Pueblo* different behaviours co-lived (from supporting and thanking the government for bringing the democracy to the country, to criticising it for its constant approach to the right-wing political parties), in *El Alcazar* they criticised the government for approaching the right-wing political parties, thus allowing the arrival of Marxism to Spain through the legalisation the PCE.

In terrorism, *El Alcazar* includes both attacks and violent acts happened in demonstrations. The only protection that the Spaniards have, according to the newspaper are the Law Enforcement Agencies, who have been abandoned by the Government. The tabloid counted once and again the military staff casualties, and criticised that they had been forgotten by both government and population. The Army is criticised, attacked by the democratic opposition that does not recognise their efforts.³⁴ However, for *Arriba* and *Pueblo*, as they have different ideologies in their editorial team, the army and the police are just the weapon-arm of the power, so they move from criticising them (most progressive writers) to praise their work (conservative writers).

For the official newspapers, the terrorism is a social problem that was attacking the Spanish democracy, even before Franco's death. It is a constant topic in the opinion texts published by both newspapers, that from their editorials considered it as an obstacle for the development of democracy,³⁵ considering them as the killers of democracy³⁶ and encouraging the government not to cease in its fight against terrorism. They also encouraged the Government by saying that neither Franco could stop the terrorism, that ended with Carrero Blanco's life.

For *El Alcazar*, the terrorism is not an aisled fact, but something that started to gain power with the murder of Carrero Blanco, vice president of Spain. For the newspaper, the terrorism is a conspiracy orchestrated by external forces coming from Marxist countries that try to destroy the Spanish organic democracy. For them, therefore, both the terrorist attacks by GRAPO and ETA are led by the International Marxism.

When a terrorist attack was perpetrated by the extreme right-wing, *Arriba* and *Pueblo* attacked the personalities closer to the Francoism inside the Government. Thus, they called for taking actions to guarantee the peace in Spain, making Suarez's government responsible for that. At the same time, they called for speeding the democratising process to take Spain to democracy thus finishing with the problem of terrorism.³⁷

³³ *El Alcázar*, 17/06/1977 , p. 1: «Los vencedores».

³⁴ *El Alcázar*, 05/11/1976 , p. 2: «La policía».

³⁵ *Arriba*, 16/12/1976, p. 2. Fernando Ónega: *El El Alcázar*, 17/06/1977 , p. 1: «Los vencedores».

³⁶ *El Alcázar*, 05/11/1976 , p. 2: «La policía».

³⁷ *Arriba*, 16/12/1976, p. 2. Fernando Ónega: *El Péndulo*; *Arriba*, 14/12/1976, pp. 5 y 7. *Las razones del <<SÍ>> y Arriba*, 16/12/1976, p. 2. Fernando Ónega: *El Péndulo*.

Besides, due to their approach to the left-wing forces, these newspapers took advantage of the terrorist attacks to criticise the supporters of the Francoism, accusing them of trying to kill the new-born democracy, thus asking the government for taking distance from the conservative forces and to overcome the Francoism.³⁸

In *El Alcázar*, they opted for reducing the visibility of the terrorist attacks perpetrated by the right-wing forces, accusing the progressive newspapers of trying to blur their pureness. When other attacks, as the Murders in Atocha (Black week)—perpetrated by extreme right-wing forces happened—they may as well to accept the authorship and then opted for condemning the attacks, while reminding that terrorists are just murderers and that they do not have ideology. They used to say: «We condemn the murder but much more those who are trying to destabilise the country by killing innocent people to awake the Marxist forces to start a revolution. These latter do not ask for amnesty, they ask for Communism, dissolution of the Law Enforcement Agencies and the instauration of the Republic».³⁹

The interest of the newspaper is, therefore, criminalising the left-wing forces. On the contrary, *Arriba* and *Pueblo* used the demonstrations by the right-wing forces to justify their demand to take the people still linked to the Francoism out of the government.

On the other hand, the threats occurred again and again, and for *El Alcázar*, Spain was being destroyed. When the summer is getting closer, things were even worse, as the Catalan crisis started too. This separatist process triggered satiety in Suarez's government and the Army. The Catalan culture, according to the newspaper, was dominated by the separatism, that links directly to the Civil War. When Suarez and Tarradellas agreed on the concession of the Generalitat, *El Alcazar* said: «Spain is not one anymore»⁴⁰ and added «this is an attack to sovereignty».⁴¹ The disagreement is frontal because it «sets the basis for breaching Spain, meaning an unwished step backwards», in reference to the Civil War. At the end of 1977, out of the study period, the newspaper started to ask for Suarez's resignation calling him totalitarian. They made him responsible for the terrorist attacks and the economic crisis because he was secretly conspiring with Santiago Carrillo, leader of the Communist Party,⁴² and at the end of the year, *El Alcazar* said: «From that July 18th 1939, only the Monarchy remains».⁴³

Once the results presented, we explain the conclusions we reached to in this study.

³⁸ *Pueblo*, 08/12/1976, p. 9. José Bugada, artículo de opinión: Los turiferarios de la democracia.

³⁹ *Arriba*, 28/01/1977, p. 7. **La situación*.

⁴⁰ *Pueblo*, 27/01/1977, p. 9. Carlos Briones: Hacer lo que se deba.

⁴¹ *El Alcázar*, 25/01/1977, p. 1: «Situación prerevolucionaria.»

⁴² «Dos demócratas deciden sobre 400 años de historia por el resto de los españoles» *El Alcázar*, 29 de septiembre de 1977, p. 1.

⁴³ *El Alcázar*, 30 de septiembre de 1977, p. 1 «Pacto Suárez-Carrillo.»

4. Conclusions

Whereas the official press had different discourses from praising the Government for its approach to the most democratic positions to criticising it for their approach to the Francoist forces, behaviour that reflects the ideological pluralism existing inside the editorial team, the pro-Francoist newspaper kept a homogeneous discourse: the need for going on supporting the Francoist regime.

Thus, we can state that, during the transition, the official press progressively abandoned its propaganda function for which it was created during the dictatorship, whereas the pro-Francoist press started to criticise the government, asking for the government to approach the right-wing —Phalanx, ultra-nationalist and militarist.

Therefore, the official and the pro-Francoist press started to harshly criticise the Government: the first one due to being close to the right-wing, as they were keeping people from the former regime in the government; the second one due to the constant approaches to the left opposition.

El Alcázar promoted a new political regime based on the maintenance of the «Francoist organic democracy», around which they hope to gather the «national forces» to keep the Francoism. As the most conservative political party and closed project, the birth Alianza Popular, from Manuel Fraga, took distance from that position, which triggered that the newspaper criticised it too. This situation resulted in the institutional auto-exclusion of the newspaper after the first elections, when only the deputy from Fuerza Nueva, Blas Piñar, empathised with the ideas of *El Alcázar*. Far away from considering it as a defeat, the newspaper insisted in keeping its positions that brought them more sales and incomes. Thus, at the end of the study period, the position of the newspaper is frankly and radically opposed to Adolfo Suarez, to whom they constantly invited to resign from his position.

On the other hand, *Arriba* and *Pueblo* evolved from the constant support to the government to a harsh criticism, due to the terrorist attacks against the organic democracy of Franco. However, for *El Alcázar*, the left-wing opposition was always trying to destroy the organic democracy founded by Franco and, therefore, it was always demonising them in its opinion pages.

Based on the former, we can state that whereas *Arriba* and *Pueblo* started to support the left-wing opposition within this period, thus withdrawing their support to the government, also did *El Alcázar* but for the opposite reason. The latter took distance from the government for considering it polluted with communist ideas and closed to the left-wing parties; therefore, its discourse evolved towards more right-wing extremist positions.

The three newspapers analysed harshly criticised the government. However, *Arriba* and *Pueblo*, at the end of the study period had withdrew their support to the Government during the Dictatorship, since they considered it still linked to the Francoism. On the contrary, *El Alcázar* also withdrew its support to the Government, from the Arias' to the Suarez's cabinets, thus criticising them constantly considering them polluted by the capitalism and increasingly closer to the left-wing opposition.

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