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The Road to Democracy

A Case Study of the Democratic Consolidation in Spain

Abstract

This thesis is a case study of the democratic consolidation in Spain. The study initially presents theories on democratic consolidation, as interpreted and defined by renowned political scientist. Then, different factors are presented known to have contributed to democratization in the Spanish case. These are; the role of the military refurbishment, the impact of EU membership, the actions of King Juan Carlos I and Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez, the role of the 1978 Spanish constitution, and civil society's role. The study then utilizes the previously presented theories on democratic consolidation to test whether or not the factors known to have contributed to democratization also contributed to democratic consolidation in the country.

The results of the study demonstrate that the following factors were important for Spain's democratic consolidation; ensuring civilian control over the military, that the 1978 Constitution ensured that Spain's different regions would enjoy a certain degree of autonomy, that Spain's EU membership required the country to fulfil the unions democratic membership criteria, and that Juan Carlos I and Adolfo Suárez sought to democratize Spain. It was also found that civil society's role was not as relevant for democratic consolidation in Spain as it has been in other cases.

Keywords: Spain, Juan Carlos I, Adolfo Suárez, European Union, military, civil society, democratic consolidation, democratization, constitutional design

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1. Introduction

In this case study, different renowned theories on *democratic consolidation* are used to analyse the case of *Spain*, and to figure out if events well-known to have contributed to Spain's democratization after dictator Francisco Franco's passing are also applicable to explaining and understanding the nation's democratic consolidation.

Spain's democratic transition has been thoroughly researched. Many political scientists have perceived Spain as a highly interesting case. However, the consolidation process has not been as comprehensively studied, even though Spain's democratic consolidation has been highly successful. A study of the subject that this thesis focuses on is academically relevant because it deepens the understanding of the country's democratic consolidation. The thesis also has social and practical relevance since Spain is widely regarded as an interesting case and a generally important country, both politically and historically. It is also of interest to dive deeper into the research on democratic consolidation in Spain because whilst there exists a broad consensus regarding the research of Spain's democratization, the research on the nation's consolidation is generally more scattered. Therefore, it is naturally of interest to study the nation's democratic consolidation more profoundly.

1.1 Research Question

The chosen research question is; "How was democracy consolidated in Spain, and what factors were of importance in order to successfully achieve consolidation?"

1.2 Design of the Study

To conduct this study, the thesis first presents a review of democratic consolidation theories, all derived from distinguished researchers within the field. The thesis then presents factors that are later used in the part researching why Spain's democracy became consolidated. I.e., these factors are utilized to conduct the study's empirical analysis. The thesis's

purpose is not to test the theories, or to develop any new ones. It is to utilize the theories to gain a deeper understanding of the Spanish case. It is a well-known fact that Spain's democratic consolidation developed in a highly positive direction.

2. Overview of Theories on Democratic Consolidation

The following section presents theories on democratic consolidation as defined by different authors. The segment begins with Linz and Stepan as well as Diamond, since their findings and definitions are widely considered the most central.

2.1 Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, 1996

When a democratic transition has been completed, several tasks remain that must be solved for a state to reach consolidation. According to Linz and Stepan, democracy must be consolidated on five interrelating arenas that reinforce one another. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 7) This section examines these arenas, explaining their importance for understanding if a democracy has become consolidated.

2.1.1 Democratic Consolidation and Its Five Arenas

Aside from the five arenas, the initial essential factor for determining consolidation is the state itself. Democratic consolidation cannot exist without an identifiable political entity that is a state. Therefore, if a country's citizens do not identify with their nation, unsolvable issues may arise. If a big portion of individuals wish to secede, establish a new independence, or join a different sovereignty, a democratic regime cannot be consolidated. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 7)

If the criteria of an existing state exist, consolidation can happen through five interrelating preconditions, a.k.a. the five arenas. Since democracy signifies more than simply a government system, the arenas describe how the system is interconnected, how it interacts, and how the arenas mutually reinforce one another. A single arena cannot function correctly and independently if it does not receive assistance from at least one other, or often all of them. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 13). The arenas can influence one another. I.e., political society enacts laws, creates the constitution, and the general guidelines. Through this, a framework of how economic society functions is established. The example shows that a

consolidated democracy is constantly flowing, and that interconnectedness exists in-between the arenas. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 15)

2.1.2 Civil Society

Civil society is where polity and self-organizing groups, people and movements share opinions. Ideas, interests and values are shared as solidarities, and associations are created. It can take many forms, and encompasses social and political groups, religious congregations, activist organizations, and academic discussion groups. Such movements want to promote their interest. Civil society also involves citizens not belonging to specific groups, journalists, associations intended for entrepreneurs, lawyers, and trade unions. Civil society has been significant for developing democratic consolidation. It may counterweight anti-democratic forces. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 7) Civil society can spring off from smaller movements and accumulate into large-scale demonstrations. Citizens critically alter the balance between regime and opposition. When demonstrating together in large numbers, they can support hypothetical demands and challenge government authority. Thus, civil society plays an important role in the democratisation and democratic consolidation process.

2.1.3 Political Society

In political society, the political entity is set up and power contestation occurs. Here, the legitimate right to control public power and the government machinery occurs, and civil society's legitimacy is constructed. It provides legal protections imbedded into the rule of law, and an impartial state apparatus controls it. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 8) Though civil society can shut down anti-democratic forces and overthrow non-democratic governments, full democratic transition and consolidation must include political society. It encompasses the democratic entity's structure and reinforcement. This can be accomplished when society develops normatively favourable understandings of political organisations and democratic institutions. I.e., when democracy becomes routinized. This includes well-functioning political parties, leaders, interparty groupings, senate, parliament, and rules determining referendums and elections. Involved is also the procedure in which society chooses and oversees their democratic government.

Civil and political societies' have complementary functions. Political power contestation strengthens democracy and directs it towards

consolidation. I.e., political society must involve parties to achieve democratic consolidation. Parties symbolize civil society, and should reflect citizens' opinion differences. To reach consolidation, political society must be adapted to democratic dispute. This is necessary since disputes are structured around the democratic order's procedures and standards. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 10)

2.1.4 Rule of Law

Rule of law originates in civil and political society, but the state apparatus applies it. For democratic consolidation to be effective, a certain degree of independence and autonomy in political and civil societies must be incorporated into and reinforced by the rule of law. Rule of law is an essential condition for a properly functioning democracy. It also serves as an important part of constitutionalism. It necessitates strong commitment and devotion to the procedures of governance that cannot be easily reformed by majoritarianism. The state's conditions set forth in the constitution can only be altered by an extraordinary majority ruling. It demands a straightforward law structure, an autonomous justice regime, and a powerful legal environment supported by civil society. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 10)

2.1.5 Bureaucratic Structure

Democratic consolidation calls for an efficient state apparatus able to control its territory. This involves safeguarding the state's monopoly on violence. An efficient tax system that can manage and handle mandatory taxes from individuals or entities under the country's *de jure* territory is required. A forceful normative administrative presence in its holdings must also exist. If such criteria are absent, democracy may disintegrate. If citizens' rights are disrespected, they are also deprived from fundamental rights in governance that has a democratic style. The state is also prevented from efficiently carrying out bureaucratic responsibilities. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 11)

2.1.6 Economic Society

During peacetimes, a command economy cannot contribute to consolidation. Furthermore, a full-fledged market economy has never lead to consolidation. The state has three fundamental tasks:

1. Responsibility to defend society from other autonomous societies' interference or violent behaviour.
2. Responsibility to protect society's members, as far as possible, from injustice or violence from other members.
3. Responsibility to install and uphold governmental works and public institutions that could never be of interest of individuals or smaller groups because it would benefit society at large. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 12)

The third task lessens citizen inequality. Inequality occurs if areas like the health sector, education and transportation are subjected to the market economy. Citizens have more protection if the state provides such services. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 13)

This is accomplished through economic society. A consolidated democracy necessitates formal and informal guidelines serving to lead behaviour and socio-politically construct the state. Here, economic society becomes important. It mediates between market and state. This is accomplished through regulations and institutions, which socially and politically regulate the market. An efficient state apparatus rooted in civil and political society would adopt an economic society susceptible for consolidation. Therefore, a strong economy correlates with democratic advancement in the consolidation process.

Crippling a state's capacity to generate regulatory functions equates to issues in making economic reforms which would further democratization. The theory determines that a consolidated democracy is constructed on the interrelation between the arenas regarding how democracy is more than a government form. Each arena has separately individual tasks. But together, they explain how consolidation is accomplished. Consequently, economic society is important for consolidation since it mediates between several arenas. It supports the idea that different arenas cannot function properly without assistance and backing of others. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 13)

2.1.7 The Five Arenas Features of Democratic Consolidation

Arena	Features
Civil Society	<p>Can the media express itself freely?</p> <p>Are political officials held accountable for their actions, and do accountability mechanisms exist making sure this happens?</p>
Political Society	<p>Are there free and fair elections?</p> <p>Are election results legitimate and accepted?</p> <p>Can the country be considered free?</p>
Rule of Law	<p>Is there a respect of human rights?</p> <p>Is the judicial system independent?</p>
Bureaucratic Society	<p>Does corruption exist within the state bureaucracy and its institutions?</p>
Economic Society	<p>Is poverty and inequality at a high level?</p>

The arenas provide interrelating preconditions for a state's development towards consolidation. Even though features constituting a flourishing arena are far-reaching, emphasis is placed on aspects like liberty, governance, electoral processes, equality before the law, checks and balances, and equality. These are the arenas' principal aspects. Therefore, the arenas could be considered a fundamental structure of underlying themes of what constitutes a consolidated democracy. If one explores an analytical framework of the arenas, one may understand the mentioned themes and features and answer the proposed questions regarding whether the theoretical concepts *constitutional design* and *democratic consolidation* are applicable in explaining Spain's 1975-1979 rise in democratic development.

2.2 Larry Diamond, 1999

According to Diamond, consolidation must rest on foundations other than simply democratic stability and persistence. Consolidation signifies the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation. All significant political actors, both at the elite and mass levels, must believe and agree that the democratic regime is the most appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative. Political competitors must regard democracy, along with the procedures, institutions, and laws that it specifies, as “the only game in town”. (Diamond 1999, p. 65) I.e., it must be the only viable framework for governing society and advancing their own interests.

At the mass level, a broad normative and behavioural consensus must exist on the constitutional system’s legitimacy, however poorly it performs. This consensus must cut across ethnic, class, nationality, and other cleavages. (Diamond 1999, p. 65) Legitimation in this sense must also be behaviourally evident and routinized. Consolidation encompasses “habituation”, meaning the procedures, norms, and expectations of democracy become so internalised that actors routinely, instinctively conform to the games written and un-written rules, even when they conflict and compete. (Rustow 1970, pp. 337, 363) It is the deep, unquestioned, routinized commitment to democracy and its procedures at the elite and mass level that produces a crucial element of consolidation, a reduction in the uncertainty of democracy, regarding not so much the outcomes as the rules and methods of political competition. As consolidation advances, there is a widening of the range of political actors who come to assume democratic conduct and democratic loyalty on the part of their adversaries, a transition from instrumental to principled commitments to the democratic framework, a growth in trust and cooperation among political competitors, and a socialisation of the general population through both deliberate efforts and the practice of democracy in politics and civil society. (Whitehead 1989, p. 79) Democratic consolidation can thus be understood as encompassing a shift in *political culture*. (Diamond 1999, p. 65)

Both at the elite and mass level, social movements and interest groups also hunt for votes and benefits, lobby for reforms, and contest in policy arenas and elections. (Diamond 1999, p. 66) Consolidation requires more than a commitment to democracy in the abstract, that democracy is “in principle” the best government form. For a democracy to be consolidated, organizations, elite, and the mass public must believe the political system is worth defending and obeying. This robust legitimacy involves a shared normative and behavioural commitment to the specific rules and practices of the country’s constitutional system, so called “loyalty” to the democratic regime. (Linz 1978, p. 16)

Consolidation occurs in two dimensions, norms and behaviour, on three levels. At the highest level are the country's elites, the top decision makers, political activists, organisational leaders, and opinion shapers, in politics, government, the economy, and society. Due to their disproportionate power and influence, elites matter most for stability and democratic consolidation, both in behaviours and beliefs. (Diamond 1999, p. 66) Elites are more likely to have elaborate political beliefs systems, more likely to be guided in their actions by their beliefs, and they have more political influence. (Dahl 1971, p. 128) Beyond their power over decisions and events, elites shape political culture and signal what behaviours are proper. Elites lead by example, good or bad; when they are contemptuous of democratic norms and rules, their followers are as well. (Gunther et al. 1995, p. 13)

At the intermediate level, parties, organisations, and movements have their own beliefs, behaviour patterns, and norms. These may not be uniform among their members, but different collective actors manifest different democracy orientations. Furthermore, while collective actors may be led by elites, they do not necessarily share their leaders' normative and behavioural commitments. The file and rank of a union or an organisation may be less inclined to compromise or tolerate opposition. They may be tightly controlled by their leaders, or operate in a decentralised fashion. However, to the extent that they operate as collective actors with members and some coherent tactics and goals, their actions have consequences for democracy. (Diamond 1999, p. 67)

At the elites and organisations level, it is easier to observe the democratic consolidation phenomenon in its inverse: the signs of instability, fragility, and non-consolidation, a.k.a. deconsolidation. These include all manifestations of "disloyalty"; rejection of the democratic system's legitimacy or the nation-state and its boundaries by significant parties, organisations, or movements; willingness of political competitors to use fraud, force, or other illegal means to acquire power or influence policies; "knocking at the barracks" door for military support in a political struggle; refusal to honour elected parties and leaders' right to govern; abuse of constitutional liberties and opposition rights by ruling elites; and false depiction of democratically loyal opponents as disloyal "instruments of outside secret and conspiratorial groups". (Diamond 1999, p. 67)

Democracy can be consolidated when no significant collective actors challenge democratic institutions' legitimacy or regularly violate its constitutional norms, laws, and procedures. If democracy is to be considered consolidated, antidemocratic forces must be truly at the margin. (O'Donnell 1996, p. 34) A regime may be regarded sufficiently consolidated even if some citizens do not share in the democratic consensus or regard its key institutions as legitimate, as long as those individuals or groups are numerically insignificant, basically isolated from regime-supporting forces, and therefore incapable of disrupting the regime's stability. The broader the scope of democratic consensus, the

closer the regime will be to full conformity with consolidation. (Gunther et al. 1995, p. 8)

At the mass public level, consolidation is indicated when an overwhelming majority of citizens believe democracy is the greatest government form. Any designation of a threshold of quantitative support is arbitrary. Still, empirical evidence suggests that two-thirds is considered a minimum threshold, and 70-75% is a more compelling indicator. Such overwhelming public support for democracy signals consolidation at the level of mass beliefs, but only when two other conditions are met: when this level is sustained consistently over some period of time and when the opposing view, actively rejecting the democracy's legitimacy rather than simply expressing apathy or confusion, is held by less than 15% of the population. At the mass behaviour level, democratic consolidation requires the rejection of fraud, violence, thuggery, and lawlessness as routine political action methods. (Diamond 1999, p. 68) Democracy can be consolidated when voter turnout is low, though it may be a lower-quality democracy getting consolidated. It cannot be consolidated when supporters of rival parties frequently terrorize one another in the struggle for power. (Diamond 1999, p. 68)

We can assess a democratic system's consolidation progress with a table. When all cells show substantial normative democracy commitment and behavioural compliance with its rules and limits, democracy can be considered consolidated. (Diamond 1999, p. 68) A third "constitutional" dimension also exists. However, this is another behaviour dimension, involving the habitual resolution of conflicts within the "specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the democratic process". The behavioural dimension is indicated when no significant actor spends many resources creating a non-democratic regime. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 6) These two dimensions can be combined with no real loss of explanatory power. They both involve behavioural support for democracy, including its institutions and constraints. (Diamond 1999, p. 303)

2.2.1 Indicators of Democratic Consolidation

<i>Level</i>	<i>Norms and Beliefs</i>	<i>Behaviour</i>
Elite	Most significant leaders of opinion, culture, business, and social organizations believe in democracy's legitimacy. Significant government and party leaders believe democracy constitutes the best government form and the constitutional system's rules and institutions merit support. Such beliefs are manifest in ideology, public rhetoric, symbolic gestures, and writings.	Government leaders, political parties, state unions, and interest groups respect each other's right to compete peacefully for power, eschew violence, and obey laws, the constitution, and mutually accepted norms of political conduct. Elites avoid rhetoric inciting intolerance, violence, or illegal methods. Leaders do not utilize the military for political advantage.
Organisations	Parties, social movements, and interest groups endorse, or, at least, do not reject in their writings, charters, and declarations democracy's legitimacy and constitutional rules and institutions.	No significant party, movement, interest group, or institution seeks to overthrow democracy or employs violence, fraud, or other unconstitutional or antidemocratic methods when pursuing power or other political goals.
Mass public	More than 70% of the mass public prefers democracy to other government forms and believes democracy is the most suitable government form. Less than 15% of the public favours authoritarianism.	No antidemocratic organisation, party, or movement enjoys significant mass following. Ordinary citizens do not routinely use violence, fraud, or other unconstitutional or illegal methods to express political preferences or pursue political interests.

2.3 Andreas Schedler, 1998

According to Schedler, to the original mission of rendering democracy “the only game in town”, a myriad of other tasks have been added. The list of “problems of democratic consolidation”, and the corresponding list of “conditions of democratic consolidation”, has expanded to now include the diffusion of democratic values, popular legitimation, the neutralisation of anti-system actors, civilian supremacy over the military, party building, the elimination of enclaves that suffer from authoritarian rule, the organisation of functional interests, the routinisation of politics, the stabilisation of electoral rules, the introduction of mechanisms of direct democracy, the decentralisation of state power, the alleviation of poverty, and economic stabilisation. (Schedler 1998, pp. 91-92)

2.3.1 Viewpoints and Horizons

Non-democratic regimes are generically labelled “authoritarian”. For a nation to be considered democratic, there must be civil and political rights in place along with fair, competitive, and inclusive elections. Dahl calls such countries “polyarchies”. However, they are more commonly called “liberal democracies”. (Schedler 1998, p. 92) Collier and Levitsky have distinguished four broad regime categories; authoritarianism, electoral democracy, advanced democracy and liberal democracy. Schedler demonstrates that these categories provide a basis for comprehending the ways that democracy students utilize the term “democratic consolidation”. (Schedler 1998, p. 93)

Those who are concerned with democratic stability and attempt to avoid regressions to either non-democratic or semi-democratic regimes support “negative” notions of democratic consolidation. Simultaneously, those who concern themselves with democratic advances and try to attain progress toward either liberal or high-quality democracy sponsor “positive” notions of democratic consolidation. (Schedler 1998, pp. 94-95)

2.3.2 Avoiding Democratic Breakdown

Once a nation has transitioned from authoritarian rule and has reached a point where more or less free, fair, and competitive elections are held, democratic actors generally cannot afford to simply relax and enjoy democratic rule’s “bounded uncertainty”. More often than not, regime-

threatening “unbounded uncertainties” persist, and the democrats’ foundational concern shifts from establishing democracy’s core institutions to securing what they have achieved. For such actors, consolidation democracy signifies reducing the probability of its breakdown to a point where they can feel relatively confident that democracy can and will persist into the near, and far, future. This preoccupation with regime survival describes the “classical meaning” of democratic consolidation. In its positive formulations, this branch of consolidation studies speak about reaching the goal of democratic continuity, entrenchment, maintenance, survival, permanence, endurance, resilience, persistence, viability, sustainability, or irreversibility. (Schedler 1998, p. 95) By contrast, negative formulations invoke the necessity of moving beyond democratic fragility, uncertainty, instability, vulnerability, reversibility, or the threat of breakdown. Whatever the variances in nuance, the uniting purpose beneath this multifaceted vocabulary is quite straightforward; it is basically preoccupied with keeping democracy alive, and with preventing it from suddenly dying. (Schedler 1998, pp. 95-96)

In accordance with its focus on the danger of coups, this first notion of democratic consolidation concerns itself above all with deviant or anti-system actors who harbour anti-democratic intentions. Principally, the range of actors that actually or potentially fall into this category of dangerous elements is unlimited. E.g., Schedler mentions that in Latin America, with its recent history of so-called bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, fears of democratic breakdown have tended to focus on the professionals of state violence, and the business class, which had also acquired a solid anti-democratic reputation until the latest democratisation cycle. But in fact, the list of either suspected or convicted assassins or gravediggers of democratic rule is a lot more extensive. Included are private men-at-arms, such as drug cartels, guerrillas, and violent street protesters. Included are also elected presidents deliberately staging military-backed autogolpes, and even dissatisfied populations who might tire of a democracy that has failed to deliver, in material terms, much more than economic hardship along with social inequality. Neutralising, eliminating, or converting disloyal players represents the primary task of preventing democratic-breakdown. Yet taming the enemy is not the only practical concern associated with stabilisation of democracy. Since democratic stability is an uncontroversial and noble goal, certain scholars tend to invoke anything that is positively valued in the name of democratic sustainability. Discussions involve, e.g., nation building, economic performance, state building, creation of mass legitimacy, elimination of authoritarian legacies, diffusion of democratic values, institutionalisation of party systems, etcetera. The list is endless. Sometimes these items are accompanied by plausible causal theories regarding how they affect the chances of democratic survival, though often only through indirect and extensive causation chains. (Schedler 1998, p. 96)

2.3.3 Avoiding Democratic Erosion

In addition to the risks of relapse to authoritarianism, new democracies often cope with the dangers of decay, of less spectacular, more incremental, and less transparent regression forms. Whilst the former provokes a discontinuity with democratic politics, leading to open authoritarian rule, the latter suggests a slow corrosion leading to a form of semi-democratic rule, to a hybrid regime that can be placed between dictatorship and liberal democracy. If democratic breakdown constitutes the main concern and defining horizon of avoidance of our first democratic consolidation concept, democratic erosion occupies the same role in regards to this second consolidation concept. (Schedler 1998, p. 97)

2.3.4 The Completion of Democracy

Whilst liberal democracies deal with “negative” challenges of hindering democratic erosion and regression to semi-democratic rule, “electoral democracies” instead are faced with the symmetrical “positive” challenge of democratic completion, which is the attainment of full-fledged democratic rule. Students of electoral democracies generally associate the notion of democratic consolidation with this task, with the telos of moving away from some “diminished subtype” of democracy towards a “non-diminished” democracy, or, with the accomplishment of a “second transition” from a democratic government to a democratic regime. (O’Donnell 1996, pp. 18-19)

2.3.5 The Deepening of Democracy

The idea of democratic transition where it is completed by traveling from electoral to liberal democracy represents a progress-oriented “positive” version of democratic consolidation. As one moves further along the “continuum of democracy” through the deepening of liberal democracy and pushing it closer towards an advanced democracy form, a second positive version is represented. (Schedler 1998, pp. 99-100) As one compares contemporary democratic nations in different parts of the world with more or less rosy pictures of better-established Western democracies, the former tends to fall short on several accounts. Less established democracies appear to possess, or be possessed by, “comparative disadvantages” in nearly every democratic politics field. The list of probable structural deficits covers an array as diverse as public

administration, governmental performance, party systems, judicial systems, civil society, interest groups, political structure, and decision-making forms. In these and other areas, most less established democracies seem “underdeveloped” compared with “advanced democracies”. (Schedler 1998, p. 100) Most authors writing about democratic consolidation either think about the first notion of democratic consolidation, the stabilisation of democracy, or about the last, its deepening. Those two democratic consolidation concepts tend to be the most popular ones. The former’s academic popularity is not surprising. Newer democracies tend to have to preoccupy themselves with long-term survival. However, as a rule, this is not an immediate concern anymore, but simply one issue among others requiring political attention. Nowadays, democratic quality issues are usually much more noticeable in everyday politics compared to issues related to democratic survival. (Schedler 1998, p. 100)

2.3.6 The Organization of Democracy

Democratic consolidation requires more than institutionalising basic democracy ground rules. It requires establishing specific rules and organisations of democracy. I.e., this concept of consolidation turns its attention from the procedural minima defining democratic regimes to the concrete rules and organisations defining different democracy forms. It changes the analysis level from regimes towards subsystems, a.k.a. “partial regimes.” Thus democratic consolidation becomes synonymous with “institution building”. (Schedler 1998, p. 100) This implies the construction of such big organisations that make up the characteristic infrastructure of modern liberal democracies; legislative bodies, parties and party systems, judicial systems, state bureaucracies, and systems of interest intermediation. (Schedler 1998, p. 101) This fifth notion of democratic consolidation is “self-referential” insofar as liberal democracy serves as its point of both departure and arrival. According to Schedler, “organising” democracy could bring us closer to preventing democratic regression and effecting democratic advances. However, it could also pull us farther away from that goal. It depends of the forms through which democracy becomes organised. (Schedler 1998, p. 101)

2.4 Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell and Julio S. Valenzuela, 1992

According to Valenzuela, there is a tendency to associate “consolidated democracies” with their stability and, by extension, to convert the passage of time with no regime reversals and the absence of potentially destabilising factors into the basic criteria for democratic consolidation. While a democratic regime’s durability is an attribute to consolidation, this characteristic does not provide in itself an adequate basis to ground the notion of consolidation. The retention of democratic government after a transition process does not necessarily ensure the consolidation of a democratic regime. There are instances where it is possible that democratically elected governments may succeed one another for a considerable time without reversals simply as a result of the caution of its leadership in not challenging actors whose power escapes democratic accountability. In this case the resulting stability cannot be equated with progress toward creating a fully democratic regime; what enhances stability may detract from a regime’s democratic quality. The democratic consolidation process would require redefinitions, sometimes at considerable risk, of the regime’s institutions and/or of the relations among political actors. (Valenzuela 1992, p. 59) Furthermore, consolidated democracies are not necessarily free of destabilising conditions such as presence of sharp ideological differences among major parties and political leaders, armed separatist or terrorist movements, social unrest permeating through urban riots, or racial and ethnic tensions leading to violent confrontations; requiring all of these to wither away before presuming democratic consolidation in new or re-established democracies would be an excessively stringent test. Consolidated democracies are also not immune to breakdown processes. In fact, they may be vulnerable to the very perception of their solidity by democratic elites that take the existence of democratic institutions for granted, even in crisis situations, and because of this do not reach the necessary accommodations to prevent their demise. (Valenzuela 1992, p. 59) In sum, the absence of political crisis, of destabilising elements, and the durability of a newly democratic setting are in one sense an insufficient test and in another an excessively demanding one for the notion of democratic consolidation. Additional criteria must exist to assess whether destabilising factors prevent democratic consolidation. (Valenzuela 1992, p. 59)

3. Analysis Template

To analyse the Spanish case, this thesis researches the role of certain factors and courses of events to find out if and how they may or may not have contributed to democratic consolidation. These factors are; the role of the military refurbishment, the impact of EU membership, the actions of King Juan Carlos I and Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez, the role of the 1978 Spanish constitution, and civil society's role. These issues have been previously mentioned and discussed in theoretical works written by different political scientists of good repute. However, the variety and focus of the texts in which these factors can be found is broad and rather incohesive. Therefore, this thesis focuses on combining these issues to thoroughly demonstrate and deepen the understanding of how these factors contributed to democratic consolidation. The aim is to discuss them in a more direct and approachable manner.

As mentioned, several factors have been considered important in the Spanish case. However, there are also factors writers such as Linz and Stepan believe are important for democratic consolidation that are not necessarily as applicable to the case of Spain. Linz and Stepan highlight that the arena which they refer to as *economic society* is considered by them to be an important supportive condition to achieve a consolidated democracy. They argue that there has never been and there cannot be a non-wartime consolidated democracy in a commanded economy. They also argue that there has never been and there will almost certainly never be a modern consolidated democracy in a pure market economy. Modern consolidated democracies require a set of socio-politically crafted and socio-politically accepted norms, institutions, and regulations that mediate between market and state. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 11)

Although this is important for the Spanish case as well, it is not generally considered to be a factor of importance in understanding how Spain's democracy was consolidated. At the time of Franco's passing in 1975, Spain was already a market economy. As early as 1959, a plan was introduced that opened the way to a new institutional design favouring a free market distribution of resources, thus allowing Spain to accelerate growth and catch up with Western European nations. Thanks to 1950s reforms and particularly the 1959 Plan, *per capita* GDP was a lot higher than it otherwise would have been by 1975. (Sanz-Villaroya et al. 2011, p. 45) Thus, when the democratic transition was initiated, Spain's rulers did not have to confront a deep economic crisis, as was the case in Latin America and the Communist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 88)

Mainwaring writes that modern-day Spain has arrived at competitive regimes with civil control over the military. (Mainwaring et al. 1992, p. 134) When studying Diamond's theory on democratic consolidation, it was found that he considers it to be of importance that political leaders strive for the military to be subordinated to civilian control. (Diamond 1999, p. 76) Schedler also mentions the importance of "civilian supremacy over the military". (Schedler 1998, pp. 91-92) Thus, as is demonstrated in the following sections, a link between democratic consolidation and the fact that Spain gained civil control over the military was found.

Spain has fully complied with the objectives established by the European Council. Since joining the union, Spain has worked tirelessly towards implementing liberalisation measures. (Guide to Business in Spain 2021) As mentioned later, a country can apply for EU membership if the union's democratic values are respected and it shows commitment to promoting them. (European Commission 2022) These membership criteria were found to be very much in line with some of those laid forth by Linz and Stepan in their five arenas that must be fulfilled in order to reach democratic consolidation. (Linz and Stepan 1996, pp. 10-11) By fulfilling and honouring the EU membership criteria, it was found that Spain has made considerable efforts to live up to the criteria for democratic consolidation of the arenas Linz and Stepan call *rule of law* and *bureaucratic society*.

Juan Carlos decided to let his extensive executive and constitutional powers provide Spain with new political legitimacy by working towards democratization. (Preston 2005, pp. 321-322) When studying Diamond's theory on democratic consolidation, it was found that one of the indicators put forth by him for a democracy to be considered consolidated is that significant governmental leaders at the elite level should believe that democracy constitutes the best government form, and that the rules and institutions of the constitutional system merit support. Political competitors must regard democracy as the "only game in town". (Diamond 1999, p. 65) Thus, as demonstrated in the following sections, a link between democratic consolidation and the fact that Spain gained a monarch who promoted democracy was found.

Adolfo Suárez, the politician Juan Carlos appointed as prime minister in July 1976, would also prove to be a key individual when it came to instigating reform in Spain. (Preston 1987, p. 92) According to Preston, Suárez was a right-wing politician who encouraged reformist ideals and demonstrated acceptance towards democracy as the sole practical path for the nation's future. (Preston 1987, p. 23) When studying Linz and Stepan's, Diamond's, and Schedler's theories on democratic consolidation, one can also come to the conclusion that there are indications that Suárez's actions also contributed to democratic consolidation. This correlation is demonstrated more thoroughly in the upcoming sections.

The 1978 Constitution is widely considered one of the most considerable and influential factors that led to political change in Spain. It was drafted in a way that made it possible for certain regions to enjoy more autonomy than others. It incarnated a balance between two opposite trends; centralism and federalism. Through the constitution's design, a balance has been maintained throughout Spanish society where regional differences are seen as enriching to the national texture, while essentialist emphasis on the nation's organicity is maintained. (Conversi 2002, pp. 227-228) These aspects were found to be very much in line with Linz and Stepan's arena *rule of law*. They argue that for democratic consolidation to be effective, a certain degree of independence and autonomy in political and civil societies must be incorporated into and reinforced by the rule of law. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 10) Regarding democratic consolidation, Diamond writes that at the mass level, a broad normative and behavioural consensus must exist on the legitimacy of the constitutional system, however poor or unsatisfying its performance may be at any given point in time. This consensus must also cut across ethnic, class, nationality and other cleavages. (Diamond 1999, p. 65) Even though regions such as Catalonia and the Basque country has seen its fair share of independence movements since the implementation of the 1978 constitution, it is a known fact that a majority of both people and political representatives of Spain's different regions, including these two, generally have regarded the constitution as legitimate. (Nohlen and Stöver 2010, p. 1824) Therefore, as explained in the upcoming sections, a conclusion was able to be drawn that the contents of the constitution, along with the fact that both a majority of the mass public and the elite in the form of the ruling politicians demonstrated their approval towards it, most likely contributed to democratic consolidation in the country.

According to Encarnación, civil society did not play a very big role in the democratization of Spain. (Encarnación 2001, p. 55) Linz and Stepan have also themselves stated that the theory they have laid forth regarding the connection between civil society and democratic consolidation is not necessarily as applicable to Spain as it is in regards to other democratization cases. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 7) As explained more thoroughly in the upcoming sections, a conclusion was able to be drawn that even though several of the five interrelating arenas that according to Linz and Stepan are required to reach democratic consolidation are applicable to the case of Spain, their theory on the importance of the role of civil society is not necessarily as relevant when it comes to democratic consolidation in Spain as it has proven to be in other democratization cases. However, it is important to understand that civil society always plays a role to a certain degree in democratic consolidation in the sense that the people of a country must generally be in favour of democracy if the democratic system is to survive in the long term.

4. The Theories on Democratic Consolidation Applied to the Case of Spain

In the following section, the theories on democratic consolidation are applied to the Spanish case.

4.1 The Role of Military Refurbishment in Democratic Consolidation

In 1981, Antonio Tejero, a former colonel of the Franco regime led two-hundred armed Civil Guard officers into the Spanish Congress of Deputies during a vote to elect a President of the Government. As the officers held ministers and parliamentarians hostage for eighteen hours, King Juan Carlos quickly and clearly denounced the coup in a broadcasted statement, calling for rule of law and the democratic government to continue. (BBC 1981) As a result of the king's actions and firm support of democracy, the coup was doomed to fail.

Despite the attempted coup, the country witnessed the establishment of civilian control of the armed forces. This process went unexpectedly fast and was very successful. In 1977, Spain established the Ministry of Defence. This reflected the desire that reformist officers had to internally modernize the armed forces, along with the need of civilian politicians to establish the primacy of civil over military power when it came to decision-making. (Maxwell 1991, p. 41) As previously mentioned, Diamond states that an important indicator of democratic consolidation is that political leaders do not utilize the military to gain political advantage. He also claims that if the military is to be subordinated to civilian control, then civilian institutional capacities to manage and oversee it must be strengthened in the executive and legislative branches. (Diamond 1999, p. 76) Schedler also mentions the importance of "civilian supremacy over the military". (Schedler 1998, pp. 91-92) Therefore, we can conclude that Spanish politicians' more or less uniform aim to strengthen civil over military power can be considered to be in line with the statements laid forward by both Diamond and Schedler that political leaders must strive for the military to be subordinated to civilian control. Consequently, the military refurbishment in Spain appears to have been a factor that

contributed to democratic consolidation. Therefore, this part of the concept of democratic consolidation, as defined by both Diamond and Schedler, is applicable in this instance.

4.2 Democratic Consolidation Through European Union Membership

Modern-day Spain enjoys institutional democratic structures including several accoutrements of democracy such as; a gamut of political parties, a full-fledged party system, “party” government, and elections. The transition towards democracy was accompanied by a broader opening towards Europe, along with a sense that Spain was no longer an outcast but rather a part of the Western democratic community. Throughout European liberal and social democratic circles, Spain gained new legitimacy and acceptability. (Wiarda and Siquiera Wiarda 1989, pp. 208-209) Spain gained full membership of the European Economy Community in 1986. According to figures published by the European Commission, the country has fully complied with the objectives established by the European Council. Since joining the union, Spain has worked tirelessly towards implementing liberalisation measures. (Guide to Business in Spain 2021)

When Whitehead discusses international aspects of democratization, he groups them under three broad headings: *contagion*, *control*, and *consent*. Schmitter also adds a fourth: *conditionality*. These four are presented as alternative modes of analysis, each with a different structure and each highlighting distinctive features. (Whitehead and Schmitter 1996, pp. 22-23, 29) In the case of democratization in Spain, the one called *consent* becomes highly relevant when studying the nations road towards EU membership. Whitehead writes that consent for democratization may be generated when it is reinforced by the prospect of full membership to the EU. (Whitehead and Schmitter 1996, p. 24) In short, the concept of *consent* refers to a negotiation perspective. As the EU along with the European Council makes demands and lists requirements, Spain is required to fulfil those requirements in order to become and remain full-fledged EU members.

For a country to be eligible to enter the EU, it must meet certain membership criteria. According to the Treaty on the European Union, a European country can apply if the democratic values of the EU are respected and it shows commitment to promoting them. Among the criteria for joining, it is mentioned that the country must have stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities. The nation must also have a functioning market economy. (European Commission 2022) These criteria

are very much in line with some of those laid forth by Linz and Stepan in their five arenas that must be fulfilled to reach democratic consolidation. When discussing the arena called *rule of law*, Linz and Stepan state that democratic consolidation can be accomplished if human rights are respected and the judicial system is independent. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 10) As part of the arena called *bureaucratic society*, it is also mentioned that corruption must not exist within the state bureaucracy and its institutions. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 11) Since Spain has been a respected member of the EU for the past 36 years, we can draw the conclusion that the country generally meets the EU membership requirements. Consequently, we can also draw the conclusion that the theory of democratic consolidation, as put forth by Linz and Stepan, is applicable to the case of Spain. Most likely, Spain's thorough commitment to joining and being a viable part of the EU has also contributed to Spain reaching democratic consolidation, since the EU demands development in a democratic direction while at the same time Spain has benefited from becoming a larger and more important part of a European and international political context through its EU membership.

4.3 The Role of King Juan Carlos I in Democratic Consolidation

After Franco's passing in 1975, King Juan Carlos I subsequently ascended to the throne during the same year. He would come to have a decisive and successful influence on Spain's democratization. Today, Spain ranks as one of Europe's most politically stable and liberal democracies. As Franco's successor and newly crowned king, Juan Carlos faced tough challenges. He saw the need for political change, and yet he had been entrusted with 37 years of dictatorship. (Ünaldi 2012, pp. 7-8) As heir to Franco, many considered Juan Carlos a weak puppet. To prove his criticsers wrong and to prevent the monarchy from turning into a mere rubber stamp for the continuation of the old regime, Juan Carlos had to make a decision regarding whether to exert his extensive executive and constitutional powers to link himself with the nation's authoritarian past or to provide the kingship of Spain with new legitimacy by turning into a catalyst of democracy, thus accommodating those who had criticised him on the right and left. Thanks to his strict and comparably down-to-earth upbringing and political and historical consciousness, he decided on choosing the latter. Additionally, his father had declared that one of the criteria for him to renounce his right to the throne was that Juan Carlos had to fully implement democratic reforms. (Preston 2005, pp. 321-322)

In December 1967 King Constantine II of Greece had been forced to flee the country of which he was head of state. This was due to the fact

that he did not have any loyal military forces to rely on. He had been forced to reluctantly agree to inaugurate a military junta as rulers of Greece. Constantine would remain as head of state in exile until the junta completely abolished the monarchy on 1 June 1973. (Dimitrakis 2009, p. 115-116) Since these events took place only a few years before the passing of Franco and the initiation of Spain's democratic transition, it is highly likely that Juan Carlos was aware and had taken notice of what had happened to Constantine. It is likely that the events in Greece influenced Juan Carlos, and made him realize that if the Spanish monarchy were to survive, it would be important for him as king to profess to democracy. Linz and Stepan touch upon this subject as they write that it is useful to remember that, in Spain, the king by his actions legitimated the monarchy more than the monarchy legitimated the king. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 89)

One of the criteria put forth by Diamond that serves as an indicator of democratic consolidation is that significant governmental leaders at the elite level should believe that democracy constitutes the best form of government, and that the rules and institutions of the constitutional system merit support. Political competitors must regard democracy, along with the procedures, institutions, and laws that it specifies, as "the only game in town". (Diamond 1999, p. 65) Democratic consolidation in Spain can, naturally, not have automatically arrived with Juan Carlos' ascension to the throne. However, that fact that he, as perhaps the most important elite governmental leader at the time, held a firm view that democracy was the only viable political option for the country most likely contributed to leading the country in the right direction towards both democratization and democratic consolidation. By looking at the behaviour and mind-set of Juan Carlos, one can come to the conclusion that he as a governmental leader generally fulfilled the criteria put forth by Diamond in regards to the norms, beliefs, and behaviours required by significant political leaders for democratic consolidation to be accomplished. Thus, we are able to come to the conclusion that Juan Carlos actions towards building a democratic nation in the long run most likely also had an impact on the country's democratic consolidation.

4.4 The Appointment of Adolfo Suárez as Prime Minister and His Role in Democratic Consolidation

An important event in the democratic transition was Adolfo Suárez's appointment as prime minister in July 1976. To understand how and to what extent Juan Carlos and Suárez contributed to this event, the

following section explains why Juan Carlos appointed Suárez, and why he was considered a suitable candidate.

According to Preston, Juan Carlos believed Suárez to be a politician who could utilize Franco's system against itself, thus instigating reform. (Preston 1987, p. 92) Suárez was part of Franco's regime, and was therefore trusted by those committed to continuing Franco's policies. (Brassloff 1998, p. 81) Him being generally considered charming, ambitious along with being fairly young made Suárez trustworthy when it came to following Juan Carlos's plans of achieving a successful democratic transition. (Preston 1987, pp. 92-94) Finally, as mentioned by Amodia, Juan Carlos believed Suárez to be a pragmatic individual with communicative skills and an ideological flexibility. To summarize, it was the combination of Juan Carlos's own realization that Suárez was the impeccable individual to dismantle the Francoist regime, along with Suárez's own remarkable characteristics, that helped him gain the position of the prime minister who would aid to bring about the transition to democracy. (Amodia et al. 1998, pp. 11-13)

As Suárez became prime minister, many did not think he would contribute to democratic change. However, upon critical analysis, it is obvious that he showed proper commitment to dismantling the Francoist regime as soon as he was appointed. According to Preston, Suárez encouraged reformist ideals and demonstrated acceptance towards democracy as the sole practical path for the nation's future. With the influence of the King and Fernández-Miranda, Suárez also chose a new cabinet that consisted of conservative Catholics with links to progressive capitalism. This gave Suárez a better opportunity to implement the anti-Francoist reforms he was intent on implementing. (Preston 1987, p. 23) I.e., Suárez was a right-wing politician who allied himself with other right-wing politicians. Amodia also mentions that Suárez demonstrated a forward-thinking attitude. As soon as he was appointed prime minister, he granted political amnesty, met with opposition leaders, and began his project of political reform. (Amodia et al. 1998, pp. 12-13) Suárez would gain support from the financial aristocracy by assuring them the reforms would not jeopardize the foundations of the capitalist system. With Juan Carlos's backing, Suárez coaxed consent out of the top military command by guaranteeing that the authorities within the armed forces and the civil administration would remain untouched, that the established legality would be scrupulously respected in putting the reform in practice, and that the Spanish Communist Party would be excluded. (O'Donnell et al. 1986, p. 83) These are other factors making it clear that Suárez was what one would consider a right-wing politician. Through Suárez's actions, we are also able to understand that his reforms could be considered to have been necessary to be on good terms with the military at the time. Had Juan Carlos allied himself with a representative from the old communist party, the military would most definitely have demonstrated their objections.

Juan Carlos's decision to choose a right-wing politician as his closest ally made it easier for the needs and requirements of the military to be met.

With these facts at hand, several political scientists have laid forth arguments that the actions and attitude of Suárez most definitely contributed to Spain's democratization. However, when one looks at the criteria related to consolidation of democracy put forth by Linz and Stepan, Diamond, and Schedler, one can come to the conclusion that there are indications that Suárez's actions also contributed to democratic consolidation. According to Diamond, one of the indicators of democratic consolidation is that significant leaders of opinion should have a shared belief in the legitimacy of democracy. Major leaders of government and politically significant parties must believe that democracy constitutes the best form of government and that the rules and institutions of the constitutional system merit support. Such beliefs must manifest in their ideology, public rhetoric, symbolic gestures, and writings. (Diamond 1999, p. 69) This definition is very much in line with the norms, beliefs and behaviours displayed by Juan Carlos and Suárez during the period after Franco's passing. The fact that both these men, who at the time were the country's most prominent political figures and significant leaders at the elite level, demonstrated clear support for democratization points to the fact that their actions may very well also in the long term have contributed to democratic consolidation. Through the evidently democratic behaviours they demonstrated as political figures, they may very well have helped to set a new foundational standard for how Spain was to be ruled, thus also aiding in making this new political attitude a permanent one in the long term.

4.5 The 1978 Constitution's Role Towards Democratic Consolidation

During the transition's early phase, from Franco's death in 1975 to the 1977 elections, the way for the most considerable and influential change of all was opened. This was the formulation of a new Spanish Constitution. The puissance of nationalist demands and the attempts of Madrid to resist such demands came to shape the entire pre-Constitutional debate and, ultimately, provided the key impetus for broad political changes. (Conversi 2002, p. 227) An important aspect of the 1978 constitution when it came to unifying the country was that it was drafted in a form that made it possible to have a compromise where certain regions of Spain were allowed to enjoy more autonomy than others. According to Conversi, the new constitution, without suggesting a rigid normative approach to the national question, incarnated a difficult balance between two opposite trends; centralism and federalism. Through the way

the constitution was designed, a political balance has been able to be maintained throughout Spanish society in which regional differences are seen as enriching to the national texture, while at the same time an essentialist emphasis on the country's organicity is maintained. (Conversi 2002, p. 228) More specifically, this is done through the 2nd article of the introductory section *título preliminar*, which defends "the indivisible unity of the Spanish Nation, common and indivisible fatherland, *patria*, of all the Spaniards", while acknowledging "the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions which form it and the solidarity among them". (Government of Spain 27) The most significant point is the constitution's acknowledgment of the existence of several "nationalities", *nacionalidades*, within a united and indivisible Spanish "nation", *nación*. Yet, the stress on unity rules out formal federalism. (Conversi 2002, p. 228)

As part of the arena Linz and Stepan call the *rule of law*, they argue that for democratic consolidation to be effective, a certain degree of independence and autonomy in political and civil societies must be incorporated into and reinforced by the rule of law. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 10) The terms "independence" and "autonomy" in political society certainly stand out as being highly applicable to the 1978 constitution. Even though modern-day Spain is not a formal federalist state, the fact that different regions gained a certain level of independence and autonomy most definitely contributed to the consolidation of democracy. At least from the viewpoint of theory put forth by Linz and Stepan. However, even though democracy in Spain today is generally considered consolidated, and even though the different regions generally accepted the terms of the new constitution, it is important to mention that the country's democratic transition also brought with it the emergence of revolutionary, separatist, fascist, and vigilante terrorist factions. (Sánchez-Cuenca and Aguilar 2009, p. 429) As part of his theory on democratic consolidation, Diamond writes that at the mass level, a broad normative and behavioural consensus must exist on the legitimacy of the constitutional system, however poor or unsatisfying its performance may be at any given point in time. This consensus must also cut across ethnic, class, nationality as well as other cleavages. (Diamond 1999, p. 65) Even though Spanish regions such as Catalonia and the Basque country has seen its fair share of independence movements since the implementation of the 1978 constitution, it is a known fact that a majority of both people and political representatives of the different regions of Spain, including these two, generally have regarded the constitution as legitimate. As the constitution was approved by the Spanish parliament *Cortes Generales* on October 31st 1978, a referendum was also held on December 6th the same year in which the nation's people were allowed to vote. As it turned out, 91.81% of voters showed support for the constitution. (Nohlen and Stöver 2010, p. 1824) Through this, we can draw the conclusion that the contents of the constitution, along with the fact that both a majority of the mass

public and the elite in the form of the ruling politicians demonstrated their approval towards it, most likely contributed to democratic consolidation in the country.

4.6 The Role of Civil Society in Democratic Consolidation

According to Encarnación, civil society did not play an immense role in Spain's democratization. He argues that the transition from dictatorship to democracy instead has challenged the assertion that a flourishing civil society must serve as a vital part for a country to democratize successfully. He states that Spain managed to construct a viable and highly successful new democracy with a prominent deficit in civil society development as reflected in the lack of the conditions most favourable when it comes to producing social capital. These typically include a prominent level of civic engagement, as suggested by a dynamic associational life, prosperous social movements, and well-institutionalised and autonomous advocacy groups. (Encarnación 2001, p. 55) Linz and Stepan has stated that they consider post-Franco Spain to be the paradigmatic case for the study of democratic transitions, almost in the same way as the Weimar Republic has been for the study of the fall of democracies. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 5) However, even though they are convinced that the case of Spain is a pristine example of democratization, their theory regarding the connection between civil society and democratic consolidation is not necessarily as applicable to the Spanish case. According to Linz and Stepan, civil society is complex, and it can spring off from smaller movements and accumulate into demonstrations on a larger scale. But whether big or small, the characteristics of civic societies are important because they have the capacity to act as a counterweight to any corrupt and anti-democratic force. (Linz and Stepan 1996, p. 7) However, in the case of Spain, it was not the organization of civil society that instigated political reform. Rather, Spain saw a transition to democracy that was orchestrated by the state elites via the institutional and legal mechanisms of the old regime. Following Franco's passing in 1975, along with the skilful leadership of Adolfo Suárez, who had been designated by King Juan Carlos to be the head of the democratic transition, the Francoist parliament approved a law and political reform that concurrently liquidated the institutions of the old regime and liberalised civil society. It also created the framework for the return to democracy with the 1977 democratic elections, the country's first since the Civil War's end in 1939. Following the elections, Suárez, along with his winning party *Unión de Centro Democrático*, negotiated the details of the architecture of the new democracy with the historical opposition to the

Franco regime; the socialist and communist parties. This well-organised and negotiated democratic transition was the first of its kind in world history, and it would come to provide a blueprint for comparable transitions, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe as well as Latin America. (Encarnación 2001, pp. 60-61) Thus, we can draw the conclusion that even though several of the five interrelating arenas that according to Linz and Stepan are required to reach democratic consolidation are applicable to the case of Spain, their theory on the importance of civil society's role is not necessarily as relevant when it comes to democratic consolidation in Spain as it has proven to be in other democratization cases. Of course, neither Linz and Stepan nor Diamond argues that civil society by itself can bring about democratic consolidation. However, they all stress the importance of it in their democratization and democratic consolidation literature, and they all tend to let the discursive treatment be highly predicated on the notion of civil society specifically. An example of this is how Diamond offers a very comprehensive theoretical assessment of the advantages of civil society in the context of democratic consolidation as well as transition. He is wary of pointing out that one must be realistic about the possible contributions that civil society can make to the project of democratisation. But, in his analysis, there also seems to be very few limits on what he believes the notion of civil society is able to do for the concept of democracy. For instance, he states that democracy, in particularly a healthy liberal one, requires a public that is organised for democracy, socialised to its values and norms, and committed not only to its innumerable narrow interests, but also to larger, common "civic" ends. A civic public as such is only possible with an effervescent civil society. (Diamond 1999, p. 221) Perhaps, the Spanish case could prove his theory otherwise.

However, it is important to remember that even though civil society may not have been the main driving force in Spain's democratization, civil society is always important for democratic consolidation in the long run in the sense that it is vital that a country's population at the "mass level" agree that democracy constitutes the best form of rule. At least if one is to believe Linz and Stepan's, Diamond's, and Schedler's theories. If a nation's people do not want democracy, there will undoubtedly not be any democratic consolidation. In the Spanish case, there are not a lot of anti-democratic movements left, and the military inheritance of Franco is nowadays widely regarded as history. An example of this is how, in May 2018, the Basque armed nationalist and separatist organisation ETA completely dissolved all its structures and ended its political initiative. (Reuters 2018)

5. Conclusions

An important part for achieving *democratic consolidation* in Spain was ensuring *civilian control* over the *military*, thus eliminating and preventing political tensions. It was also of importance to make sure that the country's different *regions* would feel that their political as well as social and historical voices would be heard and taken into consideration. This was ensured through the *1978 Spanish Constitution*. The new constitution was adopted with broad unanimity and great political support. Diamond speaks of the importance of this as he writes that government leaders, significant political parties, state unions, and interest groups must respect each other's right to compete peacefully for power, eschew violence, and obey the laws, the constitution, and mutually accepted norms of political conduct. (Diamond 1999, p. 69) And that legitimacy involves a shared normative and behavioural commitment to the specific rules and practices of the country's constitutional system. (Diamond 1999, p. 66) Even though Spain's accession to the *European Union* might not have been decisive for democratic consolidation, it did contribute by making the nation a clear part of the Western democratic community. As the EU has made demands and listed requirements, Spain has been required to fulfil them in order to receive the benefits of membership. Juan Carlos's decision to exert his extensive influence and constitutional powers to promote democracy was also an important factor for democratic consolidation. The fact that he, as an important part of the elite, held a firm view that democracy was the only viable political option made him an important factor for consolidation if one is to believe the theories put forth by Linz and Stepan as well as Diamond. The same goes for Adolfo Suárez, and the fact that he encouraged reformist ideals and demonstrated acceptance towards democracy as the sole practical path for the nation's future. As Diamond puts it, political competitors must regard democracy, along with the procedures, institutions, and laws that it specifies, as "the only game in town". (Diamond 1999, p. 65) Even if the case of Spain is a pristine example of democratization, the connection between civil society and democratic consolidation is not necessarily as applicable to the Spanish case. This is due to the fact that in Spain, it was not the organisation of civil society that instigated reform. Rather, it was instigated through the state elites via the institutional and legal mechanisms of the Francoist regime. That being said, it is important to remember that even though civil society may not have been the number one driving force in the democratization of Spain, civil society is always important for democratic consolidation in the long run in the sense that it

is vital that the population of a country at the “mass level” agree that democracy constitutes the best form of rule.

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