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Fall October 1, 1998

The Spanish 'state of autonomies': Non-institutional federalism

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Available at: http://works.bepress.com/josep_colomer/81/
Spain is one of the countries in Europe with the most visible cleavages on territorial issues. Regional inequalities and rivalries, as well as language policy, have been given increasing salience on the political agenda during the last few decades. The Spanish state is now one of the most decentralised in Europe. It is certainly more decentralised than ever before in contemporary Spanish history. Yet territorial pluralism and political decentralisation have not derived from an explicit constitutional mandate. Constitutionally, Spain is not a federal state. Even the usual expression ‘State of Autonomies’ does not appear in the constitutional text. Rather, political regionalisation and state decentralisation have been the result of party strategies, competition, and bargaining within a loose institutional framework.

In the first place, right, left, and nationalist parties launched different proposals on the issue during the transition to democracy in 1977–79. They compromised on an ambiguous constitutional formula and agreed upon creating provisional regional governments. Initially, autonomous governments were established in the communities that had voted for particular institutions in the 1930s: Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia. Yet, in the wake of this, a total of 17 ‘autonomous communities’ were soon formed.

Second, there ensued continuing competition and bargaining between political parties in regional governments developing requests and placing pressures on the central government for further decentralisation. Competitive bargaining has been encouraged by the absence of institutions of territorial cooperation, like the typical federal Senate.

Finally, the Catalan nationalists, since 1993, and to a lesser extent, the Basque and the Canary Islands nationalists, since 1996, have bargained by offering their support to different parties in national government, in exchange for further decentralisation in favour of these regions.

This essay addresses these issues. The pluralistic role of the ‘State of autonomies’ is placed in the framework of a relatively high level of concentration of powers in Spanish democracy. Some features of the Spanish case are compared with those of federal or regional organisations in
other democratic regimes. Finally, some conjectures about future developments are also advanced.

AN AMBIGUOUS CONSTITUTIONAL COMPROMISE

Decentralisation has proven to be the most innovative institutional feature in democratic Spain. This was not planned or anticipated by the founding fathers of the current Constitution in the mid-1970s. They promoted regionalisation, but they did so without adopting typical institutions of a federal state, such as an upper chamber of territorial representation. In the context of a rather simple institutional framework, however, the ‘State of Autonomies’ has been the most salient element of institutional and political pluralism in Spain.

The Spanish Constitution was negotiated by way of parliamentary vote-trading among different parties. Negotiations were induced by the absence of a single party majority after the first election in 1977. Vote-trading was feasible because, in contrast to failed constituent processes in previous historical periods, in the mid-1970s different groups of voters and parties developed intense preferences regarding different issues.

During the discussion of the draft Constitution, the party in government before and after the first election in 1977, the Union of the Democratic Centre (UCD), made a priority of such issues as maintaining the monarchy and framing the principles of free-enterprise in the constitutional text, while it was open to concessions on several other issues. In contrast, the anti-Franco opposition parties, especially the Socialists (the Spanish Workers’ Socialist Party, PSOE) and the Communists (the Communist Party of Spain, PCE), developed more intense preferences regarding the constitutional recognition of civil rights and socio-economic issues.

Only the Conservatives of the Popular Alliance (AP), on one side, and the Nationalists of the Catalan Democratic Convergence (CDC), the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), and other minor parties, on the other side, gave strong priority to the decentralisation question. The first of these groups was in favour of maintaining the unitary state, while the others were in favour of creating particular institutions for their communities.

On the basis of different party priorities on different issues, a party was ready to give a strategic, insincere vote on an issue (say, for instance, in favour of the monarchy), in exchange for reciprocal behavior from other parties on other issues (say, civil rights). As a result of this, no party or group was totally satisfied or totally dissatisfied with the Constitution that was finally approved in 1978. No one agreed with the entire constitutional text, but almost no one felt it was absolutely unacceptable either.

Yet, the constitutional compromise was particularly ambiguous on the
decentralisation issue. On the side of the incumbents, the defence of the unitary state by the UCD and the AP focused on the maintenance of the 50 administrative provinces that had been created in the nineteenth century (in part through Napoleonic influence), as a means of controlling the territory from the centre. They also accepted the introduction of a general formula of regional administrative decentralisation.

By contrast, the Catalan and the Basque nationalists wanted particular formulas of self-government. They made references to alternative previous experiences. The Basques desired the full reestablishment of the traditional, medieval ‘fueros’ (administrative and fiscal institutions) in the three Basque provinces and Navarre, which had survived in part until then. The Catalans referred to the autonomous government, known by the medieval name of ‘Generalitat’, which had been established during the Second Republic in 1931 and had survived until the end of the civil war in 1939. The nationalists’ demands were compatible with different possible formulas for the rest of the country, provided that they were not the same as those for the so-called ‘historic nationalities’.

The socialists and the communists were also in favour of autonomous governments for Catalonia and the Basque Country, but in favour of some general formula of decentralisation and federation for the rest of the country as well. The only clear precedent for this position was a very short-lived experience of federalism during the Spanish First Republic in 1873, when the territory of Spain was divided into 15 regions.

Party preferences thus differed on the maintenance of the provinces, the re-establishment of particular governments for Catalonia and the Basque Country, and the introduction of a general decentralising formula for the rest of the country. According to initial party preferences, the decision would have been in favour of the provinces and a general, administrative decentralisation, since the UCD and the AP could form a majority in parliament as well as in the constitutional drafting committee.

Nonetheless, repeated negotiations, mostly induced by the President of the Council of Ministers and UCD leader, Adolfo Suárez, led to a trading of votes on this and other issues among most parties. The result was a mixed model; it included, in fact, the implausible overlapping of several distinct administrative structures. First, the 50 provinces were maintained, as desired by the Centrists and the Conservatives. Second, different ways of access to autonomy were established for the ‘historic nationalities’ (Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia) and for the other, second-rank regions, entailing different initial powers and different deadlines for the full attainment of their maximum levels. They also implied different calendars for their regional elections. Third, general decentralisation was planned for the whole country, and it was established that all the communities could
eventually attain the same legal powers, a perspective inspired in part by the federalist tradition.

The approval of this combination of proposals required, on the one hand, that the UCD strategically accept certain initial levels of autonomy for those nationalities classified as 'historic', in exchange for maintaining the provinces. It also required that the PSOE and PCE strategically accept the 50 provinces, and that the CDC accept both the provinces and a general, somewhat egalitarian formula of autonomies resulting in a presumably diminished status for Catalonia, in exchange for the political autonomy of the nationalities.

In this light, it appears that the Catalan nationalists made significant strategic concessions in order to reach an agreement. In practice, they have not abandoned further demands for stronger specific powers. They did, however, obtain their priority objective, political autonomy for the 'Generalitat', the constitutional issue on which they had the most intense preferences. Subsequently, the victories of the coalition Convergence and Union (CiU) and its leader, Jordi Pujol, in all the successive autonomous elections, have allowed the Nationalists to govern continuously in Catalonia since 1980.

The Basque nationalists of the PNV obtained less satisfaction. Excluded from the constitutional drafting committee in the Congress, they later presented their amendments for the constitutional recognition of the historic rights of the old lands. Yet they did not succeed in making the UCD participate in a new vote trade, and were defeated in the Congressional Constitutional Commission and in the plenary meetings of the Congress and the Senate. Contrary to what happened during the trading of votes with the Catalan nationalists, the Basques refused to accept any formula implying equal powers for all the autonomous communities, even on a medium- or long-term basis. The UCD and the PSOE did not reject out of hand some of the exceptional fiscal formulas for the Basque Country, but were unwilling to consent to a new exception of principle on this matter in the Constitution in addition to the already accepted distinctiveness for the three historic nationalities.

The Basque nationalists finally withdrew from the Congressional plenum and also withheld their vote in favor of the Constitution. The Basque Country was thus the only area of Spain in which the 'yes' to the Constitution failed to prosper in the referendum that was held in December 1978. The PNV later supported the Basque statute of autonomy and has governed in the Basque Country continuously since 1980. In line with their historic traditions, the Basque Country, as well as the neighbouring region of Navarre, have exceptional fiscal formulas which, in contrast to all the other communities, allow them to collect all taxes and to transfer a proportion of them to the central government. These institutional formulas have been sufficient to include the Basque nationalists within the
democratic rules of the political game together with the other major parties in Spain.

Yet, their rejection of the Spanish Constitution has surely contributed to the persistence of high levels of conflict within the Basque Country. Three differentiated blocks can be distinguished there in respect of their positions regarding the form of the Spanish state: the Spanish-wide parties in favour of the Constitution, the Basque Nationalists acting within the framework of the present democratic institutions but in disagreement with the Constitution, and the Basque separatists giving support to the terrorist group ETA.²

THE PROCESS OF DECENTRALISATION

The consensual agreements reached during the Spanish transition were dominated by the desire of citizens and politicians alike to avoid confrontational clashes, such as those that had led to civil war in 1936–39. In a debatable inference from this fear, most institutional choices were made with the intention of favouring government stability. Restrictive institutional provisions include: severe ‘correctives’ to the proportional electoral system, strongly favouring the two larger parties; protection of incumbent politicians and party leaders through closed and fixed electoral lists; and survival of minority governments by allowing parliament to introduce only ‘constructive’ motions of censure.

After the transition period, the simplicity of the Spanish institutional framework was exacerbated by a long period of more than ten years of single-party majority governments. From 1982 to 1993, the PSOE held an absolute majority of seats in the parliament (in spite of having received only a minority of votes) and could govern without partners. This situation did not help to develop elements of political pluralism, but rather contributed to the concentration of power in a few hands. Parliament was subordinated to the government, which, in turn, was subordinated to its president and the party leader, Felipe González, the upper chamber was relegated to a ceremonial role, and the independence of the judiciary was compromised.³

Yet, decentralisation – almost the only issue on which the constitutional agreement could favour political pluralism – was developed at a rather fast pace. As mentioned, this has been mostly the result of competition among parties and autonomous communities, which fostered pressures on the central government.

All autonomous communities are organised under the same institutional framework: proportional representation, a unicameral parliamentary regime, some separate powers, and some shared powers with the central government. A relevant institutional factor for promoting territorial pluralism is the holding of non-concurrent elections for the different levels
of government. The first elections for the autonomous parliaments were held in the Basque Country and Catalonia in 1980 and in Galicia in 1981, as single events separated from any other election. Separate referenda, which ratified the statutes of autonomy of each community, led to these elections. Andalusia soon followed in 1982, after the initiative of the local councils of the region to join the preferential way of access to the autonomy of the three historic nationalities. In three of the first four elections, in the Basque Country, Catalonia and Andalusia, the winners were parties not in national government at the time (respectively PNV, CiU and PSOE).

Staggered regional elections give political parties in opposition to the central government more opportunities to introduce new issues onto the political agenda in order to challenge the basis on which the government party had won the previous election. Separate electoral campaigns allowed voters to reveal different party preferences on national issues and on regional issues. In addition, it has been observed that a critical sector of centrist voters in Catalonia and the Basque Country regularly split their votes between national and regional parties at different level elections in sophisticated voting.

In contrast, the elections for the other 13 autonomous parliaments are held simultaneously, and concurrently with the local elections. Unlike the provisions in the four communities with staggered elections, the presidents of the 13 communities with simultaneous elections cannot dissolve the parliament before the full term. When they were first held, in 1983, in 11 of the 13 elections the winner was the party in national government (the PSOE). This may be explained by the fact that in simultaneous regional and local elections, the leaders of the national parties promote nation-wide campaigns in favour of their supported regional and local candidates and try to induce voters to make their choice on the basis of national issues. As a whole, the agenda of relevant issues in these regions is narrower than in those with staggered elections; this has the effect of inducing voters to choose the same party in the different elections. In the period from 1980 to 1995, the four regions holding staggered elections elected a much higher proportion of presidents from parties not in central government, especially regional parties, than the 13 regions holding the elections simultaneously (83 and 52 per cent respectively).

In general, however, the fact that the regional elections never coincide with national elections has induced relatively high degrees of party disparity between the central and the regional parliaments and governments. Regionalist parties have been created and run in elections under the incentives given by regional institutions in all the communities, and they have gained seats in 13 of them (all except the two Castilles, Madrid, and Murcia). In the 1992–95 electoral cycle, some 27 parties obtained seats in
the autonomous parliaments (in contrast to 11 in the national elections in 1993 and 1996).

The regional parties usually have strong bargaining power in parliament due to their intermediate or adaptive position regarding traditional parties of the Right and Left. The Popular Party (PP) was motivated to develop stable pre-electoral coalitions with regional parties in Aragon, the Balearic Islands, Navarre and Valencia in the years prior to its victory in the national election in 1996. In exchange, the PP gave support to regional party candidates for regional presidencies, ministries, chairs of parliaments, and other offices, including city mayors, much beyond the regional parties’ proportions of votes and seats. Since 1996, the PP has supported nationalist presidents in the parliaments of Catalonia and the Canary Islands, in exchange for the Catalan and Canary nationalists’ support of the PP government in the national parliament. Similarly, the Socialist Party has formed majorities in regional parliaments with regionalist parties in Andalusia, Galicia and Navarre. It was also supported in national government by the Catalan nationalists in 1993-96, and has supported the nationalist president of the Basque Country since 1986.

Even regional party leaders of the PP and the PSOE have become highly influential figures within their parties. The former leader of the PP, Manuel Fraga, retired from national politics to become president of Galicia. Since then he has promoted decentralisation of the Spanish state much more strongly than before. Certain regional presidents of the PSOE, such as those of Andalusia, Extremadura, and Valencia, have been referred to as ‘barons’ based upon their control of regional constituencies and their capacity to negotiate with the party’s national leadership in favour of their regions’ interests.

From 1980 to 1998, an average of 7.5 autonomous presidents out of 17 (44 per cent of the time period) were in the hands of parties not in national government. This proportion is close to, albeit still lower than, the proportion of regional chief executives in the hands of parties not in central government in other federal countries with non-concurrent elections, including Germany (50 per cent), the United States (51 per cent), and Canada (61 per cent).¹

Yet, as suggested, the degree of competition between autonomous communities has been higher than this proportion reflects. The national parties supported the constitutional choice in favour of a general formula of decentralisation, instead of only particular formulas for the historic nationalities, with the intention of preventing Catalonia and the Basque Country from receiving ‘privileges’. Some of them also sought to avoid a new bipolarisation of Spanish politics around the nationalist issue, such as that which had developed in the 1930s when Catalonia was the only
regional government in Spain. However, the creation of 17 autonomous communities has had the unintended consequence of promoting strong rivalry among them, even when they are governed by members of the same party. Most autonomous governments have ceaselessly requested increasing financial transfers and legal powers from the central government in order to approach the level of the Basques and the Catalans. Meanwhile, the latter governments try to maintain a distance from the rest of the communities in order to enhance their own difference. This game, usually known as ‘comparative grievance’, has produced more regional competition and much higher levels of decentralisation of the Spanish state than was expected before the constitutional compromise was implemented.

In fact, competition has extended to all regions. Within the group of the three historic nationalities, the Catalan government has heralded its ambition to obtain a more autonomous fiscal formula, similar to those of the Basque Country and Navarre, in spite of the differences in their constitutional agreement. As mentioned, Andalusia, which was initially considered a second-rank region, joined the leading group very soon. Within the second group, regions such as Aragon, the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands, and Valencia, have also promoted pride in their historic traditions and certain other elements of distinctiveness (including the use of variants of the Catalan language in Valencia and the Balearic Islands), and have tried to match the powers of the first group. This would leave only eight regions which fit the initial assumptions for second-rank autonomy, but most of them are unwilling to accept a lesser status than Aragon and other similar regions.

Initially, the two major national parties tried to contain the pressures for decentralisation by mutual cooperation. Accordingly, the UCD and the PSOE collaborated over the 1981 Organic Law for the Harmonisation of the Autonomic Process (LOAPA), in which it was established that the national government could enact ‘basic legislation’ and ‘basic norms’ in domains reserved for the autonomies, and that in case of discrepancy with regional legislation, national legislation would prevail. Interestingly, it also regulated simultaneous elections and fixed terms for all autonomous parliaments, including those of the historic nationalities. Yet, in 1983, the key provisions of the law were revoked by the Constitutional Court, which clarified that ‘autonomy’ meant the right to take the final decision in certain domains.

With significant separate powers and non-concurrent elections confirmed, not only the nationalist and regional parties, but also the main nation-wide party in opposition, and even the regional leaders of the central government party, have found incentives to promote further decentralisation in favour of the regions. Continuing party interactions are developed without strong institutional constraints. Successive negotiating agreements
on assignment of taxes have been reached by the national and the
autonomous governments (excluding the peculiar formulas of the Basque
Country and Navarre) for the periods 1984–86, 1986–91 (subsequently
further extended), and 1997–2001, increasingly in favour of the autonomies.
In the mid 1990s, the Catalans raised the issue of obtaining a fixed
proportion of income taxes as the basis for the autonomy funding,
effectively increasing the share of autonomously collected resources. After
a bilateral agreement to cede 15 per cent of income taxes to the Catalan
government, this formula was extended to most regional governments. A
further decision ceded the power to collect 30 per cent of income taxes to
all regional governments. Even if they have to negotiate a final distribution
of fiscal resources with the central government, the power to collect taxes
gives the regional governments some financial benefits.

Virtually all the powers listed in the Statutes of Autonomy had been
transferred by 1987. The Catalan government then began to ask for, and
subsequently obtained, a new regional police force and full health services,
following the Basque model. Valencia, Navarra, and the Canary Islands also
obtained additional transfers, including health services. After the
‘Autonomic Pacts’ of 1992 and 1997, all the 17 regions are being conferred
new powers, including education, a decision that has required amending
their statutes of autonomy.6

As a result of this unplanned process, public spending in Spain in 1997
was distributed as follows: about 60 per cent for the central government, 25
per cent for the autonomous governments, and 15 per cent for the local
governments. The proportion of regional expenditure in Spain is thus
slightly higher than in federal Germany, although the German local
governments have higher proportions of public spending than their Spanish
counterparts.7

THE LACK OF FEDERAL, COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONS

The decentralisation issue gained further salience on the Spanish political
agenda after the Socialist Party lost its absolute majority in parliament in
1993. The Catalan nationalists of the CiU (Convergence and Union), which
has been in government in Catalonia since 1980, have been pivotal in the
Spanish Parliament since then. In 1993–96, they supported the Socialist
party in government, but provoked early elections by refusing to negotiate
a new annual budget at the end of 1995. After the election in 1996, the
Catalans of the CiU, together with the Basques of the PNV (for a year), and
the Canary Islands Coalition have supported the Popular Party in
government and its president, José M. Aznar. The exchange of votes in the
Spanish and the Catalan parliaments had already been experimented with in
1980–81, when the government of the UCD was in a minority in the national parliament, and the government of the CiU was temporarily in a minority in the Catalan parliament.

These exchanges introduce elements of pluralism onto the political agenda, but they also promote relationships based on competition and conflict rather than on cooperation. On the one hand, the regional nationalist parties have acted as intermediate, centrist parties in the national arena, especially after the disappearance of the UCD and its minor successor, the CDS (also led by Suárez). They can limit the scope of policy shifts created by the alternation of left and right governments and introduce elements of moderation and continuity, especially in economic policy.

Yet the Catalan and Basque Nationalists do not participate in full coalition governments, but instead limit themselves to giving parliamentary support to single-party minority governments and to agreeing on parliamentary accords. The regional nationalists refrain from participating in central government for fear of losing their independent position. But this creates mixed feelings regarding their commitment to playing by the same rules of the game as the other parties. When the Catalan nationalists supported the Socialists in government, the Popular Party in opposition was strongly against further decentralisation measures and accused the Socialists of making excessive concessions to the Catalans at the expense of the other regions. When the Catalans supported the Popular Party in government, the Socialists in opposition have a very similar criticism. This means that the intermediate, moderating role that the Catalan nationalists can play on some issues on the left–right dimension is not duplicated on the decentralisation issue, on which they are located at a more extreme position in relation to the major state-wide parties. The pivotal position of the regional nationalists in Spanish politics, by giving salience to the decentralisation issue, tends to provoke an increase rather than a decrease in the policy distance between the government and the opposition.

There are few institutions that promote cooperation between the central government and the regional governments in Spain, apart from the arbitration role played by the Constitutional Court. The Senate was created in the reform process of the authoritarian regime leading to the first elections in 1977, basically to give some Francoist politicians a chance to retain or regain parliamentary seats. As mentioned above, the form of the Spanish state was not clearly defined as federal in the Constitution, but rather it was shaped as an ambiguous compromise between several different proposals. This prevented the Senate from becoming a chamber of territorial representation with symmetric powers to those of the lower chamber, as is usually the case in federal states.

Most members of the Spanish Senate are elected directly in concurrent
elections with the lower house on the basis of a fixed number of seats per province (4 seats in each of most of the provinces, producing a total of 208). Only 44 senators are appointed by the autonomous parliaments, giving an overall total of 252 seats. This structure has produced very similar party compositions in the two chambers, always allowing the party in central government to replicate or enlarge in the Senate its party support in the Congress. All bills are first introduced in the Congress. In case of disagreement between the two chambers, some bills are sent to a joint conference committee, but the decision of the Congress always prevails in the end. The Senate is thus not a decisive actor in the decision-making process and cannot effectively represent the autonomous communities in the national arena.

The only institutional forums of cooperation between the central and the autonomous governments are the Fiscal and Financial Policy Council and the regular meetings of the national and the autonomous education ministers. More recently, after the creation of a consultative Conference for European Affairs, the autonomous communities have been authorised to maintain offices of foreign representation and have been included in the Spanish delegation in the European Commission. Most deals, however, are still made through bilateral relations of party leaders in the central and the regional governments.

A standard definition of federalism envisages the combination of self-rule and shared-rule. The autonomous communities of Spain can develop self-rule in certain domains. In other domains, they share rule with the central government, which can exercise some constraints on further autonomous legislative and executive decisions. The most visible deficit of the Spanish State of Autonomies, however, is shared-rule at the national level. The autonomous communities can hardly contribute to the formation of national public policy, given the lack of appropriate institutions.

The weakly institutionalised experience of the decentralisation of Spain could be labelled ‘competitive federalism’ rather than ‘cooperative federalism’, a model which is usually associated with large consensual agreements like those that are typical in federal Germany. ‘Competitive federalism’ is also used to interpret certain relevant features in the United States. Yet there is a substantial difference between the federalist model of the USA and that of Spain. In the first case, state governments compete for citizens, skilled workers, students, and capital by offering better taxes, policies, services, and similar incentives. Intergovernmental competition can encourage efficiency on the basis that people are expected to react to those incentives by moving territory (voting with their feet).

By contrast, the citizens of Spain have become almost completely immobile since the mid-1970s. Previously, migratory movements from the
rural areas towards the cities, especially Madrid, Barcelona, and Bilbao, had existed for more than a century. However, several factors provoked their sharp decline in the 1970s, including economic recession (although later followed by long periods of recovery and growth), expansion of unemployment benefits, creation of provincial universities, and also the expectation of efficient government initially raised by the new autonomous communities.

In this context, regional governments compete with each other, not to attract human and other private resources from other regions, but basically to obtain financial and legal resources from the central government. Spanish federalism is competitive in the sense of being redistributive between the regions, but not in the sense of being market-type efficient like that of the United States.

In spite of the rapid and extensive development of decentralisation in Spain in the last 20 years, the lack of a sufficiently clear model of decentralisation in the Constitution and the absence of federal institutions of cooperation may make its future uncertain. Some comparative analyses suggest that the 'vertical' division of powers between the central and the regional governments tends to be more stable when it parallels a 'horizontal' division of powers in national government. In other words, federalism is better grounded in countries with multiparty systems or divided government, as is the case, for example, in Germany or the United States, than in countries with single-party majority governments or without a powerful second chamber, as in Austria or Canada. Division of powers at the national level between different political parties fosters co-operation and discourages any party from trying to become a single, absolute winner, concentrating all powers in its own hands. In contrast, a unified national government can foster an ambition in the winning party to absorb the territorial powers as well. This can induce permanent conflict and motivate regional parties to threaten secession.

Decentralisation and territorial pluralism have developed in Spain by way of strategic competition between political parties, but against many of the factors intended to promote concentration of powers and unified government in the larger institutional framework. It might be the case that, in the future, the Catalan and the Basque nationalists, as well as other regional parties and leaders, may find new occasions to promote their strategies in favour of territorial issues, decentralisation, and vertical division of powers successfully. But if they rely only upon strategic action and not on institutions fostering more stable relationships between the centre and the autonomous communities, they may be vulnerable to changes in the centre. If a disciplined political party were to gain an absolute majority control again, the temptation to introduce institutional and legal restrictions on the regional governments
would be likely to reappear. In spite of the relatively high rates of financial and political decentralisation which have been attained in Spain, the future of the Spanish State of Autonomies is more uncertain than federalism in more formally institutionalised states.

NOTES

6. Further information and analyses can be found in the annual *Informe Pi y Sunyer sobre Comunidades Autónomas* edited since 1990 by Aja, Ballbé and Ferret.