

THE BREAD AND WINE OF DEMOCRACY:
BUILDING REGIONAL NORMS IN SPAIN

by

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THE BREAD AND WINE OF DEMOCRACY:
BUILDING REGIONAL NORMS IN SPAIN

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INTRODUCTION

In 1971, as Spain convulsed from the constant policing, censoring and terrorization of the fading dictatorship of Francisco Franco, the Iberian state's passed a remarkable milestone in its eventual transition to democracy in Barcelona. There, in the thick of labor protest, economic crisis and a fractious regime, the *Asamblea de Cataluña* (Catalonian Assembly) convened for a second time in two years, uniting groups from Catholic bishops to capitalists to ardent members of the Spanish Communist Party who sought a coalition around a Pact for Liberty (Preston 1986). Five years later, with the death of Franco and holding of the first free and fair national elections since the 1930s, the communist leader Santiago Carrillo and an ideological menagerie of socialists and Christian Democrats formed the *Coordinación Democrática* which lobbied the government for a change in leadership from Franco's allies to a multiparty system and specific democratic reforms even in the absence of a safe institutional process to do so. Finally, as the popularly-elected cabinet sat to review and address economic problems in 1978, it forged the controversial *Pacto de Moncloa*, a difficult compromise which set a wage ceiling for labor unions but forced concessions by business to raise costs (Fishman 1982). Spanish politics quickly factionalized after the pact, and in some cases had never coalesced at all, as on the eve of 1977 elections in the Basque Country the nationalist militant group ETA still carried out assassinations, mass protests and calls for a radical revolutionary state (Preston 1986). From the late 1970s forward, Spain witnessed a dramatic shift to democracy yet remained shot through with weaknesses.

The legacy of democratization in Spain presents two empirical puzzles. First, with a decisive, coherent and institutional shift to democratic practices seemingly out of the

bold decisions of a few leaders and the monarch Juan Carlos, the government remade itself, removed a bevy of Francoist leaders and brought the restive military and security forces under control within the span of a decade. Why did these remarkable changes happen so quickly? Second, while national leadership determined the appearance and form of democracy, there is a puzzling irregularity among Spanish regions in addressing the challenges of creating political parties, voting in elections and effectively negotiating with splinter groups even after the democratic transition. ETA did not renounce violence as a means of winning Basque nationhood until 2011, while labor disputes in northern Spain persisted into the 1980s and 1990s (Fishman 2004). The preceding examples are various manifestations of civil society activity, collections of non-public, non-private actors creating – or destroying – rules and norms for governance in a fragile democracy. Therefore, this paper addresses the question: *why are some Spanish regions governed by more effective democracies than others?* By studying the Spanish example of a modern, multiparty state wearing autocratic scars, the question has implications for the patterns and practices which build a freer polity on a smaller scale rather than the broad brushstrokes of aggregated indicators and state-level variables.

In answering this question, this project will isolate the role of civil society by highlighting its importance in existing theories of democratic governance and by comparing several models of state decision-making theory. A composite theory of regional norm-based group influence on state behavior builds on previous research to integrate organizational attributes with the issue focus of social learning theory. This highlights the effect of the public sphere on the consolidation and legitimization of existing or potential rules for representing, executing or enforcing a just society. In other

words, the tactics and manner in which groups express interests, respond to the overtures of political leadership and organize their membership influences the crucial, strategic choices which spell life or death for political systems. After synthesizing a theory of democratic quality, this paper clarifies the key terms and variances in civil society to offer testable hypotheses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Democracy does not simply come to be by the decisions of enlightened leaders or by the revolutionary demands of an aggrieved citizenry. Past research offers competing explanations for the conditions under which the collective expression and power distribution necessary for democracy become possible, each with a different theoretical narrative for the mechanisms which encourage participation, civil rights and security: economic, political and sociological. Lipset (1981) began with a recognizable and cogent modernization theory which linked the rising incomes, wage labor, workplace rights and urban development to the creation of an educated, tolerant and politically engaged middle class which would then demand rights and protections. The intimate connection between economic rights and the development of democracy has the intervening variable of the growth of citizen organizations. Fukuyama (1995) laid out the role of these organizations in the private sector through informal workplace groups which promote innovation, trust and reduce transaction costs within and between businesses. Effective workplace groups are not necessary for economic development, but if modernization is necessary for democracy, then workplace groups play a central role in the transition from a workplace based on class hierarchy, familism via primogeniture and centralized decision-making to one of effective division of labor, meritocracy and shareholder influence. Modern values

in the private sphere which influence government do not, however, account for the political and social perils of a system without the rule of law, in which a single company, ethnic group or political party can quickly take the property and rights of the minority.

The problem of an illiberal democracy or a tyranny of the majority, expressed in the interest group theory of James Madison in the early *American Federalist Papers* remains a concern of contemporary scholars. Zakaria (1997) contended that states without the rule of law are unable to guarantee the rights of their citizens, even if those states conduct a democratic process such as elections. Conversely, the lack of elections does not guarantee democracy, but can still permit the growth of a constitutional order, protected rights and a secure economic policy. Lijphart (1999) continued this inverted reasoning about rule of law and institutions being necessary for democracy to determine the effects of the type of democracy on governmental outcomes. He found a “consensus democracy” characterized by proportional representation from elections, a multiparty system, a cabinet formed by coalition and a nonpresidential system to be more conducive to peace and stability than a “majoritarian” system which more frequently permitted single-party rule and executive privilege. This theory at face value seems to explain the Spanish case, in which the multiple pacts and agreements shared in the introduction created a democratic momentum leading to elections, constitutional referenda and an increasing focus on the dire economic and social condition of groups oppressed by the Franco regime.

Yet political theorists such as Schmitter (1983) add the explanation of the role of civil society in these consensus processes as well. Schmitter describes the process of “interest intermediation,” by which self-interested groups collect, harmonize and

synthesize ideas and issues to present demands to the state in order to promote stability, effectiveness and legality in governance. His research shows negative correlations between the degree of “societal corporatism” and unruliness, indicating the important ability of groups to build coalitions, rectify the free rider problem of individual members satisfying self-interest outside negotiations with leadership and break the autocratic tendencies of single-party systems or predominant social classes. However, Schmitter offers Spain under Franco as an example of how corporatism failed when a state supported by a military establishment and economic elite repressed working class interests organized in civil society. In other words, group activity is necessary and important but not sufficient to promote more effective governing institutions with greater democratic quality.

The third major strand of democratic governance theory is neither economic nor political in its arrangement, focusing instead on the sociological and localized connections between individuals and the formation of values. Haddad (2012) describes a “generational” proceeding of democracy in which ideas postulated by elites transmute to the public before being adapted and returned to the elites for policy adjustments and put a more effective democracy into practice. The construction of norms and behaviors which test, adjudicate and renew state instruments of power occur independently of institutions and the workplace in the public sphere, a dimension Habermas (1991) described as a mediator “between society and state” emerging in the eighteenth century in parallel with the growth of democratic theory and a more equitable social contract. Key to the exchange of values and norms between government and the governed is the means by which societies inculcate values. Education is not sufficient, nor is it even necessarily

democratic. In this instance, Putnam (1993) hypothesizes trust to be instrumental in forming this civic community, shared traditions and a greater accountability of the state, evidenced in the comparison of Italian regions. Additionally, the mechanisms of this delivery of trust are citizen associations, often apolitical, which actualize interests and distribute benefits to their participants. Putnam, standing in the Tocquevillian strand deriving from the research of the Frenchman who illustrated the success of early 19th-century American democracy through community groups and churches, contrasts with Gramsci (Rose 2001), who sees a struggle between reformist civil society groups and an intransigent state ultimately recasting state policy. In all three cases, the exchange of values independent of public and private sectors in this “third sector” of political or interest engagement determines democratic outcomes.

THEORY: REGIONAL NORMS OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE COOPERATION

The common narrative emerging from the literature and the connections between the government and the governed is the persistence of civil society groups *within* other societal sectors, the living, breathing fabric of discourse on important social problems and shortcomings of leadership. However, suggesting the primacy of public space as a vehicle for social and political influence assumes a causal relationship between more “publicness” and more democracy. Institutions – sets of rules – according to Zakaria (1997), liberalize society and proscribe certain actions as illegal, inappropriate or unequal, but signify little more than a gesture to order and progress. Legalistic, positivist systems of governance have as many difficulties regulating and averting corruption as do more pre-modern ones, with postcolonial experiences in Africa and the struggles of the former Soviet bloc being prime examples. Inglehart and Baker (2000) suggest the rise of

“modern values” such as secularism and self-expression influence and indicate greater economic development and pluralism, but these neither arise spontaneously from a developed society nor promise the cohesion and power sharing necessary for a democracy. In other words, civil society interests can be as divisive as they can be unifying. The effects of strengthened social ties vary to the point of in some cases harming the quality of democracy while in others bolstering it. Outlining the threats of civil society activity to an effective state system clarifies the conditions under which interests benefit democracy more than harm it.

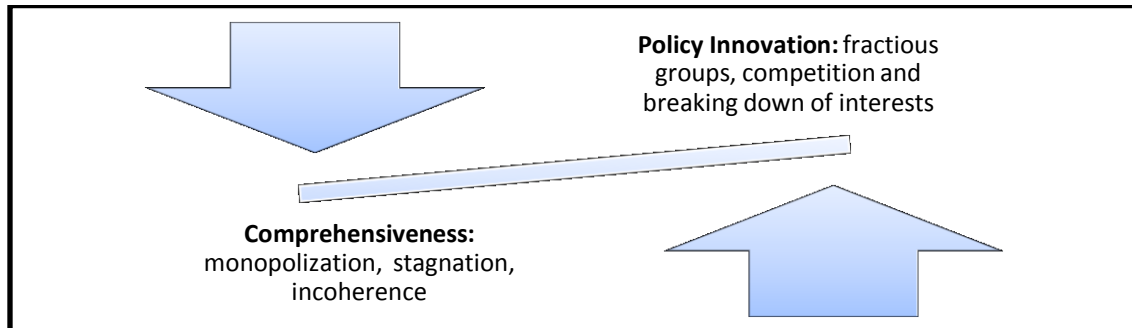
The first key threat is the tendency of groups to serve the exclusive material and ideological preferences of their membership. Carothers (1999) suggested civil society groups will hoard resources, curb the effectiveness of the state and clamor over competitors for influence, often at the expense of transparency, accountability and coherent strategy. Furthermore, the desire to address public issues such as malnutrition or mental health loses its status as a collective good if resource flows go to groups which sequester them, discriminate in the application of their benefits and pander to a particular donor community. In the United States, notably in the Supreme Court case *Christian Legal Society v. Martinez* (2010), fierce debates rage over the constraints placed on the right of associations drawing on public goods to limit their membership in accordance with the views of their privately-managed leadership. In 2012, multiple Roman Catholic Dioceses filed suit against the Obama administration to rescind the requirement of birth control coverage in religious-sponsored health insurance plans. The benefit of civil society for a distributive democratic system is a person-centered approach which

transmits public interests and upholds individual rights as opposed to the prerogative and control of private leadership.

Conversely, civil society groups which do not represent the interests of a particular constituency may inhibit the quality of democracy through economic opportunism and thereby lose the ability to generate consistent policy outcomes in the pursuit of capitalization. In expanding constituencies and donor bases relentlessly for profits and prestige, local associations, NGOs and large foundations dilute their message while appealing to incentive systems such as charitable tax deductions, solidarity with a specific social class or allegiance to a celebrity or public figure. Additionally, the incentive becomes to sell a “product” with tangible returns on investment rather than honestly assessing the product against its potential inability to meet the social problem and craft a public good. Monopolization of social issues by a select few, powerful groups creates unusable revenue streams through high donor volume, ferments relationships with policymakers through repetitious interaction and encourages corruption through a lack of competition. For example, the high proportion of humanitarian donations given to the American Red Cross and subsequent inability to spend relief money does not discourage the brand from becoming a default connection in the public mind with disaster relief. In other words, an important equilibrium point exists between the need for comprehensive, managed approaches and the supply of innovative, flexible policy solutions to provide them. When policy solutions are forthcoming but comprehensive management is not, entry costs are high and groups become self-interested and jockey for influence with the state. Similarly, when comprehensive management is available but policy solutions are not forthcoming, civil society groups fall into monopolization and stagnation.

Figure 1 depicts the values tradeoff between comprehensiveness and policy innovation:

Figure 1: Counterbalancing Risks to the Civil Society Sector



The final major threat to the effectiveness of civil society groups comes from cooptation by the state. The “rob Peter to pay Paul” resource division caused by competing groups can receive state mediation as a mechanism of resolution, harmonizing expectations and establishing concrete steps to solutions, but state intervention will not necessarily distribute goods more favorably. The provision of grants, tax relief and administrative support to civil society groups when left unchecked quickly morphs into an expression of state power through setting strict conditions on the provision of funds, bringing court action and violating judicial independence to repress unfavorable groups, charging fines to NGOs with foreign affiliations as recently decreed in Russia, or creating government-sponsored civil society groups such as labor unions, journalists, filmmakers, youth leagues and militias. A public sphere dependent on the resources of the state will be more likely to sacrifice its ideological or political preferences to receive them, while the costs of resistance increase in proportion to the legal constraints placed by the state. For example, Spain in the late Franco years promulgated a Law of Associations which

strictly limited the size of groups to under twenty-five thousand members nationally and heavily favored loyalists to the regime. Berman (1997) criticized the Tocquevillian bent of democratic theory along similar lines, by showing the easy prey of associations in Weimar Germany to the ascendant Nazi Party and the ultimate dismembering of German democracy despite the holding of free and fair elections.

Even if they are able to overcome the obstacles of interest in private goods and economic opportunism and deliver effective services, civil society stakeholders also require a receptive state. At the crux of the theory of civil society effects is social norm creation, which, as Brown and Timmer (2006) describe as affected by the ability of civil society actors to identify issues, facilitate grassroots involvement, link stakeholders, gain public visibility and monitor problem solving as a follow-up step. As a consequence, “social learning” occurs by which citizens and governments become more aware of critical issues and are supported in their ultimate solvency. To accomplish this social learning and balance the competing influence of self-interest and largesse, civil society groups cooperate with the state through an ideal range of exchange – power sharing and devolution – which keeps them aligned, institutionalizing and effective without dissuading private involvement or public takeover. The concept which describes this democratizing relationship with the state is *norms of public-private cooperation* expressed through civil society, occurring at a regional level. Features of the regional norm include the use of consultative power, networks, problem-solving strategies and a focus on results, best practices and performance in the context of a localized identity. Locally cooperative approaches apply to different issues and types of civil society groups, from educational institutions in charter schools, health providers in volunteer-

based community clinics, independent think tanks in the “revolving door” with government and neighborhood watch services and code compliance organizations working in collaboration with local law enforcement. Cooperation with government provides the final link between the operations of civil society and the promotion of democratic practices.

Four key mechanisms explain how the expression of societal interests in a locally cooperative relationship with political institutions leads to increased pluralism, responsiveness and the rule of law which define and indicate democratic quality in states with democratic institutions. First, locally cooperative relationships reduce informational obstacles. Access to credible resources which inform policy options often determines whether governments choose to extend, cut or maintain spending. Despite any countering intentions they may have, in practice administrations tend to choose the most convenient or safe option to reduce the costs of change. By holding professional conferences involving policymakers, community stakeholders and opinion leaders, civil society groups motivate action by providing a surrogate description, causal analysis and proposed solutions to problems of budget allocation, discrimination or collective action. In decentralized governing systems, the sharing of information across administrative boundaries through online portals, journals and other media quickly transmits best practices without the tedium and narrowness of bureaucratic channels or the opprobrium of challenging political leadership to make unspecified changes. By using examples of successful cases or iconic figures, drawing on networks of expertise from academia, the private sector or other parts of government, effective groups can monitor, criticize and collaborate with an institution to increase the costs of inaction and demonstrate the

benefits of change. In this manner, local associations in West Africa addressed ethnic conflict through this “horizontal” decision-making rather than through relationships of authority and power (Morris-MacLean 2004).

Second, locally cooperative relationships reduce fiscal and political costs for governments, as civil society groups with an adequate balance of autonomy, defined constituencies and a purpose directed to collective goods are inclined to provide services for the group loosely defined as their beneficiaries. With the expectation of awards financially or through legal legitimacy from the state outweighing the costs of planning and implementing without direct personal benefit, these groups rely on a mix of donors and government grants to provide the management, employment and community access otherwise inaccessible with the gaps in services or unmet needs by the state. These surrogate state functions are analogous to contracting to build infrastructure, create energy supply or arm the military in the private sector. Providing subsidized healthcare with donations from hospitals drives down insurance rates by keeping spending below premiums, while organizing nutrition through food distribution reduces the need to spend more on access to food for certain income brackets. Local arts endowments give to co-curricular student interests without the potential for losing funding due to education cuts or reassignment to focus on facilities, certain technical subjects or teacher quality. Similarly, volunteerism saves public sector expenditures on wages in important areas such as disaster relief, while policy networks and independent journalists spare the state the expense of paid advisors and complement the fact-checking and analysis of commissions. Therefore, multi-sector management produces more distributive outcomes,

precisely distributes benefits from the state and acts as preventative medicine for the long run escalation of costs by targeting root causes where the state is too often palliative.

Third, a local-regional cooperation introduces private and individual actors to norms and procedures in the Rousseauian sense of participatory democracy, giving management and civic-responsibility roles to community members, writing governing documents, making budgetary decisions and producing media material individuals and organizations gain a sense of public service and understanding of the local power arrangements with which they interact. Even on a national and international level, identifying and prioritizing actions and advocacy builds relationships with public officials, such as the American “iron triangle” of lobbyists, bureaucrats and legislators, while building awareness of the mechanisms which provide funds, gather votes to pass laws and convert ideas into tangible goals in party platforms. Mercer (2002) suggests these groups may even be sufficient to fill a vacuum left by a deficient political party system. In learning how to navigate a political system, civil society groups similarly must follow rules for truthful disclosure, reporting, accounting and respecting the rights and liberties of individuals in line with the policy goals of a government. Whether they be apolitical recreational groups or transnational reform advocates, groups sharing locally cooperative and regionally-based relationships must seek different forms of accreditation and legal protection. The consequence of this norm-generating function is the tendency to express policy preferences cleansed of a particularly rigid ideology. This “secularization” of group preferences allowed civil society actors such as Spain’s post-Franco Catholic Church into a safe political space in which it could make allegiance with labor unions and

business leaders while distancing itself from the industrialist Opus Dei order which ran backdoor politics during the dictatorship.

Fourth, locally cooperative approaches affect the strategies which groups select to interact with the state. As a corollary to the previous three functions, by sharing information, shouldering costs and following authority patterns to streamlined relationships with officials, civil society groups generate the trust and leverage from their constituencies, elite allies and expertise to take strong rhetorical, analytical and diplomatic stances in their relationships with the state. Rather than choose to “defect” and make noninstitutional demands in public space, mobilized networks employ lobbying, sample legislation writing, regular meetings with stakeholders, media campaigns and coalition building through issue linkage and aggregation to show policymakers the costs of disregarding interests. Successful civil society groups build a holistic, well-constructed and framed issue with public sympathies to create a strong negotiating position. When groups are able to create electoral vulnerability, a key part of Dai’s (2005) model on compliance at an international level through the “domestic constituency mechanism,” they force states or decision-makers to bargain and compromise rather than employ coercion or force resistance. While all groups may not necessarily fulfill their demands, the process proceeds with a civility and fairness to encourage active citizen participation and turn dissatisfaction with executive decisions into an exercise of electoral privilege by voting for a new government.

The theoretical implication of regional norms of public-private cooperation is the elaboration of the missing causal link between social ties and democratic quality. These norms provide an important intervening variable between the convergence of societal

forces and a cacophonous zone of multiple sectors' influence aiming for a voice in the public conscience. In a sociobiological sense, civil society's combination of seeking stability and adapting to environmental conditions creates an iterative cycle of "creative destruction" of different organizations, lines of thought or issue frames dictated not by any sector but by experimentation and empirical testing. Unlike laboratory testing and dissimilar to the externalities, cost-saving and popular exclusion endemic in the private sector, the collaborative space in the public sphere advocates the "political implications of biophysical trends" (Princen and Finger 1994), speaking to authentic human needs and effects on dignity, human rights, self-determination and satisfaction. Civil society can encourage governments to think more long term, and to change the calculation of political costs away from simply garnering votes with promises into making serious policy charges and sustained commitment to issues. Citizens, through the mouthpieces of organizations interacting with institutions, become advocates themselves and form more distinct worldviews, stable opinions and more predictable voting behavior. Furthermore, one would expect a rise in institutional trust, optimism about the integrity and sensibility of the governmental system and a high electoral turnout to reflect the prior sentiments. Transferring ideas on the community level through groups, deliberative decisions and cognitive flexibility affects more than democratic quality: it forges connections across social classes such as Spanish working class-intellectual relationships in the young democracy (Fishman 2004) and assists compliance with international treaty agreements (Edwards 2012).

With these implications in mind, I offer the first hypothesis to be tested as:

H1: Stronger regional norms of public-private cooperation (civil society relationships) enhance quality of democracy.

However, certain intervening and antecedent variables prevent civil society activity with regional cooperation norms from being sufficient for democratic quality. For example, tribalism or nationalism can align all the foregoing factors into a separate identity drawn from a different level of governance counter to the region. An irregular distribution of ages, ethnicity or social behavioral patterns can create a values gap between civil society and political leadership which makes rapprochement unattainable due to biases, capacity limitations or the separate voting blocs for existing leadership. Political constraints through unorganized management of interest groups or poor legal frameworks prevent financial accumulation, property ownership and tax benefits. Additionally, level of education and social values development can facilitate a civil society characterized by “parochial interests” (Azarya 1994). To address these concerns, I give two corollaries to the initial hypothesis:

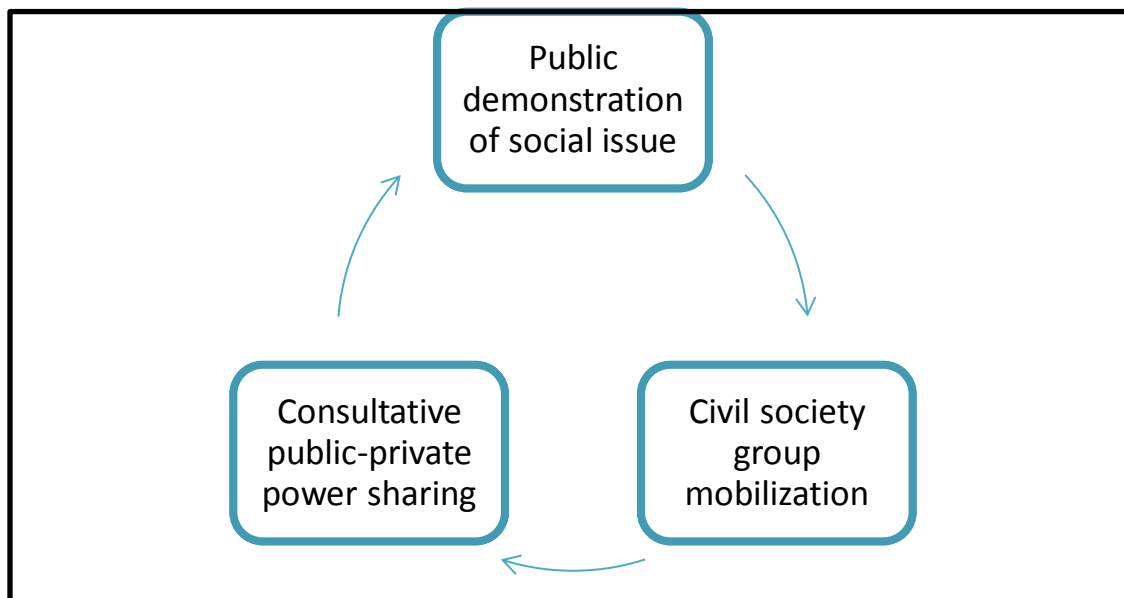
H2: Democratic quality is more likely when civil society groups express shared values in their public-private agreements.

H3: Democratic quality is less likely when groups do not successfully form networks and make connections with political institutions.

Figure 2 below shows the theoretical cycle by which public and private actors construct issues in common space and forge trust, consensus and a more just governing system and form interdependence in line with the hypotheses. The cycle is intended to reinforce the idea that the ideal demands for change are amorphous, follow a logic of

appropriateness to the size and scope of an issue and will rise and fall depending on social values and political conditions.

Figure 2: Interdependence in the Public Sphere



RESEARCH DESIGN

To formally test the hypothesized relationship between the dependency of state and civil society and democratic quality, this paper examines longitudinal shifts in public attitudes toward regional government in two Spanish autonomous communities. Following from the illustration which opened the investigation, the process of democratization in Spain and the dramatic improvement in rights and institutions as measured by reaching a Polity score of 10 less than a decade after the end of its dictatorship do not alone prove a high democratic quality within the state. Rather than draw general conclusions about what factors generate “macro-outcomes” such as greater representation, participation and satisfaction in a democracy, the research uses process

tracing and investigates small variances in the strategies and activities of the public sphere. By examining softer institutional characteristics such as public attitudes, identity, favorability and efficacy, the causes which affect “micro-outcomes” of a political system become clearer. Broad use of descriptive statistics and basic correlations across all Spanish regions open the analysis, before moving to the Spanish autonomous communities of Catalonia (Cataluña) and the Basque Country (País Vasco) through three regional election cycles from 1994-2003. Because the two cycles do not correspond exactly, Catalanian elections of 1995, 1999 and 2003 are three primary data sources, while Basque elections of 1994, 1998 and 2001 provide three reference points. Gathering data for the time periods continuously *between* elections rather than *concurrently* improves validity by discovering the development and politicization of issues rather than simply testing a theory against a discrete instance.

To support a careful, more qualitative methodology, the unit of analysis is a region-year, capturing the activities, attitudes or transactions across Spanish autonomous communities. Choosing this level of political organization in contrast with municipalities and localities is the more culturally and historically distinct boundaries of the seventeen autonomous communities, which under the Spanish Constitution (1978) were granted *hechos diferenciales*, or differing prerogatives from the state which include language, judiciaries, police and public financing. Quantitatively, 42% of Spanish government employees work at the regional level, compared to 26% at the state level in the United States (Aja 2003). Furthermore, this complicated federalized relationship provides two distinct advantages to selecting autonomous communities to research: (1) political, social and economic factors will vary more or equivalently across these boundaries than with

other geographical and demographic divisions, as especially in Spain each has its distinctive character, and (2) the outcomes in democratic quality across broad cultural-historical divides should be expected to vary, especially given the former condition. Beer and Mitchell (2006) remarked in a study of human rights violations in India that “state-level governments often are significant political forces in their own right” and predicted an “uneven character of democracy.” The federal Spanish system, therefore, offers a most likely case for testing and generalizing a theory about regional norm behavior.

The dependent variable in the study is quality of democracy, which even without considering the tracing of group behavior presents difficulties in operationalization. Putnam (1993) outlined twelve measures of democratic quality through institutional performance ranging from cabinet stability to reform legislation and housing programs. For the sake of parsimonious investigation, the research defines quality of democracy in the lens of public-private cooperation as public satisfaction with institutions, confidence in leadership, voter turnout rates in regional elections and evaluation of past performance of the autonomous communities. These measures are aggregated through the election-cycle polling system of the official Spanish Center for Sociological Investigations (CIS) which publishes pre- and post-electoral survey data broken down at the provincial level. In the standard pre-election form, two questions ask for characterizations and comparisons of the current political situation, while another looks at a spectrum of political leadership and public figures to ask for opinions of their performance. On the post-election form, the voter turnout rate as another aspect of the dependent variable can be found disaggregated by level of election to control for spikes in national-level election

years. The data from CIS is comprehensive and available across multiple years, making it the most statistically valid and useful window into Spanish public attitudes.

Analysis drawn from the CIS data relies upon a continuous 0-100 percentage scale with multiple-choice responses, often distributed across many options and at times using scales with strong agreement or disagreement around a certain position as well as ordinal scales varying from 0-10 based on strength or positivity of feeling. These measurement formats give excellent descriptive insight into public attitudes toward government quality. Additionally, the CIS provides information on the mean, standard deviation and sample size for its survey responses with multiple categories. While running comparisons of means or testing proportions of single responses between Spanish autonomous regions, tests of dispersal give weight to the concentration or consensus of public opinion on a particular issue. Consensus can serve as an important proxy for democratic quality and norms in the scope of the research. Given the selection of basic quantitative methods, the CIS numbers are not first compiled into a score and are the most effective substitute for the lack of regional Polity data. High democratic quality occurs in a given region if (1) voters demonstrate satisfaction and interest in the system through a high voter turnout (a proxy for important issues), (2) the average level of satisfaction with politicians is higher regardless of party affiliation and (3) respondents favorably evaluate political performance since the last election. The CIS sorts out political and economic concerns, making the measurement instrument very precise in asking for government performance.

Identifying and operationalizing the growth and presence of norms of cooperation for the independent variable presents an equivalent challenge. Bell and O'Rourke (2007)

in studying the presence and role of civil society in peace agreements employed simple counting methods, though given the scope and timeframe of research a comprehensive list of public-private partnerships and contracting in Spanish autonomous communities yields to a survey of several important types of public-private institutions: labor unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups. In operation, a qualitative assessment of each group's engagement with the state focuses on the following criteria to determine regional norms of public-private cooperation: (1) The region must demonstrate a dearth of non-institutional or extralegal action to resolve the public-private issue at hand, primarily referring to protest action, political violence and/or inflammatory rhetoric. (2) The positive outcome and inclusiveness of an agreement. In other words, some form of legislation, appropriation or settlement resulted from a particular region-year interaction of government and a civil society group along with a distribution of benefits to all or most parties involved in the agreement. (3) Broad benefits to sectors of society not directly party to the agreement, capturing the "public-ness" and values-focus in the hypotheses which suggests a cooperative public-private interaction has relevance and applicability to the equitable sharing of public goods, economic growth and political stability. For the more quantitative portion, measures of nationalism and regional identity in the CIS serve as proxies to these more textured criteria for regional norms of public-private cooperation.

The evidence first remarks on the dynamics of Spanish democratization and then shares descriptive statistics about the state of Spanish democracy at the end of the 20th century *after* its transition from the Francoist dictatorship. This section also initiates a mixed-methods approach with basic correlations between continuous-variable measures

of democratic quality and the regional identity proxy identified above. Second, the research employs a comparative case study of Catalonia and the Basque Country to trace public sphere activity in the 1994-2003 electoral windows. With two highly particular cases in what Encarnacion (2002) called the “unexamined and undetermined” narrative of Spanish democratic character, the case studies serve a hypothesis-testing and inductive function to produce additional observations about the role of political organization and identity which derive from the legacy of a youthful Spanish state. Mill’s Method of Disagreement is employed to compare the autonomous communities. By aligning a maximum number of similar independent variables and looking for different outcomes, the distinguishing causal factors between the cases can be identified. In the case of Catalonia and the Basque Country, each region has a centuries-old history of ethnic, linguistic and political differences from traditionally Castilian Spain as well as being among the strongest economic producers and most urbanized parts of the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, a thriving multiparty system unique in each region hosts local divisions as opposed to directed affiliates of a national party. While these factors are specific controls in the design, the regions remain mutually susceptible to political effects on a national level in Spain which are spurious effects on public opinion relative to regional norms of cooperation. The case studies are structured to highlight key events in each region’s public sphere across election cycles before tracing particularly important organizations, campaigns and negotiations.

RESULTS

(A) Overview of Spanish Regional Cooperation

To isolate the role of civil society in Spain after the democratic transition, the different factors which are known to correlate with the quality of institutions must demonstrate consistent increase (or approach a maximum limit) over the period before and during the analysis of Catalonia and the Basque Country. Additionally, the complicated and multifaceted condition of citizen groups and NGOs during the transition sets a stage for the variation in the dependent variable on a regional and local basis. Preston (1986) describes the late Franco era in Spain as a “political time bomb” for how it generated economic growth which spread to enough of the workforce and supplied a resilient enough middle class to challenge the tight network of state, military, church and cartelized economic elite which guaranteed the *continuismo* of the despotic regime. Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez helped form the Union of Democratic Center (UCD) party which along with the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party (PSOE) steered the immediate post-Franco political system of the late 1970s into greater social democracy, eventual support from the church and economic stability via parliamentary majorities. Major statistical measures of Spanish politics and economics show this transition and are reflected in Table 1 below. The 1975 measures occur before the death of Franco and the first free and fair elections, while the 1985 and 1995 measures reflect the end of the transitional period and the first full decade of democratic stability, respectively.

Table 1: Spanish Political and Economic Indicators

Indicator	1975	1985	1995
Polity Score¹	-7	10	10
GDP (billion \$)²	111	175	596
GNI/capita (\$)	3,180	4,440	14,550
Gini coefficient³	N/A	0.371	0.343

In every indicator, Spain substantially improved during the time period studied, with rapid economic development both coinciding with and following the transition into the early 1980s. Also important to demonstrate a strengthening national position are the indicators for individual citizens, as Gross National Income (GNI) per capita grew at an equal or greater rate than the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This, combined with the decreasing Gini coefficient which measures income inequality, indicates the benefits of Spain's economic growth and democratic system were more distributed among its constituents. The rosy image of Spanish success, however, must be contrasted with the mixed narrative of its civil society sector in the decades following the Franco regime. The scene in the late 1970s did not portend favorably, as only 22% of Spaniards were involved in any kind of association or organization and the state ranked near the bottom of the World Values Survey in measurement of political culture (Encarnacion 2002). Accordingly, the Franco regime had not facilitated a mobilized and resourced civil society sector, meeting significant opposition from within its ranks with the proposal of a Statue of Associations in 1969 and restricting the power of burgeoning unions in the

¹ Polity IV score database

² World Bank World Development Indicators, adjusted for inflation

³ Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) database

Ley Sindicales of 1971. A Law of Associations in 1974 pluralized the political system and by the time of Franco's death the full emergence of policy, collective action and community groups flourished on the Spanish stage. When unions again became legal, the need suddenly developed for the working class to mobilize within the political sphere as a "transmission belt" of loyalty to progressive and policy aims. What resulted was a complex system of dual worker representation on both local workers' councils and larger union bodies (Wozniak 1992).

From the participation of civil society in the heady opening years of Spanish democracy came a mixture of dramatic success and routine failure. From 1990-1995, Spain rated a distant first for frequency of labor conflict in the European Union, with an average of 319.43 days not worked compared to 28.69 for the United Kingdom and 20.70 for strike-prone France (Fishman 2004).⁴ The relationship between Spanish labor leadership and workers demonstrates the overall difficulties present in the period of democratic emergence and consolidation and suggests it may be an insufficient cause to explain the state's rapid increase in democratic freedoms. However, there was also a doubling of informal civil society groups to 113,045 across 1982-1990 (Garcia 1995) and the birth of broader Spanish social movements from connections between similarly-minded groups, which include ecology, peace and feminist organizations. Demonstrably, the discrepancy between national-level success and wide variation in attitudes and practices of the public sphere indicates either little substantive significance to the civil society variables, or the conditional impact of civil society unrest on a regional basis. In other words, some parts of the Spanish state were doing more causal "lifting" of the

⁴ The International Labor Organization (ILO) describes this measure: "The number of days not worked as a result of strikes and lockouts is usually measured in terms of the sum of the actual working days during which work would normally have been carried out by each worker involved had there been no stoppage."

quality of democracy than others. The Spanish transition provides a landscape on which to test the conditional impact of regional norms of cooperation between civil society and state on quality of democracy.

A preliminary view of data from the CIS election-year surveys measuring regional identity and the various democratic quality measures such as satisfaction with leadership and important issues facing the electorate highlight a series of variations, trends and correlations across Spain. Drawing on the survey data, four measures of the dependent variable are constructed: political satisfaction (0-100%) with the “very good” and “good” categories considered to be positive, evaluation of past political performance (0-100%) with the “much better” and “better” considered positive, rating of prominent regional politicians across party lines (the mean on a 0-10 scale) and voter turnout rate in the most recent regional election (0-100%). A single measure of the independent variable is the percentage of voters prioritizing the interests and future of their autonomous community above other levels of government when making voting choices (0-100%). For example, if Catalonia scored 65% on the independent variable in a given year, it would signify 35% of their voters based decisions on local or national issues in that particular election. Full descriptions of the survey questions which were used to construct the measures and notes on the CIS methodology are available on its survey documents.

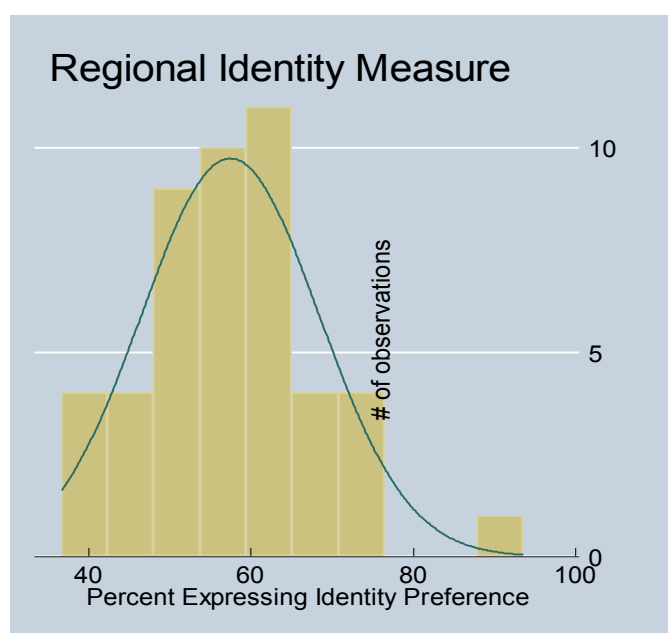
The first quantitative tool disaggregates each of the measurements indicated above across all autonomous community elections from which data were available from 1994-2007 for a total of 53 separate observations. As shown in Table 2 below, each measurement shows significant variation across the regions in each category regardless of election year, justifying research into the causes of such variation. The standard

deviation, minimum and maximum demonstrate the range of the values for each measurement. Figure 3 below Table 2 shows the approximately normal distribution of the independent variable – percentage of voters in a given election voting based on regional issue preferences, opening it to further statistical analysis.

Table 2: Regional Variation in Spanish Regional Identity and Democratic Quality

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std.Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Regional Identity %	47	57.5	11.0	36.7	93.6
Political Satisfaction %	53	34.6	13.7	4.8	59.9
Performance Eval %	53	34.7	10.9	5.8	59.6
Politicians Satisfaction #	51	4.7	0.4	3.52	5.48
Electoral Turnout %	53	81.1	4.8	66.9	88.8

Figure 3: Distribution of Regional Identity Variable



Furthermore, the observations divide into two distinct tiers of cases: the autonomous communities which lock in to simultaneous election cycles, and those with more latitude who have distinct historical traditions, languages and often nationalist aspirations in the form of referenda – such as an independence vote called in Catalonia in 2012 – nationalist political parties and frequent disputes with the central government. Moreno (1997) describes these “ethnoterritorial boundaries” as creating a dual identity and complex nationality for citizens in the regions with histories of autonomy. In this latter category of nationalisms are Galicia, the Basque Country, Catalonia and Andalusia. Table 3 depicts the differences and similarities in regional identity (though the data crosses over less well within the nationalisms subset) and democratic quality across the tiers of cases. Hypothesis 1 predicts stronger levels of regional identity through norms of public-private cooperation in these nationalist cases would lead to a greater quality of democracy, though the initial results through informally examining differences of means tend to reject the hypothesis because of consistently lower quality scores.

Table 3: Spanish Nationalisms and Democratic Quality

Variable	All Regions Mean	Nationalist Regions Mean
Political Satisfaction %	34.6	22.3
Performance Evaluation %	34.7	24.0
Politicians Satisfaction #	4.7	4.3
Electoral Turnout %	81.1	79.7

The second quantitative tool after separating measurements by autonomous community and comparing the variables informally is a more formal test of the

correlations between the independent variable of percent of respondents showing preference for the issues in their region and the dependent variable of democratic quality. However, given the asymmetry with the larger number of measures for the dependent variable, the four are aggregated into an index to run a simple bivariate correlation. Each measure of democratic quality was converted into a z-score signifying the number of standard deviations away from the mean, with each of the four z-scores added into a total. The index operates under the assumption that while each measure of quality may differ and not vary together, democratic quality cannot be assessed on the terms of a single indicator. For example, high voter turnout rates can show dissatisfaction with a current government yet a motivated public. In other words, each measure is necessary but insufficient until taken together to explain the form and function of democratic institutions in Spain. A key component for which the correlations also account is the issue of time-dependency. To witness the individual behavior of an autonomous community's population in different election cycles, the analysis must cover each time period in which every autonomous community has voted only once. In this way, repeated observations of the same region or change over time in the same region can be separated from a single correlation.

Figures 4-6 below show correlations and Pearson's r with a line of best fit in each of three election cycles for which sufficient data is available: 1999-2001, 2003-2005 and 2006-2007. In the final cycle, the autonomous communities of Galicia, Basque County and Andalusia are omitted because their elections did not occur in the designated time window.

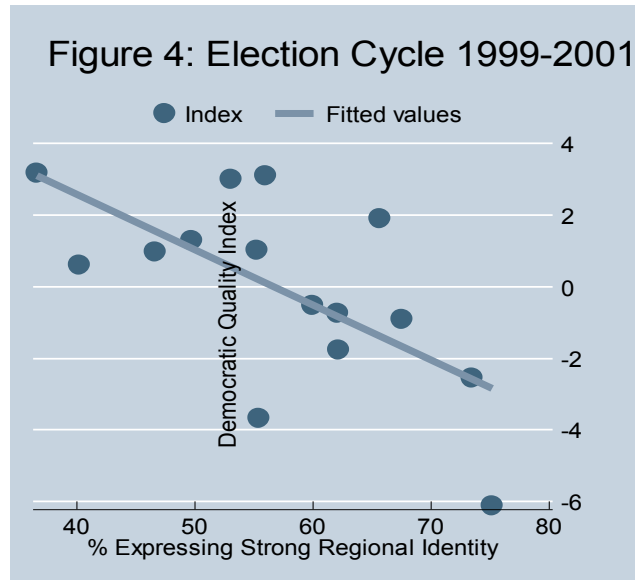


Figure 4 Pearson's r : -0.6451

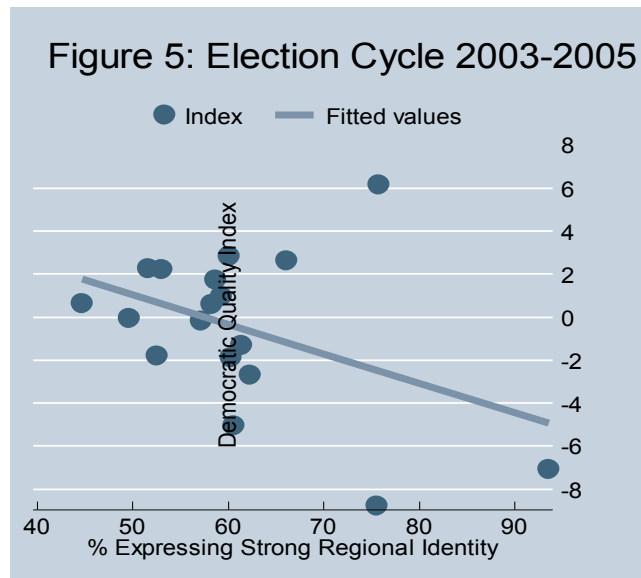


Figure 5 Pearson's r : -0.4176

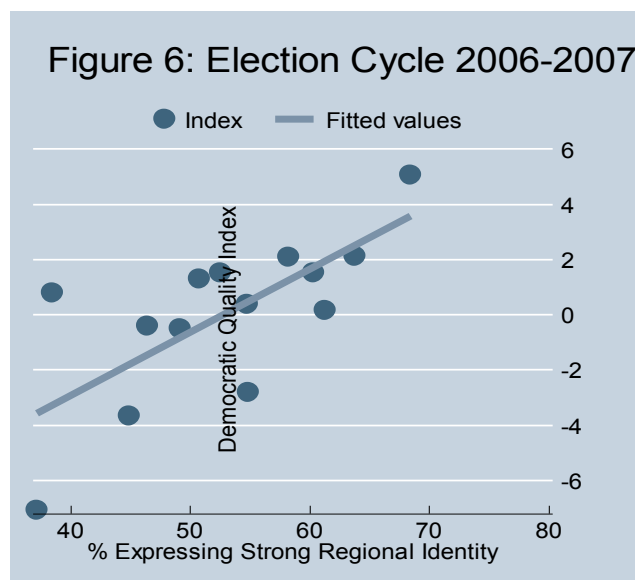


Figure 6 Pearson's r : 0.7110

Several important conclusions, observations and next steps come from observing the quantitative data. First, correlations can only show associative relationships between different variables and neither statistical nor substantive significance. The evidence here limits, therefore, the claims which can be made about how much or with what certainty regional norms of public-private cooperation affect quality of democracy. Furthermore, the first two election cycles show the *opposite* direction as hypothesized for the characteristics of the region, while the third shows the expected positive relationship. A potential causal explanation for this sudden shift which merits attention is that the 1999-2001 and 2003-2005 cycles took place alongside a larger national change of leadership between the Popular Party (PP) and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). The single 2006-2007 cycle, meanwhile, occurred with the retention of PSOE Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's government which remained in power from 2004-2011. Regional identity could not have an effect on institutions at the regional level as voters turn their preferences to national-level issues. Conversely, high levels of regional

cooperation could be motivated by dissatisfaction with the national level in these years, creating an inverse relationship between regional cooperation and quality of democracy. Put differently, the measurement of the independent variable is susceptible to effects at other levels of government and may not adequately measure actual regional norms.

Methodological issues, however, also color the analysis and potentially explain the discrepancy between the first two election cycles and the latter one. First, the different election years taken together suggest a generally lower degree of democratic quality for regional identity scores up to 55, with 55-65 showing on average higher values and then generally declining afterward. The potential *curvilinear relationship* indicated by these numbers cannot be captured with the simple correlation tools utilized in the research. Second, the results at low values in the 2006-2007 cycle and the results at high values in the 1999-2001 cycle have greater dispersal, showing greater heteroskedasticity and less contribution to the correlated variables. The potential avenues here are low and high *threshold effects* for regional identity, meaning only a certain optimal range of regional cooperation affects democratic quality, while more extreme values either detract from or do not affect the evaluation of institutions, parties and leadership.

Third, limitations of the measurement tools add to the statistical tool limitations and suggest the need for refinement. The CIS questionnaire varies across election cycles and between different autonomous communities, which made the regional identity question – already a proxy for regional norms of public-private cooperation – become more ambiguous. Forms of the question asking about feelings could have the opposite outcome, in that strong regional identity sometimes translates into pessimistic feelings about the future of the region and therefore a lower number of voters showing preference

for regional issues and lowering the value of the independent variable. When operationalized properly, these strong identities could actually occur higher on the democratic quality scale on the y-axis and reverse the direction of the correlations shown in the figures above. When the question did not ask about feelings about the region and simply preference for regional issues, this presented less of an obstacle. In terms of cases, the omission of three nationalistic autonomous communities in Andalusia, the Basque Country and Galicia from the last correlation could significantly alter the results as shown in Table 3 above.

Fourth, the operational measures of regional norms of public-private cooperation used changed dramatically between autonomous communities across election cycles, suggesting the measurement captures opinion much better rather than something conceptually as strong and rule-based as a norm of regional political behavior. To examine the rules of public-private behavior, autonomous communities drawn from the Spanish nationalisms constitute the case studies and offer insight into unanswered questions from the quantitative examination: at what point(s) regional cooperation benefits or harms democratic quality, how more qualitatively consistent indicators of regional cooperation act as the independent variable and specific causal outcomes in regional elections proceeding from these regionally-based political agreements.

(B) Basque and Catalanian Cases: *Borrar con el codo lo que se escribe con la mano*

To better describe the processes which first distinguish the Spanish nationalisms from the other autonomous communities and second explain the connections between regional agreements and democratic outcomes, the research turns to the most similar cases of Catalonia and the Basque Country. A feature of a consensus democracy such as

Spain, previously cited in Schmitter (1983), is interest intermediation. In this process, major stakeholders in public policy are able to collaborate to assert common demands and produce agreements which advance interests based on compromise suitable to the current government. Consequently, Spanish autonomous communities are *expected* by their government structures to produce these agreements. To test the hypotheses in the cases, therefore, regional norms of public-private cooperation are evaluated on the basis of the quality and success of these agreements rather than simply their presence. Context, content, enforcement mechanisms and public response direct the analysis of each accord and hold them to the criteria for the independent variable referenced in the research design: parties involved and cooperative outcome.

For centuries prior and especially during the Franco dictatorship, Basque nationalism and its political offspring frequently clashed with Spanish central government through violence, social mobilization and bitterly split opinion within the Basque people themselves. The exchange of rights and privileges under the democratic Constitution of 1978 did not settle armed disputes with the terrorist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) – which translates to “Basque Homeland and Freedom.” Inspired by the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 between the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and major political factions in the United Kingdom, the Basque government called together a forum of public and private leaders to craft the Lizarra-Garazi Agreement of 1998, named for the place in Navarre in which it was signed. Drawing directly from the Irish example, the agreement pledged to use the Good Friday Agreement as “a model of solution to the conflict which understood and respected all the traditions of the island” (ABC 2006). Furthermore, “dialogue and détente brought forth in this network of relations made

themselves the protagonist and the priority.” The agreement pledged to find solutions which were exclusively political.

Lizarra-Garazi’s content had limited concreteness, no enforcement mechanisms and did not include important political factions in its negotiations. Outlining its method, the agreement agreed to no more than a “process of dialogue and open negotiation, without exclusions...with the intervention of Basque society in its fullest.” The process which stemmed from the method called for a preliminary phase of “multilateral conversations that do not demand prior conditions,” which robbed the parties of common understanding and expectations crucial to a bargaining model. The subsequent resolution phase asked for “the will and the compromise to approach the causes of the conflict.” These rhetorical gestures claimed to “deepen democracy in the sense of depositing in Basque citizens the last word with respect to the confirmation of their future.” In sum, seven political parties – including the powerbroker Basque National Party (PNV), seven unions and nine NGOs or political action groups signed on to Lizarra-Gazari.

Contrasting with language of the agreement which called for consensus, the Basque political situation during and after Lizarra-Gazari was uncooperative. The CIS pre-electoral poll in 1998 found Basques heavily divided on the issues on which the agreement claimed to seek consensus. Among respondents, 26.7% wished to remain an autonomous community, 31.3% sought more privileges from the central government, while only 29.4% wanted the chance for citizens to determine their political future as a province or independent state. In addition, 23.7% of respondents felt no political party was in a position to guarantee political stability, while Lizarra-Gazari signatories such as Herri Batasuna (HB) and the United Left (IU) received 1.1% and 5.2% marks on the

same question. Furthermore, ETA itself did not come to the table for negotiations in 1998, despite being the “elephant in the room” in all dialogue about Basque autonomy and nationalism. A handful of other parties, unions and NGOs attended but did not become signatories to the agreement, further weakening its structure and influence in the arena of government. The combination of poor public support and omission of key groups draws a stark contrast between the promises of Lizarra-Gazari and true norms of cooperation.

In the months following the agreement, the fragile and limited consensus on the issue of multiparty dialogue shattered. With the accord signed in September 1998, by April 1999 the large Basque nationalist unions ELA-STV and LAB called a general strike. Demands for a shortening of the workweek to 35 hours, according to the nationalist unions, were not met by the business community and the regional government. However, leaders of pan-Spanish unions such as the Workers’ Commissions (CCOO) lamented the use of the workweek demands as a “pretext for political action” (*El Pais* 1999). Business leaders went further, dismissing the general strike as adding to the “especially convulsive political moment” leading to a “spiral of confrontation and tension.” The Spanish press noted the increasing distance between the Basque-based unions and their national-level counterparts as well as the disjuncture between the pledges on the Lizarra-Garazi agreement and the present behavior of the unions. The Secretary-General of Confesbank, a Basque industry lobby, countered the calling of the general strike as a “negation of the good faith which should preside in whichever negotiation process” (Zubia Guinea 1999). The politicization of the workweek debate and rupture in expectations between the sides shows a divide in the positions of the public

and private sectors in the wake of the political agreement of 1998. Disagreement between unions, with the private sector and public lack of confidence in the stability of the cooperation demonstrate the political fault lines in the Basque Country.

The mechanisms theorized in the relationship between regional norms of cooperation and democratic quality work through the Basque case. First, informational obstacles hounded the negotiation process, as nationalist unions which were headlining signatories on the Lizarra-Gazari Agreement just months before together broke with other unions in refusing to express their workweek demands jointly and greatly raising the costs of consensus. Second, the lack of dialogue among the nationalist unions raised costs for the public sector, as the government now had to choose between meeting the demands of a shorter workweek or the economic record of Basque business, which claimed to have produced 6.4% annual growth. Neither solution would please both parties in civil society. Third, the end of negotiations failed to solidify procedures which would allow similar accords to occur in the future and eroded the mutual respect between public and private sectors. The business community labeled the strikers as irresponsible and disproportionately responding. Fourth, the lack of commitment to the agreement showed greater preference to coercion and resistance perhaps best symbolized by Spanish Prime Minister from 1996-2004 Jose Maria Aznar. Aznar, having survived an assassination attempt by ETA in 1995, refused to negotiate with the group and hastened his decline by erroneously blaming the 2003 Madrid subway bombings on them (Council on Foreign Relations 2008). Brinkmanship rather than partnership characterized Basque civil society issues at the end of the 20th century.

In terms of effects on the dependent variable, the Basque Country did not show strong scores for democratic quality across the late 1990s. Within the Spanish regional election dataset used above, the Basque Country's 1994 elections showed 4.8% favorable evaluation of the political situation, which had changed only to 7.1% in 2001. Favorable evaluation of immediate past political performance dropped from 11.1% in 1994 to 5.8% in 2001. The mean approval for politicians improved slightly from 3.52 to 3.70 on a ten point scale, while voter turnout increased significantly from 70.8% to 85.6%. Despite the positive changes in two of the first three categories, their results still place them more than two standard deviations *below* the average scores for all Spanish regional elections from which data was available between 1994 and 2007. Substantively, the Basque National Party (PNV) retained power as it had since 1985, despite the nationalist political institutions presenting the greatest obstacle to cooperation. The effects on quality of democracy from low regional cooperation, therefore, are negligible at best from the poor outcomes of the 1998 Lizarra-Gazari Agreement in the Basque Country.

Similar to the nationalism of the Basque Country, Catalonia in northeastern Spain carries a rich cultural tradition of autonomy, best represented in the yearly celebration of a 1714 battle in which Catalonian troops resisted the accession of the French Bourbon monarchs in Spain. This National Day of Catalonia is reflected in the semiautonomous political system, parties, unions and social organizations which are exclusive to the region. Historically a Spanish economic powerhouse and center of commerce, Catalonia underwent a scare in its business fortunes in 2004 when a series of multinational corporations (MNCs) began to remove operations and labor demand from the region. Samsung, Phillips, Panasonic and Levi's were among the companies which relocated to

other countries on account of a more favorable climate. In response, the Catalanian government initiated a process under the umbrella Strategic Agreement for the Competitiveness of Catalonia which involved unions, NGOs, the government and major business groups (*El Pais 2004*). The composition was not unlike the Basque agreement of 1998, though the content addressed markedly different issues.

Armed with €470 million from the Catalanian budget, the Agreement committed to the relocation of certain economic resources, the construction of 12 educational centers, expansion of renewable energy sources, new electrical substations for efficient power distribution, highways, ten technological centers and funding through the Catalanian Financing Institute (ICF) for small and medium-sized businesses (PYMES). The agreement included concurrent benefits for labor, employability through training, job security and more accurate hour counting for fairer wages. With the consensus of public and private sector, the accord addressed the seemingly competing goals of internationalization – which often demands businesses lower costs and hire cheap labor – and labor rights. The agreement contained 119 officially sanctioned participants, including the President of the Catalanian government Pasqual Maragall, ministers of Economy and Finance, Labor and Industry and Commerce as well as the presidents of major industry groups including the Chamber of Commerce and small business federations PIMEC and FEPIME and the major unions such as CCOO and the General Workers' Union (UGT).

As well as addressing new issues, the enforcement mechanisms and specificity of the agreement counted among its assets. Commissions which drew on these participants across sessions, as well as local commissions, recording sessions, fact sheets,

parliamentary oversight and interdepartmental cooperation in the bureaucracy ensured the money allocated dispersed appropriately and accountably. In a direct contrast with the response of the Workers' Commissions (CCOO) leader in the Basque Country, the CCOO head in Catalonia claimed its 2004 agreement contained "consensus, proven, quantified and evaluable representativeness" of stakeholders, making them in turn "the subjects of the agreement" (ESADE 2009). In the same report, various participants praised the "rigorous, strict and transparent" web of compliance mechanisms which guaranteed cooperation and made expectations more concrete. Moreover, the approach of the Catalan competitiveness agreement was one of an "active attitude" over a passive one, creating a new degree of cooperation in addressing national issues and introducing a new philosophy about "public economic and social policies" which offered the potential for replication in other Spanish autonomous communities. When the agreement came up for renewal in 2007, key players such as the Catalan leader of the CCOO suggested the continuation of similar agreements roughly every four years into the future. Furthermore, stakeholders across departments and sectors had met up to 40 times over the course of the several years since the inauguration of the agreement.

In terms of the mechanisms which generation of norms of cooperation and successful connection between public and private sector in the competitiveness agreement, information obstacles lowered through the consistent convening of meetings and the articulation of concrete demands and expectations from each side in bargaining. Second, the joining of diverging interests such as labor market reforms and expansion of infrastructure and government investment in technology shows the ability of cooperative interests to reconcile competing policy choices into a single path. Third, the elaborate

connection of authority and specified reporting requirements of the agreement established patterns of behavior among the participants and introduced the industry to administrative standards. The Finance Minister noted the ability of the government to issue reports, call meetings and apply pressure to ensure compliance and enforcement in this way. Fourth, the continuation of the rounds of the competitiveness strategy show the selection of bargaining strategies against the competitiveness and unequal payoffs in a winner-take-all political environment. In contrast with the symbol of Prime Minister Aznar facing assassination from Basque nationalist militants, Catalonia in 2004 hosted the Universal Forum of Cultures which produced a declaration affirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, development practices and the necessity of compromise and negotiation in the construction of such agreements (*El Pais 2004*). For now at least, Catalonia demonstrated a high level of effective public-private cooperation.

With the regional elections nearest to the competitiveness agreement, Catalonia performed significantly higher than the Basque Country, but still below the national average for the different democratic quality indices. In 2006, 15.8% of voters responded favorably to the political environment, while 17.7% positively evaluated past performance. For politicians, the mean evaluation on a ten point scale was 4.21, while voter turnout in the 2006 Catalanian ballot was the lowest of the entire election dataset at 66.9%. With the exception of voter turnout, the remaining democratic quality indicators were around one to one and a half standard deviations below the national averages in the same span of time. In terms of the type of political leadership, however, the Catalanian division of the Spanish socialists retained power in the 2006 elections and would continue so until 2010 despite its continued agreement with and investment in the

modernization and liberalization of certain business practices. A final important comparison to make between the two autonomous communities is to note that nationalist sentiment, unrelated to the ability of the region to produce cooperation, showed a mean of 5.88 out of ten in the Basque Country in 2001 and a mean of 5.27 in Catalonia in 2006.

The results of the case studies show conditional support for the first hypothesis about the positive relationship between regional public-private cooperation norms and quality of democracy. However, as each studied example expressed values of consensus, dialogue and public inclusion and yet produced widely varying results, the second hypothesis finds no support in the evidence. There is a disjuncture between the promises of civil society groups and the effectiveness of their delivery. Finally, the corollary hypothesis about the lack of networks preventing quality of democracy tests favorably between the two cases as the less cooperative region of the Basque Country failed to mobilize some of its most important political actors and could not hold them together for a sustained period of time. Despite the potential for support on hypotheses one and three, the relatively small change in democratic quality based on the observed metrics does not indicate a high level of substantive significance. As the Spanish expression which introduced the case studies indicates – *borrar con el codo lo que se escribe con la mano* (Erase with the elbow what is written with the hand) – the drafting of agreements and democratic institutions can be undermined by the stubborn erasure of poor public-private cooperation and invalidation of agreements between key interest groups.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research began with several puzzles and guiding questions for its investigation, including gaining a clearer understanding of the patterns of Spanish democracy from its legacy of rapid opening after the Franco dictatorship, as well as explaining anecdotes of varying outcomes in democratic performance across different parts of the country ranging back at least four decades. To address these empirical puzzles, a new angle which incorporated the relationship of civil society with the state proposed a relationship between cooperative norms which stem from such a healthy relationship as an explanatory factor in democratic performance. Quantitative testing proved the variation among regions in both identity scores used as a proxy for cooperation and in measures of governmental performance based on citizen satisfaction. A gamut of correlation tests brought mixed results but found the regional election cycle which did not coincide with a national election to have a positive relationship between regional cooperation and performance. Qualitative testing through case studies demonstrated the strength of agreements between public and private sectors to positively correlate with the stability and success of democratic institutions in Spanish autonomous communities. However, the substantive amount of improvement was limited.

With reservations, the evidence supports the first hypothesis of a positive relationship between norms of cooperation and democratic quality. Quantitative data is inconclusive, but suggests the possibility of a relationship more complex than linear – if a relationship exists at all. More probable is a relationship between democratic factors and the nationalist aspirations of a region, demonstrated by the consistent difference between Spanish nationalisms and the rest of the country. Evidence firmly disproves the second

hypothesis of value expression by civil society benefiting democracy, undermining the case for an ideal-type of a civil society group claiming a particular mission or standards having direct effects on the discourse and political outcomes in a given polity. Finally, the third hypothesis has small support in the qualitative tests, as networks were not covered in the quantitative data and act almost as an intervening variable or mechanism between norms of cooperation and interfacing with the government.

Importantly, then, this research unveils important links in the transmission of ideas, information and bargaining from a constituency to government couched in the constructive logic of norms and processes rather than the insulated performance of an institution. Rather than examine outputs in terms of landmark legislation, public relations campaigns or the dynamics of electoral cycles themselves, the research examines the back-room practices which link the state to civil society and questions the variance in its effectiveness. While Putnam (1993) uses Italian regions to connect isolated participation in civic associations and local government outcomes, this study integrates civil society variables directly into policy domains. The attention to process and the de-emphasis on institutions themselves invite new interpretations of the role of government as more contemporary thought suggests, “the sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other’s emergence” (Lemke and Naron 1999). Put differently, the success of regional cooperative norms triggers mechanisms of consultative power sharing and the generation of better modes of governance.

The mechanisms outlined in the theory are a useful complement to the variables of civil society groups and conventional measures of public opinion. Effective standardization of behavior and interactions between groups and with the state resolves

conventional tradeoffs assumed in policymaking and addresses obstacles to bargaining which prevent distribution of benefits and public goods to more people. Clearer information sharing, mutually agreeable policy solutions, the introduction of procedures and the middle ground between coercion and conciliation make the instruments of governing more efficient. In this way, further research could investigate the connections between regional norms of public-private cooperation and economic development, their use by political actors in promoting electoral success, peace or even conflict as well as influence on the judicial process. Inversely, additional research could examine the factors which contribute to the operation of these norms primarily through the exchange of values and construction of identities among a certain population. The research offers a window into the linkages between public interests, political behavior and policy.

Even with its theoretical applications, the research has several causal and methodological issues which affect its usefulness in explaining regional variance in the quality of democracy. First, the inverse of the first hypothesis could be the actual direction of the relationship, being that the presence of a regime type such as democracy is a permissive cause for the growth of cooperative norms. To test this, findings would have to demonstrate the presence of these norms in a nondemocratic system or the occurrence of the norms before the development of democratic institutions. Second, discovering and analyzing public-private cooperation norms in a nondemocratic system would call into question the sufficiency of the norms for the dependent variable. In other words, as with concerns about civil society more broadly, the fungible nature of norms allows them to also be repossessed to justify violent or undemocratic behavior. Third, the argument runs the risk of being tautological, in that public satisfaction with democratic

performance can be synonymous with norms of cooperation themselves. However, the research avoids the risk of tautology by distinguishing the positive and negative effects of cooperation measures on democratic performance. Finally, individuals' perception and decisions to participate in their democratic system may be determined by an *antecedent* presence of these norms, rather than the norms creating a more favorable system to which citizens then respond. Yet this relationship could well be cyclical, as shown in the cycle of issue demonstration, civil society mobilization and public-private power sharing.

Methodologically, the case studies only imperfectly addressed the issue of measuring democratic quality, choosing to draw on the dataset as well as look at a series of events in the government each associated with though not necessarily caused by the agreements studied. This limitation, however, is an inherent challenge in process tracing. Furthermore, the inconsistency in the types of questions used by the CIS to measure regional identity had the largest influence on the scores for the independent variable and potentially altered the results of the correlation tests. In either case, the category of Spanish nationalisms in Catalonia and the Basque Country among others perhaps merits more attention for separate testing due to different measures and high variation. Despite these obstacles, the research offers a template for the tailoring of policies and strategies based on region, and assessing regional politics in a consensus democracy on the enforcement, capacity and comprehensiveness of agreements. The bread and wine of democracy, from a Spanish expression meaning things should be described as they are in their most basic form, comes not from the loud proclamations of leaders but from the careful road to consensus from diverse and seemingly incompatible preferences.

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ABSTRACT

This research addressed different explanations for the processes and variation of democratic quality between regions of Spain, focusing on the relationship between the civil society sector and the government. Weighing other theories of democratic quality, the study isolated norms of public-private cooperation and the advantages they bring to government effectiveness as a determinant of quality. Consequently, three hypotheses answered the central question of regional democracy patterns through proposing a relationship between different aspects of public-private cooperation and measures of democratic quality. Using a mixed-methods approach which combined coded Spanish regional election data and document analysis from the Basque Country and Catalonia, the research found conditional support for its hypotheses while opening new doors to using such a measurement for civil society activity in the future.

Also included are more descriptive statistics showing the irregularities in the Spanish case which advance new questions about the types of regions and the effects of new variables on democracy. Understanding these patterns has important implications for the study of governance in 21st-century Europe and the evolving civil society sector.