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USING RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT TO LEGITIMATE THE MONARCHY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE REIGN OF KING JUAN CARLOS I OF SPAIN

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Abstract

This article explores the management of relationships by King Juan Carlos I of Spain to legitimate the monarchy as an institution and build a new democracy after Franco's death in 1975. The high level of public support during most of his reign shows there is a correlation between good relationship management and the loyalty of the subjects. Only when some basic relationship management principles of mutual benefit, such as trust and openness with his subjects, were violated the level of support for Juan Carlos I, and the monarchy as an institution, declined. Nonetheless, the value of relationship management has proved durable since the new monarch, Felipe VI, was able to recover in a relatively short period of time the public support that Juan Carlos I enjoyed in the past. This fact indicates that even in the case of disruptive monarchies, such as Spain, the power of relationship management has shown effectiveness to legitimate the institution. However, at the same time it also points out that for the public opinion regime monarchies have to show exemplarity and that involves not only to create mutual benefit for the citizenship through good deeds, since Juan Carlos I always behaved professionally as a business and diplomatic representative, but that there is feeling of trust between the monarch and the subjects.

Keywords: Monarchy, Spain, relationship management, public relations, government relations

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Introduction

This paper analyzes the role of Juan Carlos I legitimating the monarchy building a new democracy after General Francisco Franco's long dictatorship following the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). King Juan Carlos I took over as Head of State, hand selected by Franco prior to his death (Burns, 2007), which created a problem of legitimacy for the democracy (Onega, 2015). The new King had to face this situation not only supporting democracy but managing relationships wisely with a number of constituencies such as, for example Catalan and Basque nationalists and the armed forces, which were considered opposite factions.

The monarchy has been analyzed in terms of its historical and political evolution, its legal and constitutional aspects and even the public projection of its members as public figures or celebrities. On the few occasions where scholars have adopted a communication management perspective, they have paid attention to the role of the monarchy as a corporate brand and, despite acknowledging the monarchy's affinity with a corporation, have eluded the role of public relations tactics as too self-promotional and more appropriate for commercial purposes (Balmer, Greyser & Urde, 2006; Balmer 2007).

To date, the nature of constitutional monarchies has received scarce interest from public relations scholars. Even in Great Britain, where the monarchy as an institution enjoys broad legitimacy, an environment of deference often dictates against the Queen being the subject of debate (Hames & Leonard, 1998). The British monarchy has generated some fleeting attention in the field of public relations regarding the apparent lack of public sorrow of Queen Elizabeth II after the death of Princess Diana (Benoit & Brinson, 1999). In Spain, the situation has been even more accentuated due to the awareness of the importance of the King's political role in the relatively recent democratization of the country and the reluctance of Spanish citizens to undermine his authority (Powell, 1996). Indeed, for decades, the private lives of the members of Spain's royal family "generally went uninvestigated, their whereabouts unreported, and the sources of King Juan Carlos' vast personal wealth were not discussed" (Minder, 2013b, Para. 1).

In this paper, the Spanish monarchy is examined under a public relations lens. It is an institution at least as old as the British monarchy but not as solid because of the interruption of its power from 1931 until 1975. Juan Carlos remained in power for nearly four decades until 2014, when he abdicated to his son.

When Juan Carlos I became king, he faced a double challenge: To generate adhesion among Spaniards regarding his own personality and the institution of the monarchy as a whole, and to build trust among international opinion leaders regarding the new democratic regime. To build his reputation, since 1975, *la Casa Real*—the entity that includes the Spanish monarch, family and service—was extremely active, with a total of 3,177 speeches, 458 official trips and 4,388 activities (such as audiences, award ceremonies and receptions) recorded in under 40 years (Canel & García, 2013). This frenetic activity had clear results in terms of public perception. The Spanish monarchy consistently obtained evaluations above seven out of ten in the main polls. These results highlighted the monarchy as the most valued public institution by the Spanish citizens because of the “order and stability” it was perceived it provided the country. Furthermore, a rising percentage of Spaniards started to see the monarchy as an institution firmly rooted in Spanish history and tradition beyond *juancarlismo* or adherence to the hard-won charismatic legitimacy of Juan Carlos I.

With Spain experiencing one of the worst recessions in decades, this reputation was, however, eroded nationally and internationally due to the king’s ostentatious lifestyle, opaque origin of his fortune and an influence-peddling case involving his son-in-

law, Iñaki Urdangarín, who was accused of traffic of influences for exploiting his royal background to skip legal procedures (Carvajal & Minder, 2012).

This paper explores the management of relationships that have been decisive in consolidating democracy and monarchy in modern Spain.

Theoretical framework

One marketing perspective has dominated the approach to the role of monarchies in the field of communication: Some scholars emphasize the importance of monarchies as part of a country’s reputation (Balmer et al., 2006; Balmer, 2007); also, a monarchy helps to define a nation and helps their people forge an identity and a heritage (Balmer et al., 2006; Balmer, 2011). Likewise, monarchies help their countries differentiate themselves from other countries and even promote economic development. For instance, although the United Kingdom is a medium-sized economic, political and military power, thanks to its monarchy it plays a larger role in world affairs and enjoys more visibility, prestige and status (Balmer, 2007).

These authors’ approach is that monarchies are like a corporate brand and, therefore, should be managed in a very similar way (Balmer et al., 2006). In

European countries, monarchies have evolved from being a theocratic institution, where God appointed the monarch, to a constitutional institution (after all, in constitutional monarchies sovereignty rests with the people), where the monarch is at the service of the people. Monarchs have a mission that is to serve the people, just as corporations usually have a mission that is to serve their stakeholders. And that means royalty must care about the opinion of mere commoners regarding their reputation. “The Royal Family is an institution that, like any corporation or other organization, must be concerned with public relations” (Benoit & Brinson, 1999, pp. 147-148). In the same way corporate brands embody an informal contract between an organization and its brand community (Balmer & Greyser, 2003), monarchs have to meet the demands and expectations of multiple stakeholder groups (Balmer et al., 2006; Balmer, 2007).

Most of this research on nation branding tends to overlook the role of public relations, seeing it instead as one more element of the marketing mix, in a subordinate position to image creation and management (Piggott, Morgan & Pritchard, 2004; Szondi, 2010). Likewise, the role of public relations is diminished and seen “as too transparently self-promotional” (Balmer et al., 2006, p. 151).

However, the fact that corporations are profit-driven and monarchies have

mainly, although not exclusively, a symbolic and representative mission jeopardizes any comparison between both entities.

This article takes a public relations approach regarding the role of monarchies in democratic regimes. Public relations can be understood as the strategic management of communication and relationships between organisations and their publics (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994; Dozier, L. Grunig, & J. Grunig, 1995). Indeed, the modern practice of public relations has incorporated this strategic perspective in the way it defines itself. In 2011/2012 PRSA defined public relations as “a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.” Therefore, a mutual benefit as an outcome for each of the stakeholders can be considered a requisite in order to talk about good public relations.

Ledingham and Brunning (1998) were the first researchers advancing the concept of relationship management and demonstrating empirically there was a correlation between the quality of relationships and the loyalty of stakeholders toward organizations. From a relationship management perspective, public relations can be defined “as the management of relationships between an organization and its key publics (Ledingham & Brunning, 2000, p. 56). Relationship is described as “the state which exists between an organization and its

key publics in which the actions of either can impact the economic, social, cultural or political well-being of the other” (Ledingham, 2003, p. 184). And this is a description that reflects well the purpose and consequences of the relationship between kings and subjects. If what the King says or does can affect the political or economic stability of a country, social or cultural public opinion shifts affect the political solidity or even social acceptance of the monarch by his subjects and the future of the monarchy as an institution.

According to the relational theory, we can determine the quality of the relationships and their progress. The key criteria are trust, openness, credibility, intimacy, similarity, immediacy, agreement, accuracy, common interest, and relational history (Ledingham, 2003, p. 189).

In the relationship with their subjects, monarchs need to meet almost all, if not all dimensions. Monarchs need to emanate trust, being open and close to the people. They have to show their care for the people and react quickly to threats to the nation (such as for example, in Juan Carlos I televised speech in support of democratic Spain during a *coup d'état* in 1981 for which he dressed with the uniform of Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces).

According to these dimensions, there is no reason to exclude kings and monarchs from the public relations domain. Monarchs

in parliamentary monarchies make a service to their stakeholders helping to build and sustain democracy and, in exchange, obtain recognition and legitimacy from the same stakeholders. The Spanish Constitution of 1978 is not any different. According to this document, the King of Spain has symbolic or representative, arbitral and moderative functions (Constitución Española, 1978).

First, the King is the Head of State and represents Spain permanently; the rest of political figures are temporary and sometimes unknown in foreign countries, but everybody knows the Monarch of Spain because his/her permanency. For example, the first European Head of State welcomed by President Obama was King Juan Carlos I.

The King's public actions have as well a symbolic value. For example, his presence at the signature of the EC (European Communities) accession treaty by Spain in June 1985 in the course of a solemn ceremony held at the *Palacio Real* [Royal Palace] gave this event—in the words of the British foreign secretary who had just attended a similar event in Lisbon—a restrained grandeur, thanks to the relaxed style of the Spanish Monarch and his consort, which contrasted with the earlier spontaneity of the Portuguese Republic (Powell, 1996).

Second, the arbitral and moderation functions of the monarch are exposed in article 62 of the Spanish Constitution and must be done in agreement with the President

of the Government, a minister or the President of the Parliament. It basically means the Monarch will sanctioned big state events through the signature documents or just with his or her presence.

In third place, the Monarch has functions as a mediator not as much because he/she is the Head of State but because is the head of the nation, and represents its entire society. The King is just not a party man or a politician but a referent for society. An example of this function as a mediator happens during the Christmas televised addresses where King Juan Carlos has repeatedly talked about the need to be united to fight against the economic crisis or terrorism.

According to Brunning and Ledingham (1999), there are three types of relationships in relationship management theory: interpersonal, professional and community. The interpersonal relationship refers to the personal interactions between members of the organization and its publics. The professional relationship is how the organization delivers professional services. The community relationship regards how the organization is perceived addressing community concerns. Modern monarchs respond to all of them showing closeness to the people (Juan Carlos I was often called 'hearty'), they travel with business delegations to foreign countries using their charisma on behalf of entrepreneurs and are

present in tragic events such as terrorist attacks or natural catastrophes (members of the Spanish Casa Real cried with relatives of the victims during the mass in memory of the terrorist attacks in 2004).

A key aspect of relationship management regarding the role of monarchies is their capacity to display public diplomacy on behalf of a country. From a public relations standpoint, public diplomacy extends international communication beyond the realm of professional diplomats (Van Dyke & Vercic, 2009), which includes the monarchs that are not exactly diplomats but neither politicians. Indeed, Taylor (2008) has suggested the power of relationship building in effective public diplomacy. Public diplomacy is built on the concept of *soft power*, or the way "a country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries —admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness— want to follow it" (Nye, 2004, p. 5). For example, in the case of King Juan Carlos I, one of his roles was to project, among foreign leaders, the perception of Spain as a young, vibrant democracy and a model of other countries that wanted to make the transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes.

Methodology

This paper explores and analyzes how the Spanish Monarchy took a relationship management approach to bring democracy to Spain and legitimate the Monarchy itself. The examined period runs from the coronation of Juan Carlos I in 1975 to his abdication in favor of his son Felipe VI in 2014.

The author uses a historical-critical method to investigate the connection between the management of relationships of a monarch in a process of transition to democracy over the course of three decades. One of the purposes of this article is to evaluate the correlation between these relationship management efforts and the loyalty of the Spaniards toward the monarchy as an institution. When the Spanish monarch relationship efforts aligned more closely to the relationship management dimensions the level of support for the monarchy increased in surveys and viceversa in his last years. The author has made use of the main sociological statistical survey implemented in Spain that of the CIS (Center for Sociological Research)—Spain’s government-backed national public opinion institute—, as well as by Metroscopia—a private pollster used by Spain’s most prestigious newspaper *El País* during the last four decades— paying particular attention to those survey dates where there is a watershed in terms of public opinion towards the figure of Juan Carlos I.

The author uses a historical-critical methodology. In order to examine this topic, the author reviewed history books on King Juan Carlos and contemporary Spain. The author has also examined articles from newspapers, public opinion surveys and reviewed articles from experts and academics. The author also conducted a content analysis of some key informational materials such as the Casa Real website, TV addresses and public speeches. Among the almost infinite number of events and sources in a topic like this during such a long period of time, the author has paid particular attention to those which have created more public impact, having as a guideline Paul Preston’s book *Juan Carlos. Steering Spain from Dictatorship to Democracy* (2004), considering by many historians the most impartial biography of Juan Carlos I in part because Preston did not interview Juan Carlos I to preserve his independence as an author (Oppenheimer, 2012). The approach is holistic and considers that each statement or action by Juan Carlos I, has a relational component and, therefore, an impact in the degree of legitimation of the monarchy in Spain.

Data analysis in this type of historical account method has, however, its limitations. It does not establish an empirical correlation between relationship management efforts and the changing of perceptions, but it does signal trends. There are other factors that can be

considered relevant, such as the fact Spain lived one of its worst economic recessions (more than 20 percent of unemployment) during the period in which the monarchy was under more scrutiny.

Building a new monarch's reputation through relationship management

After his proclamation, King Juan Carlos I had to gain the trust of a number of *stakeholders* inside and outside of Spain for whom he, and the Spanish monarchy he represented, were relatively unknown.

Within Spain, he had two crucial tasks: First, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, he had to gain and maintain the loyalty of the military; second, as King, he had to travel around Spain and establish the popularity of the Monarchy (Preston, 2004). Furthermore, in order to make the transition from dictatorship to democracy even smoother, he had to build good relationships with other constituencies, including: successive governments of different ideologies, demonstrating that the Monarchy was above partisanship; the church, still an important power when Franco died; and the world of culture, which saw Juan Carlos as a mere inheritor of Francoism.

Regarding the relationship with foreign audiences, monarchs have traditionally been regarded as good ambassadors for their countries. That was the

case with Juan Carlos, whose special relationships with numerous heads of state and his knowledge of the international scene were used on behalf of Spain's international reputation.

Relationships with the army

The military was probably the only sphere in which the King of Spain had real power. As head and symbol of the "unity and permanence" of the Spanish nation, the Spanish constitution made the Armed Forces dependent on the wishes of the King rather than of the government. However, after his proclamation, there were ample sectors in the Spanish military that saw the King as a rival power that aimed to reduce the military power in the state structure. In order to generate trust among army officials to resolve the problem of subversion, the King used a number of public events to communicate and strengthen his relationships with the military establishment.

For example, Juan Carlos used *pascua militar*, a celebration of the beginning of the military year on January 6, to communicate with fellow officers, who experienced dramatic changes in the 1980s as a result of both internal reforms and Spanish membership in NATO (Preston, 2004). In 1984, Juan Carlos I called on the Armed Forces to remain united and to collaborate without doubts or reservations in the government plans for military reform (*El*

País, 1984). The following year, the King outlined the advantages of modernization within NATO (Yarnoz, 1985).

Additionally, the King made a point of presiding over the annual Armed Forces Day celebrations, which helped to improve civil-military relationships. These events attracted considerable media attention and proved remarkably popular; in May 1986, for example, some 100,000-people turned out to watch the military parade held in Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Powell, 1996).

Relationships with the church

Regarding the Church, King Juan Carlos had a double mission: Catholicism remained the religion of a majority of Spaniards and it was therefore important that the Head of State had good relationships with the Spanish Church as well as with the Vatican. But, at the same time, the Church had been one of the main pillars of Franco's regime and a very close relationship of the monarchy with the Church would not have been seen as a positive thing by the most progressive sectors of society.

King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia invited Pope John Paul II to visit Spain in 1982, after the decisive elections won by the Socialist Party. The Pope would be invited to visit Spain again in 1984, 1989 and 1993 with a Socialist government in power, a fact which conveyed a situation of normality.

In spite of the separation of Church and State, King Juan Carlos cultivated many

of the monarchy's traditional ties with the Catholic Church that held highly symbolic meaning. For example, the Royal Family frequently attended major Catholic events with a strong component of popular religiosity, such as the traditional offering to Spain's patron held at Santiago de Compostela, Seville's Easter celebrations, or the Corpus Christi procession in Toledo. Likewise, Juan Carlos has promoted the maintenance of a number of Christian symbols in the public sphere, such as the nativity scene in the background of his annual televised Christmas speech or the presence of a crucifix in the atrium when new members of the government cabinet swear allegiance.

In spite of his close personal and institutional association with the symbols of the Catholic Church, Juan Carlos I avoided any form of religious controversy, or in other words, was careful about maintaining the separation between Church and State. For example, Juan Carlos I—who, according to the Spanish Constitution, cannot refuse to sanction a law passed by the Parliament—signed the legislation relating to divorce (1981), same-sex marriage (2005) and abortion (2010).

Relationships with the world of culture

Juan Carlos always attributed the downfall of his grandfather, Alfonso XIII, during the dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera, to the hostility of Spanish intellectuals (Powell,

1996). For that reason, King Juan Carlos worked hard to build relationships with the cultural world through a number of gestures. He was the honorary patron of the eight Royal Academies with the purpose of demonstrating the support of the monarchy and therefore the State for the highest level of cultural and scientific achievement. The King and the Queen were also associated with other manifestations of Spain's cultural life such as the annual open-air Madrid book fair—which they usually inaugurate—, as well as the highly respected Cervantes' Award. The Monarch also hosted an annual reception for leading members of the academic and cultural community in the Royal Palace.

Relationships with Spaniards

One of the main goals of King Juan Carlos was to be a king for all Spaniards, which meant to reconcile the notion of a united yet pluralistic Spain. His premise was that, as in Belgium or Britain, the monarchy should be efficient in helping hold the country together. His main task in this area was to moderate the centrifugal tensions created by the process of decentralization of the country (also known as *Estado de las Autonomías*, or State of the Autonomous Regions) that, after Franco's death, had transformed Spain into a quasi-federal state.

An added circumstance was the lack of prestige of Spanish symbols, such as the Spanish flag or the word "Spain", both

strongly identified with Franco's regime. This explained the importance given by Juan Carlos to events such as the commemoration of the 200 years of the Spanish flag in 1985, which sought to dissociate the flag from Franco by highlighting its 18th century origins.

But, the main issue remained the acceptance of the monarchy, symbol of the Spanish unity, by Basque and Catalan nationalists. For that reason, Juan Carlos returned time and again in his speeches to descriptions of the cultural diversity and linguistic tolerance of Spain. According to the 1978 constitution, Spanish was the official language of the state, but the other Spanish languages (that is, Catalan, Basque and Galician) were co-official in their respective regions. Juan Carlos always looked for ways to symbolize this unity in plurality. For example, in October 1992, at a ceremony held at the monastery of San Millán de la Cogolla in La Rioja, traditionally associated with the study of the linkage between Spanish and Basque languages, the King argued that the coexistence of Spain's language richness was a cornerstone of the new democratic monarchy. Likewise, Juan Carlos made efforts to speak Basque and Catalan on every visit to the Basque and Catalan regions despite the fact that, in the case of the Basque Region, less than one fourth of Basques speak the local language fluently. Despite his presence triggering the usual protests of

radical nationalists, because he was the main symbol of Spain's unity, his manifestations acknowledging the existence of a Basque and Catalan identity elevated his popularity in these regions to comparable levels to those of other areas in Spain (Powell, 1996).

In 1990, Juan Carlos I started a series of official visits to all the Spanish regions (Autonomous Communities) with the purpose of offering an image of proximity and accessibility to all Spaniards and deepening his knowledge of the Spanish territory. On these visits, the King met with representatives of the new constitutional organs as well as the main state and regional institutions.

Relationship with the government

The symbolic presence of the King was also manifested in his attendance at Cabinet meetings because, at least in theory, the King was the head of the government. To avoid the association of the King with governmental decisions, these public meetings were used to inform the King about non-partisan issues, such as the state of membership negotiations with the European Community (EC) or the consequences of international crises such as the Gulf War.

Cultivation of foreign publics

One of the main challenges of the young Spanish democracy was to persuade foreign leaders about the solidity of the process. If, in general, monarchs have been traditionally

regarded as good ambassadors of their countries, King Juan Carlos played a special role because of his unique relationships with numerous heads of state and his knowledge of the international scene much more than, for example, Adolfo Suárez, the first elected democratic president who was overlooked by some foreign leaders such as the French President Valéry Giscard D'Estaing who only wanted to discuss matters with the King (Hernández, 2010).

For example, the figure of the King played a major role in achieving one of the main objectives of Spain as a country: becoming a member of the EC. His public speeches on a number of occasions were crucial in forging the reconciliation between Spain and the European democracies (Powell, 1996). Thus, he was awarded with the prestigious Charlemagne Prize for his contribution to European Unity, and his presence had a strong symbolic component at the signature of the EC adherence treaty by Spain in June 1985.

During the first decade of his reign, the King's major foreign policy goal, which reflected that of successive governments, was to achieve Spain's full acceptance by the major European powers. For that purpose, the King successfully cultivated relationships with key political figures in France and Germany. In 1993, King Juan Carlos became the first foreign head of state to address the French legislative assembly since 1919. The

King and the Queen exchanged four visits with the chancellor and president of Germany, the country that ultimately facilitated Spain's entry to the EC, between 1977 and 1982.

Due to the issue of Gibraltar, a small British enclave in the south of the Iberian Peninsula, the relationship between Spain and Great Britain has never been fully normal. In fact, Juan Carlos has been very reluctant to emphasize his family ties with the British Royal Family under the premise that it would jeopardize the Spanish claim of this territory (for example, King Juan Carlos I did not attend the wedding between Prince Charles and Diana of Wales due to the fact they were spending part of their honeymoon in Gibraltar). However, the British respect and understanding of monarchy as an institution gave Juan Carlos a prominent role in the relationship between the two countries. In 1986, Spain's King became the first European monarch ever to have addressed the assembled Houses of Parliament. In spite of referring to Gibraltar as the only source of tension between Spain and Great Britain in his speech, the King was greeted with heavy applause from the members of Parliament (United Press International, 1986). By this time, Prince Charles and Diana of Wales had visited the Spanish royal family at their vacation home in Majorca for three consecutive years, a fact that, given the media attention these visits created, was said to have

done "more for the improvement of Anglo-Spanish relations than years of diplomacy" (Powell, 1996, p. 195).

Thanks to Juan Carlos, Spain was able to project a perception of soft power among a number of countries, particularly new democracies in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

When visiting countries with military regimes in transition to democracy, such as Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, he met with members of the opposition, advising them how to deal with their own armed forces. When polled about the visit of the King in 1983, 65 percent of Uruguayans acknowledged they had followed the visit of the King with interest and 39 percent believed Juan Carlos had made a great contribution to the democratization of Uruguay (CIS, 1983). The same can be said about his visits to Central and Eastern Europe with the main purpose of exporting Spain's transition to democracy. Between 1987 and 1989 the King visited Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, where he spoke in favor of democracy and detailed some useful aspects of the Spanish experience.

An element that is often underestimated about the public diplomacy role of the monarchies is the personal component. For example, dealing with semi-absolute monarchs, such as Arab monarchs, always requires the intervention of Juan Carlos, who personally knows most of them

from his time in exile. That was the case of the King of Morocco, who preferred to discuss problems with Juan Carlos rather than members of the Spanish government. Likewise, the King's relationship with the Arab monarchs of the leading oil-producing countries proved particularly useful to Spain, a country with a strong dependence on imported oil. In the 1970's during the oil crisis and in a particularly challenging period of transition to democracy, it was at the request of Juan Carlos that King Fahd offered Spain 100,000 daily barrels of crude at a special price. Oil experts came to describe this quantity as "the king's quota" (Powell, 1996, p. 201). Thanks to his personal connections, Juan Carlos also obtained additional crude from the rulers of Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait (Lisbona, 1993).

Recent scandals

After decades of deference by the public, the media and the political class for bringing democracy to the nation, Spain's King started to be increasingly scrutinized following a number of publicized incidents. Needless to say, the context has also changed, and the economic depression suffered by the country has contributed to this situation.

Elephant hunting in Botswana

The first incident took place in spring 2012, when the King broke his hip while elephant hunting in Botswana. The King was criticized for taking a pricey African safari during a time of national hardship. The Spanish monarch reacted, according to Benoit's image restoration theory (1995, 1997), with a manifestation of mortification when, abandoning the hospital, he stated, "I am sorry, it will not happen again" (Romero, 2012).

This vague apology, however, did not hinder strong criticism in the press. A picture of Juan Carlos with a rifle in his hands and a dead elephant in the background became popular in the Spanish media. A famous Spanish TV celebrity, Mercedes Milá, wrote in her blog that the picture was "obscene. The head of the elephant, its eye, its razor, its twisted trunk are punitive. That animal was killed in exchange for several thousand euros in a Safari in Africa" (*Qué!*, 2012, para. 3).

Furthermore, there were some later revelations that the Safari had been subsidized and organized by Mohamed Eyad Kayali, a Syrian construction magnate who had worked with the King on a \$9.9 billion bullet-train contract that the monarch helped broker for a Spanish consortium in Saudi Arabia (Carvajal & Minder, 2012).

To help repair his image, Juan Carlos used a bolstering strategy emphasizing his role as a sometime dealmaker and economic

ambassador for Spain and not just a decorative figure. That same month he took the controls of a cutting-edge NH90 helicopter during a visit to a Eurocopter manufacturing plant in Southern Spain. He also traveled with a group of Spanish entrepreneurs and government representatives to Russia as part of a campaign to advance “Brand Spain” and support the interest of some Spanish companies in building the new high-speed train between Moscow and St. Petersburg. He held himself up as an example of hard work when he said, “any other person would still be on leave. But I have to work” (*El Economista*, 2012, para. 1) and his message to Spanish businesses was “export, export, export” (para. 3).

The King’s son-in-law

In 2011, Iñaki Urdangarín, the husband of the King's youngest daughter, Cristina, was scheduled to testify before a judge on allegations that he used his royal credentials to secure contracts for his foundation from regional authorities to organize sports and tourism events and then deviated part of the contract fees toward other companies and offshore accounts controlled by himself and his associates.

The Royal Family reacted by adopting a series of corrective actions: Suspending Urdangarín from attending official functions, declaring him *persona non grata* and removing all his pictures from the

Spanish Royal Family website (Carvajal, 2013). Furthermore, Urdangarín was also absent from the King’s traditional family Christmas meal and the King said in his Christmas speech to the nation that any suspect action should be “judged and punished in accordance with the law” (Minder, 2013a).

Although a review of the e-mails sent by the King backing sponsorships for events his son-in-law was organizing could not demonstrate any wrongdoing on the King’s part, the monarchy was tarnished and came under intense scrutiny within a general environment of resentment over privileges and special connections that have insulated Spain’s elite from the recession (Carvajal, 2013). In spite of the fact that the Spanish constitution grants the monarch full immunity, and as a proof of good intentions to restore his image, the *Casa Real* published its accounts in 2011 for first time, detailing how it spent the 8.4 million Euros that it received from the State the year before. It was not only a gesture of transparency but also a way to prove that the *Casa Real* is one of the most inexpensive royal houses of Europe and provides a good return on investment to Spain as a nation.

The German princess

Along on the expedition to Botswana was a German princess, Corinna zu Sayn-Wittgenstein. The Spanish gossip press

labeled her the King's longtime mistress who, they claimed, had benefited from her association with Juan Carlos through a Spanish-Saudi investment fund (Carvajal & Minder, 2012).

In a country where, on moral questions, public opinion tends to be discreet, the King did not need to use any image restoration strategy regarding the accusations of having an extramarital relationship.

Results

In the last barometer implemented by the Center of Sociological Research (CIS), Spaniards gave the monarchy 3.68 points out of 10 (Junquera, 2013), that is to say, more than one point below its last worst results in October 2011. This poll was implemented in the middle of the imputation of Princess Cristina, who was finally not called to court.

This data contrasts with past times when the monarchy was the most valued institution in Spain. In December 1995, Spaniards gave the monarchy the highest

grade, 7.48 points, among all Spanish institutions (CIS, 1995). In February 1998, the grade was 6.72 (CIS, 1998) and still in 2004, 51.7 percent of the Spanish population said they trusted the monarchy (CIS, 2004). After that, the reputation of the monarchy started to decrease —5.19 in 2006 (CIS, 2006); 5.54 in 2008 (CIS, 2008); 5.36 in 2010 (CIS, 2010)— and top position went to the armed forces. The first failing was in October 2011 when the Urdangarín case exploded. Despite these data, King Juan Carlos was still the best-considered Spanish public figure individually, with a difference of more than 75 points with respect to the government, parliament and other political parties (Toharia, 2013).

Indeed, according to Metroscopia, most Spaniards still consider the monarchy to be the best form of government for Spain (53 percent) (Toharia, 2013). Monarchy supporters have maintained relatively stable since 1982 (first year when the Center of Sociological Research asked Spaniards if they preferred a monarchy or a republic [La Sexta, 2013]) despite the recent erosion of the King as a public figure (Toharia, 2011).

Table 1. Question: What system do you prefer for Spain?

	2011	2010	2007	1996	1982*
A parliamentary democracy	49	57	69	66	45.4
A republic	37	35	22	13	21.5
Indifferent	7	4	5	20	19.2
No answer	7	4	4	1	13.9

Source: Metroscopia

*Source: CIS

The fear was that Spaniards did not believe in the monarchy as an institution, but they were *Juancarlistas*, that is to say, they appreciated the King's efforts to democratize the country and his good performance from 1975 until his abdication (Granados, 2010). However, recent polls show that, after King Juan Carlos I abdication in favor of Felipe VI, the support for monarchy as a form of government in Spain has gone from 49.1 percent in the last times of Juan Carlos to 61.5 percent, a percentage almost as high as when Juan Carlos I was most popular (Remírez de Ganuza, 2015).

Discussion

This article demonstrates, also in the case of the Spanish monarchy, there is a correlation between the quality of relationships and the loyalty of stakeholders toward organizations. The high level of approval and the support for monarchy shows during his 40 years of reign,

King Juan Carlos I was successful in his relationship management approach with his subjects as well as in his public diplomacy efforts. The result was Spanish citizens associated parliamentary monarchy with democracy during his kingdom despite the legitimation problem at the beginning and the scandals at the end.

From a relationship management approach, it can be said both the subjects and the Spanish monarchy reached a mutual benefit. Spaniards became reconciled, reached consensus in key issues such as the role of the army and the Church, and the country abandoned international isolation. The monarchy, disruptive during long periods of the Spanish history, got legitimation in terms of preferred political system as well as Juan Carlos I himself as a public figure.

In terms of interpersonal, professional and community relationships (Brunning & Ledingham, 1999), during his reign Juan Carlos I was perceived as approachable and close to the people visiting every corner in Spain as well as having a symbolic presence in main national and

international all sort of events (such as the Madrid Middle East Peace Conference in 1991 or the Barcelona Olympics in 1992). He was a good representative of Spain talking to all the worldwide leaders even when the Spanish main politicians did not have good relationships with them (such as the Prime Minister Rodríguez Zapatero never had good relationships with George Bush Jr. [Calvo Roy, 2005]), demonstrating his solidarity with victims of terrorism or exhorting the political class to show care for the least favoured people during his Christmas allocutions.

Juan Carlos I never stopped being a good professional or showing care for the situation of Spaniards. However, at the end of the reign of Juan Carlos I the level of support declined when the citizenship felt Juan Carlos I and the Casa Real as a whole had violated principles of trust and openness when he disappeared in Bostwana or overlooked the fact his son-in-law was using Juan Carlos' network of contacts for his own personal benefit. Despite his efforts of public apology, mortification and the implementation of corrective actions at the end of his reign, Juan Carlos I could never regain the confidence of the Spaniards. In this sense, his lack of success using image restoration strategies contrasts with the success of Bill Clinton or even Silvio Berlusconi when they had to face their sex scandals. In the case of Clinton, public apology and mortification were

sufficient to maintain public support while in the case of Berlusconi there was a general lack of accountability (García, 2011). This failure evidences that the Spaniards need to perceive the figure of the monarch as exemplary in each of his actions and cannot be just a symbolic figure.

Overall, the quick recovery of people's support of monarchy during the brief reign of his successor, Felipe VI, indicates the monarchy as an institution is stronger in Spain than thought and that the management of relationships by Juan Carlos I created the substratum for the endurance of monarchy in Spain.

Conclusion

The reign of King Juan Carlos I shows that the monarchy is an institution that, unless it goes uninterrupted and is based on a multiseccular tradition, like the British monarchy, has to justify its existence through good performance (which means in a large part good relationship management) and perhaps personal charisma, such as was the case of King Juan Carlos until the scandals of his later years of reign. For example, although the British monarchy suffered a number of scandals during the decade of the 90s, its level of acceptance among British citizens has never dipped below 70 percent

(Ipsos Mori, 2013), which is not the case for the Spanish monarchy.

An analysis of how other monarchies have managed relationships and implement image restoration strategies in case of

difficulties would help to discriminate if the British monarchy, in terms of public support, is the exception or the standard when considering monarchies' legitimation.

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