The Effects of Polarized Pluralism on the Democratic Transition of Spain and Italy
History of Transitions

Francisco Franco 1936–1975

Benito Mussolini 1922–1943
Hypothesis

Elements of Polarized Pluralism
- Democratic Instability
- Italy

Absence of Polarized Pluralism
- Democratic Stability
- Spain
Elements of Polarized Pluralism

- Anti-System Parties
- Bilateral Opposition
- Center Party Dynamics
- Ideological Polarization
- Fragmented Party System
Anti–System Parties

Italy 1948 Elections

- MSI– Neo–Fascist Party
  - 338 Seats
  - Pro–System Parties
  - 338 Seats
- MSI– Neo–Fascist Party
  - Half–System Parties
  - (95 seats)
- PCI– Communist Party
  - Anti System Parties
  - (277 seats)

- Monarchist
- Christian Democrats
  - PRI
  - PLI
  - PSDI
- Socialists
Spain–1978 Elections

Anti-System Parties (20 Seats)

Pro-System Parties (332 Seats)

Spanish Communist Party

UCD
PSOE
Alianza Popular
Pacte Democràtic per Catalunya
Bilateral Opposition

Italy

Left Opposition

Center Party (In Power)

Unable to work together to form alternative government

Right Opposition

Spain

Government in Power (Right or Left)

All opposition on one side of the spectrum
Forces are driving outwards, which does not promote moderate politics
Ideological Polarization

Italy:

Communists

No room for consensus

Conservatives (Church)

Spain:

Political Attitudes on Ideological Scale

40%

1 5 6 10
Party Fragmentation

ITALY
300,000 votes for 1 deputy
More representation of smaller, splinter parties

SPAIN
3% of total vote to gain one deputy
Protects majority and eliminates smaller, extreme parties from gaining representation
Currently need 1,214,731 votes to gain representation
Conclusion and Results

- Italy
  Political Instability
  Average length of Prime Minister’s term: 1.7 years

- Spain
  Political Stability
  Average length of Prime Minister’s term: 6.6 years