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From Autocrats to Democrats.

A Comparative Analysis of Authoritarian Successor Parties and Democratic Acceptance in Spain, Panama, and Myanmar.

Michael Harty

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ABSTRACT

Political parties often emerge from authoritarian regimes that contend democratic elections following transitions to democracy. However, the behavior that these parties display in regard to democratic acceptance varies, ranging from working to reestablish authoritarian rule to accepting democracy and becoming important democratic actors. This study seeks to account for this variation in behavior by identifying the conditions under which these parties, known as authoritarian successor parties (ASPs), accept democracy. It conducts a comparative analysis using Mill's Method of Agreement for two cases in which ASPs have accepted democracy and have become major democratic actors: the Alianza Popular/Partido Popular in Spain and the Partido Revolucionario Democrático in Panama. It then applies Mill's Method of Difference to compare these results with the case of the Union Solidarity and Development Party in Myanmar, which has played a role in autocratization. The study finds that economic incentives for democracy, the level of support for democracy and relevance of domestic political actors (i.e. civil society, opposition parties, the military), and the level of international influence for democracy are determinant factors in ASP acceptance of democracy, while public support for democracy is not a determinant factor.

KEYWORDS: Authoritarian Successor Parties, Democratization, Democratic Consolidation, Political Parties, Comparative Analysis

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

AP.....Alianza Popular
ASEAN.....Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASP.....Authoritarian Successor Party
DJP.....Democratic Justice Party
EEC.....European Economic Commission
EU.....European Union
FDI.....Foreign Direct Investment
GDP.....Gross Domestic Product
KMT.....Kuomintang
NATO.....North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NLD.....National League of Democracy
PP.....Partido Popular
PRD.....Partido Revolucionario Democrático
UCD.....Unión de Centro Democrático
US.....United States of America
USDA.....Union Solidarity and Development Association
USDP.....Union Solidarity and Development Party

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1. INTRODUCTION

Authoritarian successor parties (ASPs), or parties that emerge from authoritarian regimes, are quite a common feature in states that have undergone a transition to democracy. These parties are often highly competitive in the democratic landscape: 75% of third-wave democracies (those that emerged in the late 20th century) have seen an emergence of competitive ASPs, and in over half of these cases, these parties have been voted back into power (Loxton 2018). ASPs have largely emerged out of regimes notorious for human rights abuses and repression of dissent, yet many of them have found success in popular elections. Further, these parties have emerged across ideological leanings and geographical location, ranging from the right-wing dictatorship in Taiwan under the Kuomintang (KMT), where the party now participates in democratic elections, to post-Soviet left-wing parties in Eastern European countries such as Romania (Democratic Party, Social Democratic Party) and Moldova (Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova, Bloc of Communists and Socialists).

Despite the common authoritarian origins of ASPs, their commitment to democracy post-transition varies widely. Some parties accept democratic norms and participate in democratic systems, while others thrust their states back into authoritarian rule. Given the significant differences in democratic acceptance by ASPs, and the implications of this acceptance on democratic consolidation, this paper seeks to answer the following research question: Under what conditions do ASPs accept democracy?

Identifying the conditions under which these parties accept democracy is important in understanding democratic consolidation following transitions to democracy. While there has ample literature regarding the impacts that ASPs have on democratic consolidation in the post-transition period, there has been little attention given to the conditions that lead to these parties' acceptance of democracy. Given the variation of outcomes in systems with ASPs, and the potential for renewed autocratization under ASP rule, identifying conditions that lead to ASP acceptance of democracy can have important implications related to democratization for policy makers and encourage further research on the topic of ASPs and democracy. This paper attempts to address this gap in the literature by comparing the conditions that led to varying outcomes of ASP acceptance of democracy in the cases of Spain, Panama, and Myanmar.

This paper is organized in the following way. First, in section two, a conceptual framework is presented that examines existing literature on ASPs and democracy and introduces the hypotheses. Following this, section three details the research methodology that is used to address the hypotheses and offers an explanation for case selection. Section four presents the empirical findings of the study, followed by a discussion of these findings in section five. Finally, section six offers concluding remarks, summarizing the findings of the study, highlighting limitations, and offering avenues for potential future research.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Much of the literature on the topic of ASPs and their relationship with democracy focuses on the impact of the parties on democratic consolidation. While there is debate in the literature regarding at what point a democracy can be considered consolidated, one of the most prominent definitions is when democracy has been monopolized as the widely accepted political system, resulting in its becoming "the only game in town" (Linz and Stepan 1996, 15). This definition is largely supported by other scholars, who contend that democratic consolidation can be defined by the level of acceptance of democracy, and the likelihood that it will endure (Mounk & Foa 2016; Schedler 2001).

Given their status as former leaders in authoritarian regimes, outgoing elites and their successors can have an impact on the success of democratic consolidation in the post-transition arena. However, the ways in which these actors contribute to and impede democratic consolidation are contested in the literature. Miller (2021) argues that the impact of ASPs is generally negative on democratic consolidation post-transition, given that they, "are often the most significant political actors in young democracies and thus strongly shape democratic development" (581). This allows for an outsized impact on the democratic landscape, leading to negative impacts on democracy quality and survival, including impeding democratic consolidation and reversing democratic gains made during the transition. Given their advantages, such as increased name recognition, existing party membership, increased financial resources, existing local and regional organization, and potential allies in the media and military, Miller (2021) argues that ASPs are generally able to heavily influence the design of the newly democratic system in their favor. This is reiterated by Albertus (2019), who writes that, during transitional processes, authoritarians often attempt to establish protections for themselves and their interests. Loxton (2018) further identifies negative impacts that ASPs have on democratic consolidation, writing that they can hinder transitional justice, promote vestiges of authoritarianism inside of the democratic states, and even trigger authoritarian regression.

There are several mechanisms by which ASPs can negatively impact democratic consolidation, such as by issuing pardons for former authoritarian elites or by negotiating a transitional framework that benefits outgoing elites. This framework can include conditions such as amnesty for crimes committed during the regime, unrealistic criteria for constitutional changes that maintain bias for the outgoing elite, veto power for the military, and biased election rules, among others (Albertus 2019; Loxton 2018). By distorting the rules of the nascent democracy to their favor by establishing processes and institutions that shield authoritarian elite from prosecution and provide favorable political conditions for the ASP, outgoing authoritarians hinder the process of democratic consolidation and imprint vestiges of authoritarianism on the new political system. In Chile, for example, a constitution was introduced that included key privileges for former officials of the Pinochet government, including senate appointments

for life for outgoing authoritarian officials, a biased political system that favored the right-wing, and privileges for the military (Loxton 2018). By shaping the rules of the new democracy, the outgoing regime ensured that there would be favorable conditions for its elite and its political influence in the future under democracy.

Alternatively, Yan (2022) argues that ASPs can have a positive impact on democratic consolidation, writing that the impact is especially positive if the party was a central institution of the regime, as the opposition to the ASP is encouraged to cooperate to be able to better compete against the dominant ASP. This, in turn, promotes stability in the democratic system through the reduction of fragmentation among opposition parties, and leads to a more institutionalized party system (Yan 2022). Grzymala-Busse (2020) also argues that ASPs can potentially be positive contributors to democratic consolidation, specifically if they reinvent themselves following their exit from power during the transition. In cases in which the ASP reinvents its image and commits to democracy to maximize its vote share, electoral democracy and party competition improve (Gryzmala-Busse 2020). Examples of parties that have done this include former communist parties in Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Slovenia, and Slovakia, each reinventing themselves as social democratic parties and becoming competitive in the democratic system (Grzymala-Busse 2020). Loxton (2018) echoes these positive impacts of ASPs, writing that they promote party institutionalization and they incorporate potential spoilers into the democratic system. Slater and Wong (2013) provide evidence for this claim, arguing that in Taiwan, South Korea, and Indonesia, ASPs (KMT, DJP/Saenuri, and Golkar, respectively) have contributed to the stabilization of new democratic regimes by offering a platform for authoritarian elites to be incorporated into the democratic arena. Further, Loxton (2018) speculates that ASP success can demonstrate that political survival is not necessarily dependent on maintaining authoritarian rule, thereby encouraging neighboring authoritarians to democratize.

The wider focus in the literature on the impacts of ASPs on democratic consolidation is certainly relevant and important, but there is variation in the conclusions that are arrived at by scholars. In order to determine the reasoning for this variation in outcome, and therefore address this gap in the literature, this study seeks to better understand the conditions under which ASPs accept democracy. By identifying these conditions, it is possible to clarify the varying impacts that these parties have on democratic consolidation. Therefore, in contrast to the conventional research approach taken in regard to ASPs and democratic consolidation, in which democratic consolidation is taken as the dependent variable and ASPs are taken as the independent variable, this paper seeks to evaluate ASP acceptance of democracy by taking democratic acceptance by ASPs as the dependent variable and identifying independent variables that lead to this acceptance. By taking this approach, this paper seeks to provide clarity for the question that naturally derives from the differences observed pertaining to the impact of ASPs on

democratic consolidation: why, in some cases, are ASPs integrated as democratic players in successful democratic systems, while in others they are obstacles to democratic consolidation?

To answer this question, it is necessary to evaluate possible conditions that facilitate the acceptance of democracy by ASPs. While there are a host of potential conditions that could lead to ASP acceptance of democracy, this paper focuses on four of them. This is due in large part to the scope of the study, which limits the potential for an in-depth analysis of more conditions. The conditions were chosen due to the perception of their relevance and utility to the study, while acknowledging that there are other potential variables worth studying. For example, this study chose not to evaluate the impact of historical legacies of the countries and parties due to the large potential for significant variation that would make case comparison difficult. This is not meant to discount the impact that this factor may have in ASP acceptance of democracy, but it does not allow for a particularly useful comparative analysis.

Economic conditions are one often-cited marker for democratic transitions. Boix (2011) posits that there exists a positive association between per capita income level and higher development levels and democratization. As development and per capita income level grow, the likelihood of a democratic transition increases. This is similar to findings of Feng & Zak (1999), who suggest that per capita income is a key determinant of democratic transitions, and Murtin & Wacziarg (2014), who conclude that development, specifically higher per capita income and higher levels of primary schooling, result in higher levels of democracy.

Alternatively, Haggard and Kaufman (2012) argue that transition to democracy is unlikely under prosperous economic growth. In other words, when things are going well, there is little incentive to alter course. Positive economic conditions provide a positive environment for any regime type, according to the authors. The inverse of this is supported in an analysis by Doorenspleet (2004), who writes that poor or negative economic growth in an autocracy leads to a higher likelihood of democratic transition. Given these frameworks, if economic growth occurs under democracy, ASPs are likely to support democracy. Therefore, if democratization is encouraged with economic incentives, and the subsequent democracy is coupled with economic growth, ASPs are likely to accept democracy as a means to maintain positive economic conditions. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H_1: Increased economic incentives for democratization lead to greater ASP acceptance of democracy.

In addition to economic incentives that lead to ASP acceptance of democracy, it is possible that political pressures from domestic political actors could impact democratic acceptance by ASPs. Businesses, trade unions, the military, other political parties and organizations, social movements, NGOs, etc. have the potential to mobilize to promote (or reject) democracy. Self (2023) contends that the military plays a key role in transitions in systems in which it has significant influence, conceding to more democratic

systems when political allies are stronger, while Serra (2010) argues that civilian control of the military is essential for democratic consolidation. Further, Stoner & McFaul (2013) write that active civil society can spur democratic change.

The role of democratic political actors in democratic transition is evident in the literature. However, how these actors impact ASP acceptance of democracy is less clear. Slater and Wong (2013) argue that authoritarians have incentive to democratize if they meet three conditions: they are confident that they would be victorious in elections, they are confronted with signals that their power is past its peak, and they undertake legitimization strategies conceding to democratic reform as a result of these signals. Similarly, Geddes (1999) argues that the likelihood of ruling authoritarian parties' acceptance of democracy results from strong opposition and depleting power as a way to maintain a level of power and influence. Given the incentive for authoritarians to maintain power and legitimacy, and the role that civil society and the military play in democratization, the second hypothesis proposed is the following:

H_2: Increased support for democracy in domestic political actors leads to greater ASP acceptance of democracy.

Further, the general population is likely to play a role in democratization. Stoner & McFaul (2013) contend that popular support is an important component of democratic change, while Bunce & Wolchik (2006) emphasize the importance of high mobilization levels for founding democratic elections. Further, public support of democracy is frequently linked to higher levels of democratic consolidation. Mounk & Foa (2016) argue that a high degree of public support for democracy as a democratic system is a key characteristic of a consolidated democracy, and Linz & Stepan (1996) highlight the importance of widespread popular support of democracy as essential for democratic consolidation. Chu et al. (2008) write that the level of popular commitment to democracy is not necessarily dependent on economic performance at the national or personal level. Instead, democracies must build their legitimacy through political means, gaining the trust of the populace and meeting basic requirements, such as free and fair elections (Chu et al. 2008). This suggests that in democratic states with higher satisfaction with democracy among citizens, there is greater legitimacy held by democratic institutions. This is important, as Lührmann (2021) and Mounk & Foa (2016) contend that citizens' discontent with democracy and democratic institutions can be utilized to promote autocratization by anti-democratic actors. This suggests that in states that maintain high public support of democracy, it is potentially politically dangerous for ASPs to oppose democracy. Alternatively, in states with little confidence in democratic institutions, there may be little political punishment for opposing democracy. Based on this, the third hypothesis proposed is as follows:

H_3: A high level of public support for democracy leads to greater ASP acceptance of democracy.

Finally, international influence may play a role in the acceptance of democracy by ASPs. Levitsky and Way (2005) argue that democratization can be, in part, explained by the density of a state's ties to Western democracies, more than through direct leverage held by Western democracies over a state. The authors argue that typical mechanisms used to exert leverage over states, such as diplomatic pressure, democratic conditionality, and military intervention, were often less significant in democratization than the density of ties to the West. This impact of the political system of related states is similarly reflected in the analysis conducted by Doorenspleet (2004), who argues that having neighboring states that are democracies increases the likelihood of a state becoming democratic. Given that this international influence has an impact on democratization, ASPs may be incentivized to accept democratization in order to maintain strategic relations and to gain relevance and importance on the international stage. Due to this influence of international actors, while acknowledging the numerous historical failures of military intervention as a means for democratization, the fourth and final hypothesis presented is the following:

H_4: High levels of international influence of democratic states leads to greater ASP acceptance of democracy.

3. METHODOLOGY

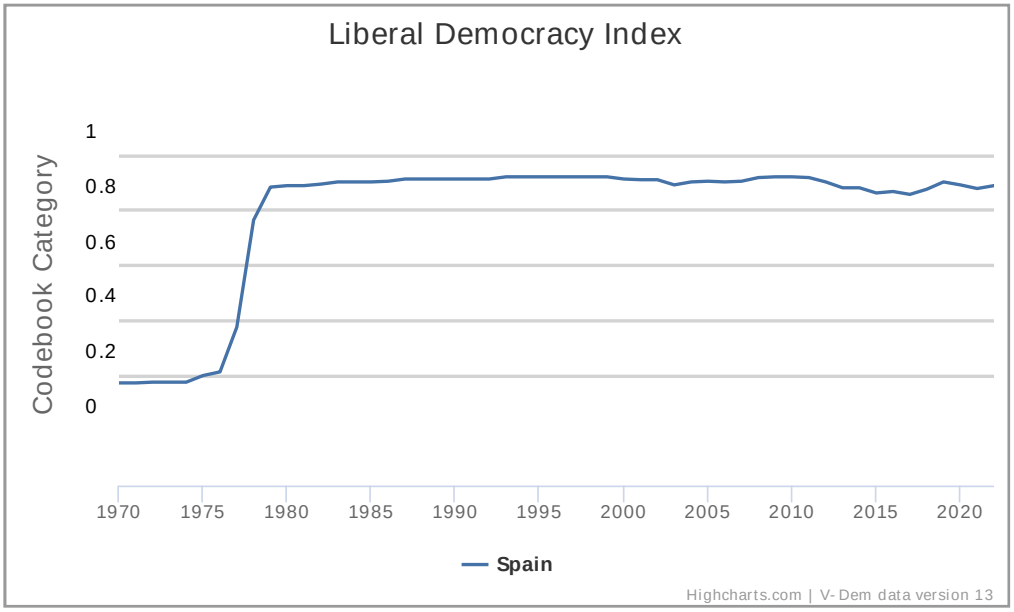
This paper presents a small-N qualitative study to test the previously mentioned hypotheses. Utilizing Mill's Method of Agreement, the study first compares cases that had similar outcomes (ASPs that have accepted democracy), resulting from different contexts (Coppedge 2012; Bogaards 2019). Then, Using Mill's Method of Difference, the variables identified in this comparison are applied to a case that had a different outcome (an ASP that rejected democracy) to assist in further determining the robustness of these variables' impacts on ASP acceptance of democracy (Coppedge 2012; Bogaards 2019).

The cases of Spain and the Alianza Popular/Partido Popular (AP/PP)[1], and Panama and the Partido Revolucionario Democrático (PRD) are used for the first part of the analysis. These cases were selected according to the high level of ASP relevance in the current political systems. Both ASPs that accept democracy chosen pass the two turnover test presented by Huntington (1991) on a party level, in that each party has participated in at least two transfers of power after national elections that they had lost. This is relevant, as Schedler (2001) notes that this test is especially useful for determining how actors manage transfers of power, demonstrating that these actors have accepted democracy and have become

[1] Alianza Popular was re-founded as the Partido Popular in 1989, as it joined with smaller conservative and liberal parties.

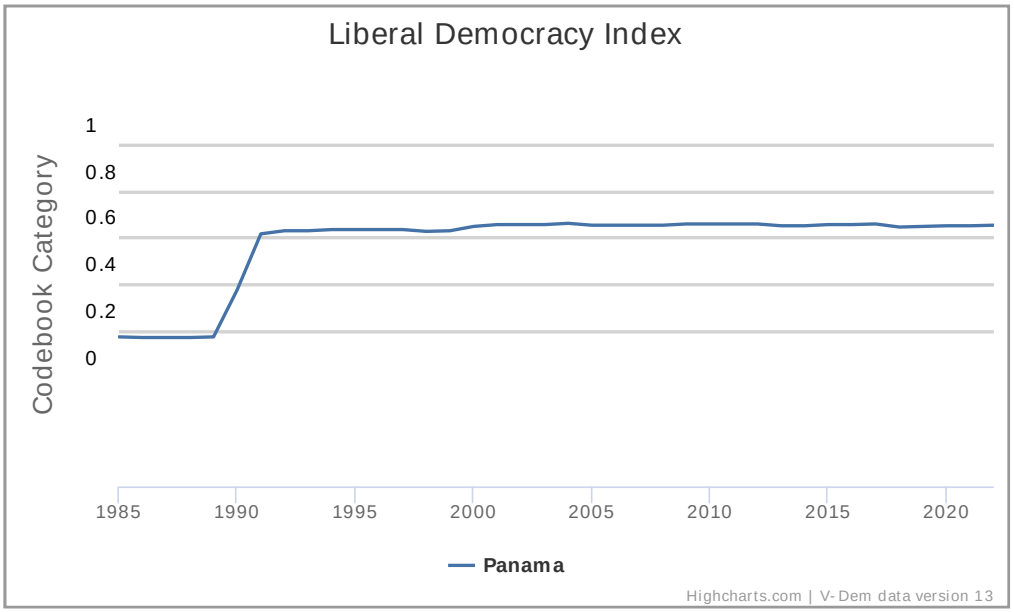
stable democratic players in countries that consistently rank as democratic in democracy rankings since their transitions (Economist Intelligence Unit 2023; *Coppedge et al. 2023b, 2023c).*

Figure 3.1: Liberal Democracy index for Spain (1970-2022)



Source: Coppedge et al. 2023c

Figure 3.2: Liberal Democracy index for Panama (1985-2022)



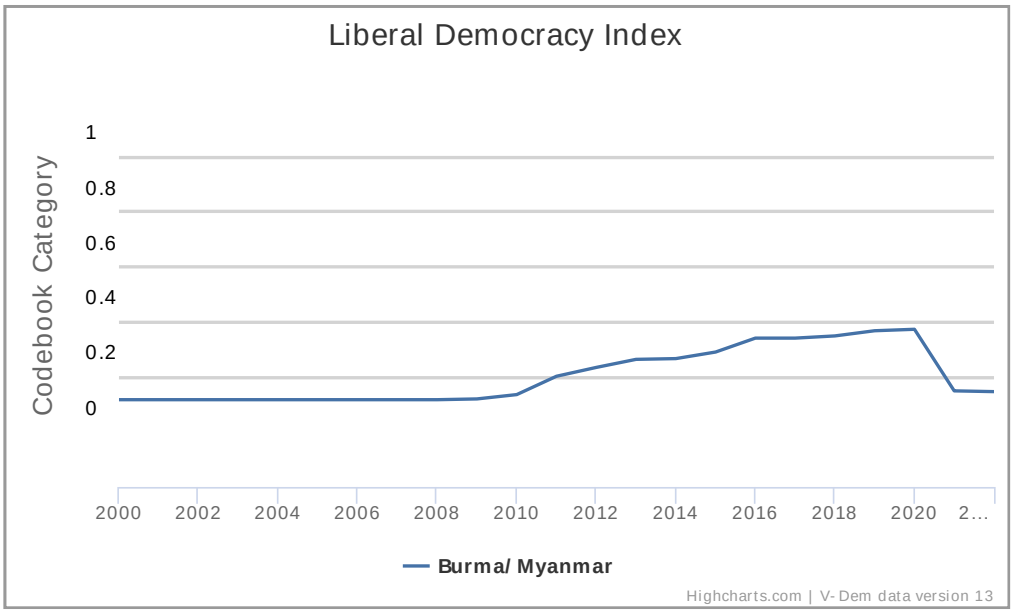
Source: Coppedge et al. 2023b

Relevant differences between these cases facilitate a comparison to identify variables in common that lead to ASP acceptance of democracy. In addition to geographical differences, the countries' transitions

to democracy were undertaken under different conditions, with Spain having a pacted transition following the death of its dictator, and Panama transitioning as a result of military invasion by the US. The level of democratic consolidation also differs, with Spain consistently ranking higher than Panama in democratic rankings, but neither country experiencing democratic backsliding. Moreover, the ASP origins were different, with the AP/PP being founded by high ranking officials of the Franco regime, and the PDR being the political party of the military dictatorship that ruled the country for twenty-one years. The parties' ideologies also differ, with the AP/PP having a right wing ideology and the PRD having a center to left wing ideology. Additionally, the amount of time for each party to come to power following transition varied, with the PP not coming to power for twenty years, and the PRD winning the first elections following transition. While not a comprehensive list of differences between the cases, these are some important differences relevant to this study that allow for the identification of independent variables in common between the cases. Using Mill's Method of Agreement, it is possible to identify these common variables, through the lens of the proposed hypotheses, that have led to the respective ASPs' acceptance of democracy.

Following this, a third case is introduced to compare the commonalities found between the cases of the AP/PP and PDR with a case that has experienced a different outcome: that of Myanmar and the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP). The USDP emerged from the political organization of the military junta, the Union Solidarity and Development Association. While the party won the first elections following transition to democracy (boycotted by the opposition), following two election losses it participated in a military coup and now holds the presidency in the new government led by the military junta. This added case assists in the robustness of the study, allowing variables leading to ASP acceptance of democracy identified in the comparison of Spain and Panama to be tested with the case of Myanmar, which experienced severe autocratization with the help of the USDP.

Figure 3.3: Liberal Democracy index for Myanmar (2000-2022)



Source: Coppedge et al. 2023a

To test the hypotheses, this paper draws on primary sources, such as electoral results, party manifestos, speeches of prominent party leaders, economic indicators, and public opinion data, as well as secondary sources, including scholarly literature on the specific case studies. Economic indicators and public opinion data allow for the identification of structural patterns to be identified between cases to test the hypotheses, while party manifestos, speeches of leaders, and secondary sources allow for an analysis of party behavior as it relates to democracy.

4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This section presents the empirical findings for the study. Evidence related to each hypothesis is presented for each case. The cases of the AP/PP and Spain and the PRD and Panama are presented first. These are the cases that have maintained democracies with ASPs that are active participators in the democratic systems. Following this, the case of the USDP and Myanmar is presented as the case in which democracy was rejected by the ASP and there was severe autocratization.

4.1. Spain

The Spanish transition to democracy began in 1975 following the death of Francisco Franco, the authoritarian leader of the country for 36 years. The AP was founded in 1976 during the transition by seven former officials of the Franco regime as a federation of political associations under the leadership

of Manuel Fraga. In 1982, the party consolidated itself as the country's main opposition party, overtaking the Union of the Democratic Center (UCD) to anchor itself as the major conservative political force in Spain. Despite often opposing efforts for national reconciliation pertaining to atrocities committed under the dictatorship, the AP/PP has consistently accepted democracy, contesting elections as the AP until it was re-founded as the PP in 1989. It remained in the opposition until 1996, when José María Aznar became the first Prime Minister from the party to be elected. He remained in office until 2004, and the PP returned to the opposition until 2011, when Mariano Rajoy became Prime Minister. He remained in the post until 2018, and since then the party has remained in the opposition as of the time of writing, while leading several local and regional governments around the country.

a) Economic Incentive

Spain experienced vast economic growth under the Franco regime during the 1960s. The 1959 Stabilization Plan marked a transition away from autarky towards liberalization and increased international trade. This shift in economic policy marked a clear inflection point in economic growth. GDP per capita in the country skyrocketed, inflation declined, the budget deficit was erased, and there was new influx of foreign investment (Prados de la Escosura 2011).

However, the liberalization undertaken by the regime had a ceiling. In the region, European economic integration was taking place in the form of the European Economic Community (EEC). The regime realized the importance of the EEC to the Spanish economy, with over 60% of exports being sent to Europe, and applied for entry into the organization in 1962 (Moradiellos 2016). As a result of its autocratic political system, Spain was unanimously denied entrance into the organization. In 1970, an agreement between Spain and the EEC pertaining to basic economic, customs, and trade issues was signed, giving the country preferential treatment in terms of trade with bloc. Nonetheless, the regime would not be able to further maximize its economic growth beyond the results of the Stabilization Plan and the preferential treatment agreement without full integration into the ECC. Further, economic conditions in Spain worsened as the country faced a period of stagflation around the time of transition. The lagging economy, following a decade of economic growth and prosperity, provided great incentive for an economic rebound, which could be jumpstarted by joining the EEC.

Given the requirement for countries to be democratic for ascension to the EEC, economic integration with Europe was a great economic incentive for democratization in Spain. As Núñez Peñas (2015) writes, ascension to the EEC for Spain was both "an economic necessity for Franco's regime and a political aspiration for democrats" (6). The ascension of Spain to the organization was therefore widely supported by political parties in Spain, including the AP. In the first elections that took place in 1977 following Franco's death in 1975, the electoral program of the AP includes the commitment "To fully

participate in the political and economic framework of the European Community" (Alianza Popular 1977, 23).[2] This support indicates that the party accepted the required democratic reform for ascension.

As negotiations to join the EEC continued, the AP criticized the socialist-led government's negotiation strategies, and planted the possibility for renegotiation following the Spanish entry into the community, but the party never revoked its support for joining the EEC. Further, the party supported the ratification of the Treaty of Adhesion in the parliament. One AP representative, Miguel Herrero y Rodríguez de Miñón, described the party's vote in favor of the treaty as an enthusiastic and instrumental one, looking towards the future with the best interest of Spain in mind (Congreso de los Diputados 1985). Economic conditions in Spain flourished following its ascension to the EEC, as GDP per capita grew steadily and inflation fell sharply, remaining relatively steady in the subsequent years (World Bank 2022c).[3]

b) Domestic Political Actors

Civil society played an important role in liberalization under the Franco regime in its final years, as well as in the democratization process. Political parties and trade unions promoted democratic practices and publicly supported the democratic transition (Hamann 1998). These groups helped to establish the political landscape in the democratic era, leading to incentives for political actors to garner the support of civil society organizations. Further, prominent civil society actors such as the Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales began to reject the UCD in favor of the AP in the late 1970s and early 1980s, solidifying its position as a democratic actor (Hopkin & Gunther 2002).

While some groups promoted democratic transition, the military was less supportive. The military as an institution tolerated the transition, but there were many influential detractors within the military that opposed democracy. The military's culture remained Francoist, with those openly supporting democracy facing discrimination and unable to ascend to higher ranks, including those that supported the AP (Shubert 1984). This indicates a lack of AP reliance on the military for political power, which was shown throughout the transition as the party remained committed to democracy and declined to utilize the military for political endeavors (Serra 2010). The lack of influence of the military over political actors is likely in part due to the increasingly civilianized authoritarian system under the later years of the Franco regime, leading to a decrease in the prominence of the institution over political life (Weeks 2002). Opposition to democracy among actors in the military culminated in a coup attempt in 1981 to overthrow the democratic government and reestablish authoritarianism. This attempt failed, and was rejected widely by political actors, including by the AP. In fact, during the coup attempt, Fraga told the perpetrators that the attempt was a "betrayal to Spain" (Faro de Vigo 2011).

[2] Own translation.
[3] See figures A1, A2, and A3 in the Appendix for economic data.

c) Public Opinion

By the end of the dictatorship, the prospect of economic integration with Europe increased public expectations of sustained growth following the economic successes of the 1960s (Boix 2008). This expectation of economic growth pressured the political elite to pursue an agreement with the EEC, both under the Franco regime and under democracy.

Further, as the Franco regime implemented more liberal reforms in the media in 1966, liberalized attitudes became more widespread in the general population. Between 1966 and 1974, the percentage of Spaniards supporting freedom of expression jumped from 40% to 74%, (Gunther et al. 2000). Additionally, by 1974, a majority of Spaniards supported freedoms contrary to authoritarian rule, including freedom of religion (71%) and the freedom to join trade unions (58%) (Gunther et al. 2000). In general, there were majorities that supported democratic ideals in Spain before the death of Franco, and this continued throughout the transition.[4]

The AP moderated itself in an attempt to overcome persisting voter perceptions relating it to the dictatorship: in 1979, almost 50% of the electorate perceived the AP to be far-right, and in 1982, 54% perceived it as far-right (Maestu Fonseca 2020). Steps taken by the party to moderate included adopting more centrist policy positions over time, adapting traditional symbols such as the monarchy, Christian values, and the nation to the image of the democratic right, and refusing to legitimize within the AP far-right actors that rejected democracy and the constitution (Maestu Fonseca 2020). The party also replaced Fraga as leader due to the political liability of his image as a former official of the Franco regime, and rebranded to the PP, displaying its willingness to adapt to the democratic system instead of rallying against it.

d) International Influence

The Cold War and NATO played an instrumental role in the advancement of the Spanish transition to democracy. Under Franco, Spain was staunchly anti-communist. In the context of the Cold War, especially after a bilateral agreement with the US that allowed for American military bases in the country in exchange for military and economic aid, the country aligned itself with the US and the West. However, despite the US' willingness for Spanish ascension to NATO regardless of its political system, many European members opposed Spanish membership due to its authoritarianism (Powell 2001). In the face of the demands for a democratic Spain, the AP supported joining NATO in the post-transition environment, positioning itself in favor of further strategic alignment with the West. In a parliamentary speech in 1981, Fraga details the reasoning for his support of Spanish NATO membership, arguing that

[4] See tables A1 and A2 in the appendix for further public opinion data.

Spain was already aligned with the West, but it was on unequal footing and needed to join the organization to improve its standing with NATO members:

> Today, we are, for all intents and purposes, in the strategic world of the West, but in the worst possible way: we have a [military] base agreement without a defense commitment, we are the smaller party negotiating one-on-one with a larger one, and we are not within a global structure where we can collectively make the necessary decisions (Congreso de los Diputados 1981, 11444**)**.[5]

The leader of the AP justifies his support for Spain's ascension to NATO as a natural next step to improve the international standing of the country and to properly align itself with Western states, therefore further demonstrating his party's acceptance of democracy. Further, Fraga explicitly links his party's support for NATO membership with democracy: "In conclusion, as we understand that it aligns with the overall decisions to promote democracy and a constitutional system in Spain, our group will vote in favor of the proposal" (Congreso de los Diputados 1981, 11444**)**.[6] NATO membership not only represented a collective defense agreement, but a commitment by Spain to democratic values and governance; a commitment shared and supported by the AP.

In the context of European integration, the economic incentive of the EEC was a regional tool used by Western European powers to pressure Spain to adopt a democratic system. Not only a regional tool for the economy, the organization had come to embody European values such as liberal democracy, and was seen by many in Europe and among democrats in Spain to be a promise of a cure for the authoritarianism in the country (Pridham 1991). The organization became a "synonym for democracy" in Spain, according to Spanish diplomat Pablo Barrios, and ascension to it meant a commitment to liberal democratic values that the organization represented (Gorce 1982). Further, the US supported Spain's membership in the EEC, given the belief that the country would be deeply economically tied to Europe and therefore be solidly aligned with the West (Powell 2001). This meant meeting the conditions for EEC membership, including a democratic system, which while not necessarily a priority for the US, was necessary for the European members of the organization to approve Spain's membership. As previously stated, the vote authorizing Spanish EEC membership was supported by the AP, further consolidating democracy as a means of satisfying a condition of the organization.

4.2. Panama

Panama experienced a transition to democracy in 1989 as a result of US military intervention. The country was under military rule since 1968, principally under the rule of Omar Torrijos and,

[5] Own translation.
[6] Own translation.

subsequently, Manuel Noriega. When elections were held in the 1980s, the results were altered in favor of the ruling party, the PRD. The US invaded Panama in 1989 in Operation Just Cause, following the annulment of the election of the same year, ousting Noriega from power and establishing the democratically elected government. Following the transition, the PRD has remained committed to democracy, contesting elections and participating in transitions of power, despite pardoning many former officials of the regime and opposing transitional justice mechanisms. The party won the presidency in the first elections following the transition in 1994, with the candidacy of Ernesto Pérez Balladares, and went on to win elections in 2004 with the candidacy of Martin Torrijos and 2019 with the candidacy of Laurentino Cortizo, who served in the role until 2024. The party has also governed in regional and local posts following transition.

a) Economic Incentive

Economic incentives for the PRD's acceptance of democracy are evident both before and after the US intervention. Leading up to its invasion of Panama, the US implemented sanctions with the hope of damaging Noriega enough to destabilize the regime and begin a democratization process. These sanctions severely damaged the Panamanian economy, which, being dollarized, was especially susceptible to US sanctions. The US suspended aid and trade preferences, blocked Panamanian bank accounts in the US, and ordered American businesses and citizens to not make payments to the government (Lombard 1989). This resulted in a significant decrease in the country's economy, with a GDP per capita reduction of 15.2% in 1988 and a marked decrease in government revenue (World Bank 2022d; Lombard 1989).

In addition to the economic sanctions applied by the US, Panama was set to gain control of the Panama Canal in 1999 as a result of a treaty agreement between President Jimmy Carter and General Omar Torrijos in 1977. This agreement was made with the understanding that liberal reforms would take place as a condition for the transition of control over the canal, with the US Senate Majority Leader making it clear to Torrijos that ratification of the treaty in the Senate depended on commitment to adopt several measures, including legalizing political parties, allowing exiles to return, and reducing laws that restricted the press (Robinson 1990; Calderón 1987). Further, President Carter reflected on his signing of the treaty ten years later, declaring in a statement that, "Omar Torrijos and I spoke about how our two nations could become lasting partners. He told me that could only happen if Panama were to become a democracy, and he pledged his commitment to that goal" (Calderón 1987, 331). Given this, with increasing authoritarianism under Noriega following Torrijos's death, Panama was facing an increasingly agitated US upon which it depended for its future control of the canal.

The canal was a great economic incentive for democracy, as shown through the economic impact that it has had in the years since Panama gained control over it. Between 1990-1999, before Panama

controlled the canal, the revenue generated by the canal was an average of about $564 million per year and the contribution to the treasury was an average of about $96 million per year. Between 2000-2019, the average revenue generated grew to approximately $1.923 million per year and the average contribution to the treasury grew to $841 million (the canal finished expansion work in 2016, further boosting the economic gains) (Fuentes Cordoba 2021).[7]

Due to this immense economic potential, control of the canal was a major economic incentive for political actors to embrace democracy and to cooperate for a successful democratic transition. As Saller (2023) notes, the canal served as somewhat of a self-sanction that forced the Panamanian elites to work together to see through the process to avoid major economic consequences. This incentive, along with the recent economic crisis triggered by US sanctions, encouraged the PRD to accept democracy. The party's electoral strategy became dependent on nostalgia for Torrijos, who negotiated the transfer of the canal, and rejection of Noriega, who was reminiscent of corruption and unfavorable economic conditions in the recent collective memory. In adopting this electoral strategy, the party responded to the democratic conditions and the immediate economic needs of the country. Further, the electoral strategy of the party in 1994 to continue with the policies and strategies related to the canal of the previous government demonstrates the party's recognition of the economic importance of the canal and the significant role that political stability played in the time leading up to Panama's taking control of the canal (Gandásegui 1994).

b) Domestic Political Actors

The military played a key role in the maintenance of an authoritarian system in Panama, as it was a central institution to the regime. It was only through a military defeat that the transition to democracy in Panama was undertaken. Following the US invasion, there was mobilization for demilitarization in the country, which ultimately culminated in the disbandment of the military and the subjection of the domestic security forces to the civilian government (Caumartin 2007). Without a military to provide backing to the PRD, the party would be unable to orchestrate a coup to retake power, even if it wanted to. Accordingly, the PRD adopted the more politically feasible strategy of accepting the disbandment of the military and rejecting the party's past association with the military and General Noriega (Loxton 2022; Caumartin 2007).

Further, following the transition to democracy, the government continuously engaged with civil society in order to establish national dialogue and to promote stability. Political parties worked with the Catholic Church to determine election ethics before the 1994 elections, and in 1996, a program of dialogue was established called Encuentro Panamá 2000, in which civil society groups met to discuss national issues

[7] See figures B1 and B2 in the Appendix for economic figures.

(Leis 2000). The first Encuentro Panamá meeting was in 1996, and focused on the impending transfer of the canal. It included a wide array of actors with different interests, including political parties, the government, labor unions, business groups, and feminist and indigenous groups, among others (Leis 2000). For the PRD, this increased prominence of civil society and the disbandment of the military likely signaled that democratic acceptance would be the most politically feasible way to achieve power.

c) Public Opinion

Public opinion in Panama was strongly on the side of democratic transition and subsequent democratic consolidation. Even before the invasion, there was widespread popular discontent with the regime. Robinson (1990) writes that in 1987, 75% of Panamanians wanted Noriega to step down from power. Further, following the transition to democracy, a majority of Panamanians supported US intervention in the country in a poll conducted between 1992 and 1994 (Pérez 1999). Elite opinion broken down by party affiliation further shows that members of the PRD did not approve of the American invasion in the period leading up to the first democratic election (Pérez 1999).[8] Despite the party's disapproval of the American intervention, there was no brazen attempt to thwart democracy, and the party won the 1994 elections. Signaling the party's continued acceptance of democracy, the 1999 transition of power, in which the PRD lost the election, went just as smoothly as the 1994 transition before it.

In 1996, two years following the first democratic election, 75% of Panamanians supported democracy (Panama Latinobarometer 1996). This was the third highest percentage in the region of Latin America, behind only Costa Rica and Uruguay. Given this, the PRD took measures to maximize its potential to regain power in the democratic system. During the 1994 campaign, the party went to great lengths to renounce the Noriega period, instead embracing the much more popular Torrijos, along with dispelling any claims of desire to return the military to power or engage in renewed confrontation with the US (Loxton 2022).

d) International Influence

The US had long had a major interest in Panama, given the global economic importance of the Panama Canal. This interest made the country's internal affairs relevant for US foreign policy, especially due to the transfer of control of the canal from the US to Panama. As it was a result of a US invasion, international influence played a major role in the transition to democracy, and this influence was also relevant in the post-transition period. Pressures were applied by the US and other international actors, such as the World Bank, for democratic consolidation and stability.

[8] See tables B1 and B2 in the Appendix for public opinion data.

The recent memory of the US invasion served as a deterrent for the PRD to attempt to revert back to authoritarianism, and even more so in the period leading up to the transfer of control of the canal, when US and global interests were at their height. Pressure was intense, as the Panama Canal serves as a major route for the global economy, and Panama's success in its pending takeover of the waterway was of utmost importance for the international community. As stated by the US State Department diplomat Michael G. Kozak in a congressional hearing, democracy and the canal were "indissolubly linked, because in a world of rising democratic expectations, a political system other than a functioning democracy cannot provide the political stability and the economic strength which is indispensable for the canal's continuing safe and efficient operation" (US Congress 1989, 29).

The PRD, during its first term in power from 1994-1999 under Ernesto Pérez Balladares, implemented policies aimed at reassuring international partners, such as the US and international institutions like the World Bank. The president appointed a unity cabinet made up of several officials from other parties with the goal of projecting an image of stability (Pérez-Liñán, 2003). Neoliberal economic reforms were undertaken at the urging of international economic institutions, projecting outwards an image of Panama that was willing to play by the rules of the international community and indicating that the party realized the immense responsibility that the canal's control meant for the country (Gandásegui, 1999).

4.3. Myanmar

Myanmar began a transition to democracy in the 2000s, culminating in presidential elections in 2010. The country had been under military rule for decades: in 1962, General Ne Win led a coup, and led the country under socialist, isolationist policies until 1988, when major protests broke out in response to significant government failures. Following this, in 1989, another military junta was established that led the country. In 1993, the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) was established as the civil society organization for the military government. This organization became the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) in the new democratic system as the party of the outgoing military junta. In 2010 the first elections were held, resulting in a landslide victory for the USDP. The main opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), boycotted the election due to concerns with the military's role in the democratic system. The next elections, held in 2015, resulted in a major victory for the NLD, and a peaceful transition of power took place.

The path to democratization occurred under the backdrop of widespread protests and international pressure in 2007, with the government establishing a new constitution in 2008 that guaranteed the military's continued control over key policy issues, including foreign affairs, military policy and funding, and domestic security. Further, the military was guaranteed 25% of parliamentary seats,

sufficient to block changes to the constitution. As a result of these authoritarian holdovers, Myanmar was unable to consolidate its democracy, despite implementing some liberal democratic reforms during democratic civilian rule. Myanmar's experiment with democracy ended in 2021, when, following the landslide reelection of the NLD, the military and the USDP staged a coup and have maintained complete control in the country since.

a) Economic Incentive

Economic factors and incentives played a role in the government's decision to initiate a process of transition to democracy. Fellow ASEAN members, including Thailand, pursued a policy of greater economic interaction with Myanmar, with trade between the two countries growing 24.5% annually between 1994 and 2001 (Ruzza et al. 2019). Against the backdrop of growing economic interdependence, ASEAN encouraged change in the domestic political situation in Myanmar, and urged the leader of the country, Khin Nyunt, to engage with the opposition (Ruzza et al. 2019).

Further, domestic economic policies resulted in widespread discontent, with the outbreak of major protests in 2007, known as the Saffron Revolution. These protests were in response to the economic situation in Myanmar: the country was facing sharp inflation of 35%, with diesel and gasoline prices up 100% and natural gas up over 500% (World Bank 2019; BBC News 2007). Faced with this economic reality, the government was forced to take measures to improve its economic situation. By transitioning to democracy, the country allowed itself increased foreign direct investment (FDI), specifically by the US and the EU. The two had previously sanctioned Myanmar due to its authoritarian government.

In the years following the transition, FDI increased greatly. However, this trend did not last, with the country experiencing a sharp decrease in FDI in 2018, corresponding with humanitarian concerns related to the genocide of the Rohingya population (World Bank 2021; Reiner & Goel 2020). FDI further decreased following the COVID-19 pandemic (World Bank 2021). Additionally, while GDP per capita grew following the transition, it maintained a relatively stable growth rate from the period of the dictatorship throughout the period of democracy, until falling sharply in 2021, coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic (World Bank 2022a).[9]

While the coup has further deterred foreign investors, investment was already decreasing sharply due to the genocide and the COVID-19 pandemic. This loss in investment, along with the proportionate economic growth of the democratic period to the preceding authoritarian period, dissipated any significant economic incentive for democratic acceptance by the USDP. Even following the coup, important economic partners such as China, India, Russia, and Thailand have continued to invest in the

[9] See figures C1 and C2 in the Appendix for economic figures.

Myanmar economy, while Western states that had already lowered investment in the country following concerns about the genocide have continued to avoid investment (Mark et al. 2020).

b) Domestic Political Actors

The Saffron Revolution in 2007 was a massive public demonstration against the leading military government that was met with severe repression. Still, the size of the protests and level of popular discontent in the country with the government and the economy served as a catalyst for the constitution that was established just one year later, and the national elections that would take place in 2010 (Amarasinghe & Orsitto 2021). Despite the significance of the Saffron Revolution, civil society in Myanmar has remained largely segregated by ethnic group, which limits its influence in pushing for national democratic consolidation (Bawana 2021).

While perhaps the Saffron Revolution aided in the original transition to democracy, the military has played a significant role in the rejection of democracy by the USDP. The military has, in many ways, rejected democratic consolidation from the beginning (Stokke & Aung 2020). When unable to secure power through free and fair elections, despite the power that it had reserved for itself in the democratic system, it rejected democracy to reassert its dominance over the state apparatus with the USDP as its political proxy. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the party has participated in a military coup. Since the coup, the party has fallen in line with military expectations. The incumbent president of Myanmar, Myint Swe of the USDP, transferred power to the military leader, Min Aung Hlaing, immediately following the coup. The large influence of the military was not depleted during democracy in large part due to the reserves of power that it maintained, and the military maintained significant control over the party throughout the country's experiment with democracy.

c) Public Opinion

Perhaps reluctantly, the military allowed for a more democratic system while retaining several powers for themselves. However, despite these limits to democracy imposed by the military, democratically elected governments maintained significant public support until the coup in 2021. There was widespread public confidence in the government until 2020, even during the USDP-led government resulting from an election boycotted by the NLD (Reinhart 2022). In 2014, 89% of people had confidence in the USDP-led government, and in 2020, the election year following five years of NLD leadership, 86% of people in Myanmar had confidence in the government (Reinhart 2022). This number plummeted in 2021, following the coup, when only 28% of people reported having confidence in the government (Reinhart 2022).[10]

[10] See polling data in figure C3 in the Appendix.

Public opinion in Myanmar is firmly on the side of the NLD, with the party having expanded its majority in both chambers of government in the 2020 election. Despite the high level of public satisfaction and landslide election results for the incumbent democratic government, the USDP participated in a coup that removed the elected government from power, signifying that public opinion was not a sufficient factor for the USDP's continued acceptance of democracy.

d) International Influence

Myanmar' transition to democracy was impacted by relations with the international community. The country became an ASEAN member in 1997, and as the organization encouraged increased economic interdependence, Myanmar's ruling military junta was susceptible to influence from ASEAN and its member states that encouraged democratization. Following the democratic transition in Myanmar, there was a boost in foreign relations with the West, along with a continuation of relations with Asian actors such as China and ASEAN. These actors engaged with Myanmar with their own interests, but investment from all sides assisted in local peacebuilding and increased state capacity (Stokke et al. 2022). This increase in foreign investment legitimized the democratic regime internationally, and encouraged Western hopes that increased engagement with Myanmar would lead to further democratic consolidation. Following the first elections in 2010, which many in the international community deemed as illegitimate due to the boycott of the NLD, President Obama visited Myanmar and met with President Thein Sein of the USDP in 2012 to promote continued democratization efforts (Spetalnick & Mason 2012).

Relations with many in the international community soured since 2017 as a result of the genocide against the Rohingya population, with the US and the EU implementing targeted sanctions and the UN calling for senior military officials to be investigated for genocide (Marks 2018; Wong 2018). This distancing of democratic states from Myanmar led to an increase in the already dominant influence of neighboring countries such as China and Thailand, which in recent years has been struggling with democratic backsliding of its own (Mark et al. 2020). With low level of interest in involvement in Myanmar among the West, and with more permissive actors such as China establishing themselves as dominant actors in relations with the country, Myanmar did not have a meaningful international influence promoting and supporting democratic consolidation leading up to the coup. As a result, the USDP did not have significant international pressure to continue to accept democracy at the cost of its political power and influence through election losses.

Following the coup, there has been international legitimization of the newly-installed military junta by several actors. China, which has ongoing infrastructure projects with the Belt and Road Initiative and an incentive to promote stability on its borders, has continued working with the country's new government (Fumagalli 2022). Similarly, India and Thailand have continued relations with the country

under the military regime (Kushwaha 2023; Dunst 2021). ASEAN member states have been unable to agree on a response, with some arguing for noninterference in domestic affairs and other expressing support for democracy (Dunst 2021). In practice, this has led to permissiveness, with Myanmar's leader under the junta, Min Aung Hlaing, attending the ASEAN summit in 2021 in his first foreign trip as leader (Dunst 2021). Further, instead of merely continuing relations, Russia has boosted its military and economic cooperation with the country following the coup, as the junta has emerged as one of Russia's principle backers in the war in Ukraine (Fumagalli 2022). Alternatively, there has been little interest among democratic countries to engage in a struggle against authoritarianism in Myanmar, with resistance groups unable to rely on international support against the regime.

This level of international support for the military government, coupled with the lack of international assistance for resistance, has established an environment of international legitimization of the regime. The international influence most present and impactful in Myanmar consists of support, either implicit or clearly affirmed, for the status quo of military rule. Therefore, there is little to no international pressure serving as an incentive for the USDP to accept democracy.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings in the above section facilitate an analysis of conditions that potentially lead to ASP acceptance of democracy. The findings tend to support that ASP acceptance of democracy is related to economic incentives for democracy, the level of support for democracy among domestic political actors, and the influence of democratic international actors (H_1, H_2, and H_4, respectively). These factors were influential in the acceptance, or rejection, of democracy by ASPs in the cases evaluated. Public opinion (H_3), on the other hand, is not a sufficient factor for ASP acceptance of democracy. High public support of democracy was prevalent in all cases, and therefore cannot be considered a differentiating factor between cases that experienced differing results. The findings of the study are reflected in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Summary of Findings

	Spain (AP/PP)	Panama (PRD)	Myanmar (USDP)
H_1: Economic Incentive	Economic Incentives for Transition and Consolidation.	Economic Incentives for Transition and Consolidation.	Economic Incentives for Transition, Not for Consolidation.
H_2: Domestic Political Actors	Civil Society Supportive of Democracy and Engaged with ASP; Lack of Institutional Rejection of Democracy by the Military, ASP not Dependent on Military for Political Support.	Civil Society Supportive of Democracy and Engaged with ASP, Military Abolished following Democratization	Ethnicity-Based Civil Society Limits National Cohesion and Influence; Military Maintains Significant Influence over ASP and Rejects Democracy.
H_3: Public Opinion	High Level of Public Support For Democracy.	High Level of Public Support For Democracy.	High Level of Public Support For Democracy.
H_4: International Influence	Significant International Pressure for Democratic Consolidation.	Significant International Pressure for Democratic Consolidation.	Lack of Significant International Pressure for Democratic Consolidation.

The AP/PP in Spain and the PRD in Panama offer two cases in different contexts that resulted in democratic acceptance by the ASPs. As is evident in the findings, the two cases had economic incentives for democratization. They also had domestic pressures to democratize, with pro-democracy civil society engagement with ASPs and a lack of institutional-level support in the military for autocratization. Further, neither party was reliant on the military for political support. Additionally, both cases were subject to international pressures to transition and consolidate democracy. These similarities suggest that these conditions are conducive to ASP acceptance of democracy.

When comparing the findings of the cases of Spain and Panama to the case of Myanmar, whose ASP rejected democracy, it becomes evident that not all of the conditions that appeared to lead to ASP acceptance of democracy are sufficient. Myanmar also boasted a significant level of public support for democracy and for the democratically elected government, signaling that public support is not a determinate factor in ASP acceptance of democracy. However, Myanmar lacked continued economic and international incentives for continued democratic consolidation following the transition to democracy. Further, the military retained several important powers alongside the civilian government and remained central to the USDP, which essentially serves as its political proxy. These are important differences between the successful cases of ASP acceptance of democracy and the failed case presented in this study, as they allow for the identification of independent variables that may lead to an increased likelihood of ASP acceptance of democracy.

This study offers a contribution to the literature on democratic consolidation, offering further clarification on key factors that lead to democratization and ASP acceptance of democracy. While several authors have written about the connection of economic growth and development to democratic consolidation (Murtin & Wacziarg 2014; Boix 2011; Feng & Zek 1999), this study links sustained economic growth as a factor leading to continued ASP acceptance of democracy, likely increasing the odds of democratic success by incorporating former authoritarians into the democratic system. Further, this study has found support for the concept put forth by Self (2023) and Serra (2010), that the military is an important institution in democratization efforts, with states with less military influence over ASPs and a lack of consensus in the military for a return to authoritarianism less likely to have ASPs that are sympathetic to autocratization. Additionally, the findings of the study highlight the importance of international actors in the attitudes of ASPs, with more democratic international influence resulting in greater ASP acceptance of democracy. This finding corresponds to the work of Levitsky & Way (2005), which emphasizes the ties to democratic states as a mode for democratization. Moreover, the literature emphasizes the importance of public opinion on democratization and democratic consolidation (Linz & Stepan 1996; Chu et al. 2008; Stoner & McFaul 2013; Foa & Munk 2016; Lührmann 2021). This study does not reject this, but instead adds a level of nuance. Given the high level of support for democracy in each case observed, and the identification of public opinion as an important factor for democratization in the literature, it is possible that public opinion is necessary for ASP acceptance of democracy, but it is not sufficient for acceptance to occur.

These findings offer a potential for a greater understanding of party behavior and of ASP influence on democratic consolidation. The literature on ASPs and democracy generally focuses on the impact of ASPs on democratic consolidation, which is highly variable. As seen in the cases presented in this study, some ASPs have fully assimilated to democratic systems, anchoring themselves as major democratic players, while others have participated in coups and overthrown democratically elected governments to

reestablish authoritarian rule. This variation is evident in the literature, with many studies highlighting potential positive and negative impacts of ASPs on democratic consolidation (Loxton 2018; Miller 2021; Albertus 2019; Grzymala-Busse 2020; Yan 2022). This study attempts to identify conditions under which ASPs accept democracy in an effort to clarify the variation of ASP behavior and impact on democratic consolidation.

6. CONCLUSION

The varying impacts of ASPs on democratic consolidation in a wide array of post-transition states has been observed by several scholars, but the conditions that lead to these differing impacts have been given little scholarly attention. This study set out to analyze these conditions, and found that economic incentives, the level of domestic political involvement, and international influence to be important factors in ASP acceptance of democracy, while public support of democracy is less determinant. This is a significant finding, as it may assist in understanding the varying impacts that ASPs have on democratic consolidation in their respective contexts.

The study has limitations that are important to acknowledge. Given that three cases are considered, the generalizability of the findings is limited. Further, four conditions were chosen for evaluation due to the scope of the study. However, there are other potential independent variables that may impact ASP acceptance of democracy. These limitations call for further research into the topic of ASPs and their acceptance of democracy. The literature lacks a comprehensive quantitative analysis pertaining to the conditions that lead to ASP acceptance of democracy, which would allow for greater generalization of findings. Further, future analyses could test the findings of this study on other cases to further test their validity, as well as apply different conditions for ASP acceptance of democracy to these and other cases.

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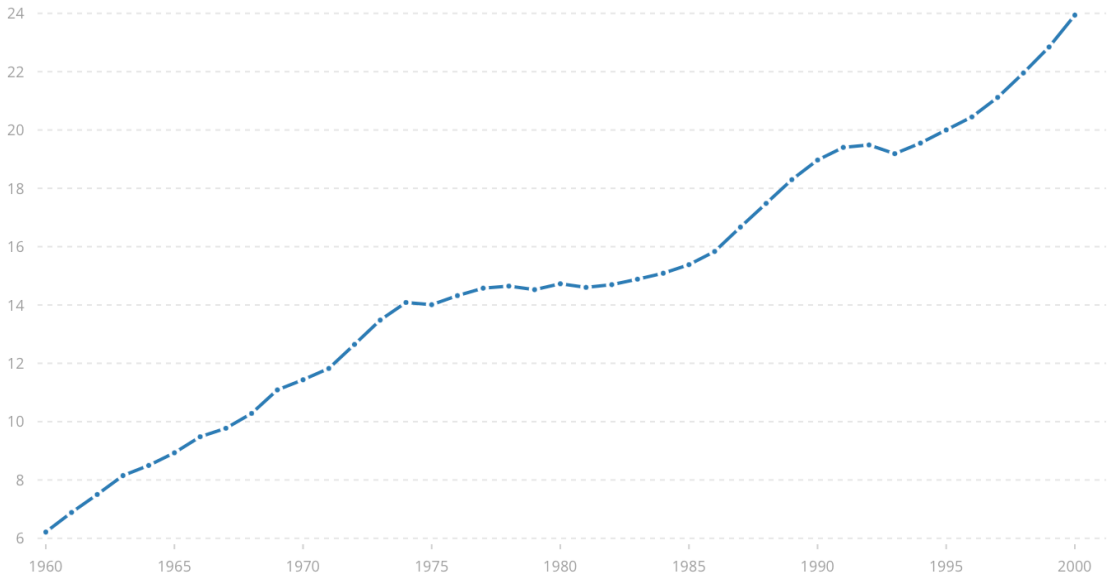
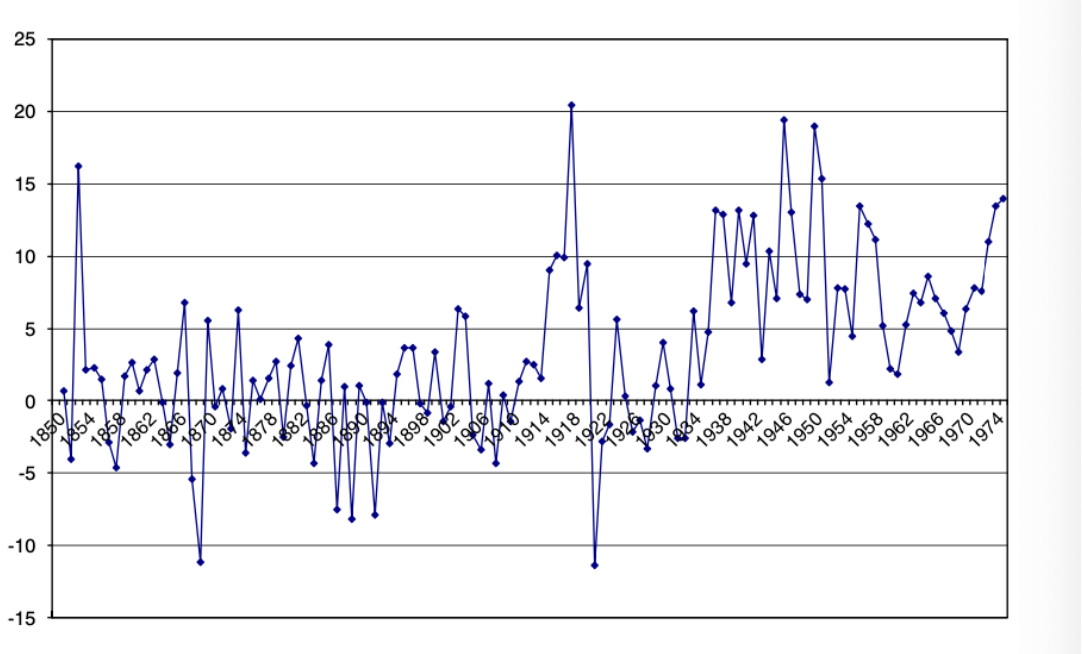
Appendix A

Figure A1: GDP per Capita (Thousands, Constant 2015 USD), 1960-2000, Spain



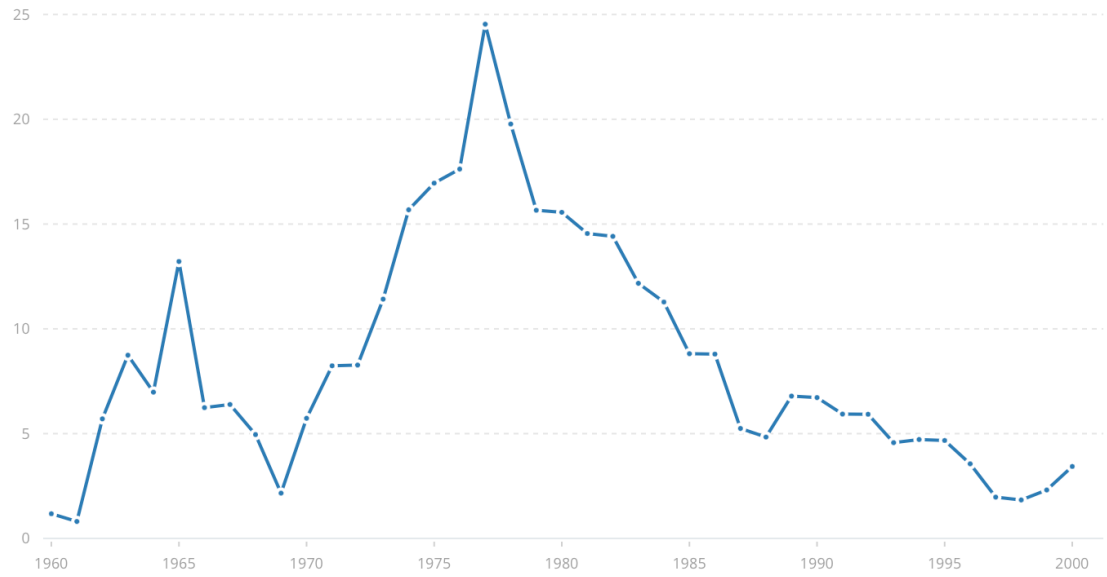
Source: World Bank (2022c)

Figure A2: Inflation Rate 1850-1975, Spain (%)



Source: Prados De La Escosura et el. (2011)

Figure A3: Inflation Rate 1960-2021, Spain (%)



Source: World Bank (2022e)

Table A1: Spanish attitudes towards Democratic Ideals, 1975

Attitude	Agree	Disagree	I don't know	No opinion
Democracy is the best known system of government	46.3%	8.8%	41.0%	4.0%
Leaders should be chosen through voting	86.3%	1.9%	10.5%	1.4%
All citizens should have the same opportunities to influence government policy	78.9%	5.3%	13.6%	2.2%
The minority should have freedom to criticize the decisions of the majority if they would like to	66.3%	7.5%	23.3%	3.0%

Source: Hernández Sánchez (2010)

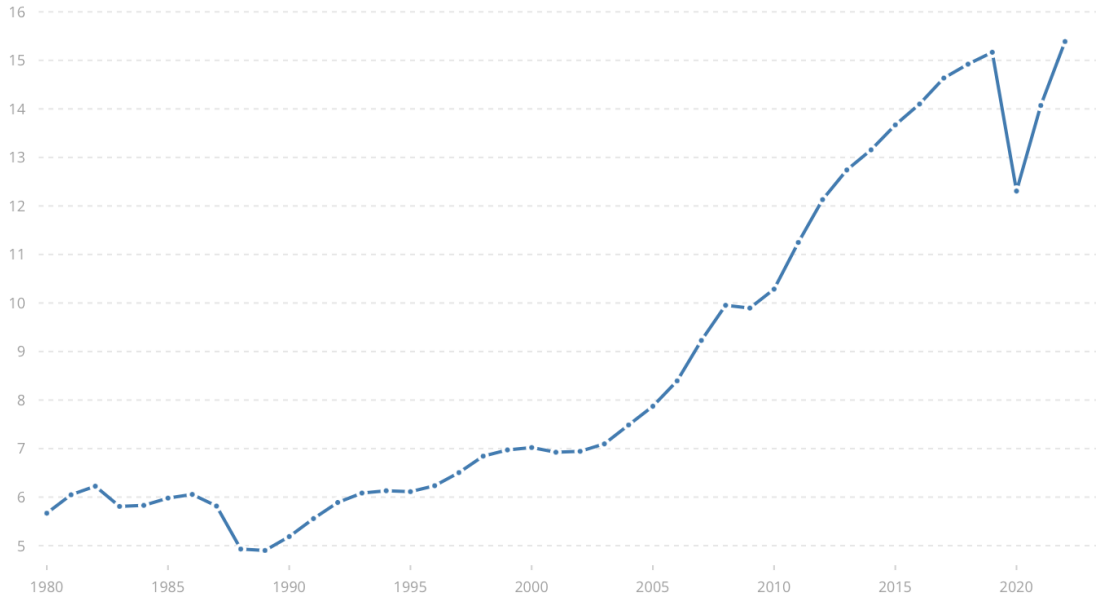
Table A2: Spanish Attitudes Towards Democracy

OPTIONS FOR DEMOCRACY	% in FAVOR
I support an evolution towards a Western-style democratic system. (May 1975)	74%
I support the democratic principle of universal suffrage (December 1975)	70%
I support democratic political representation (May 1976)	78%

Source: Hernández Sánchez (2010)

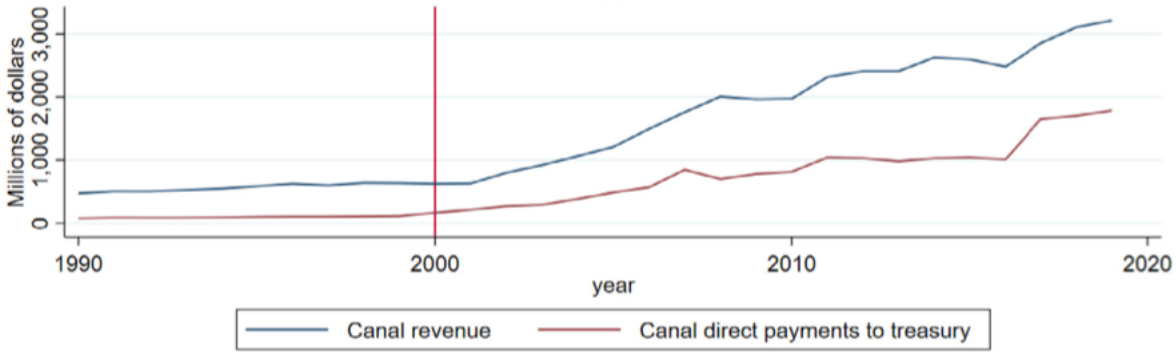
Appendix B

Figure B1: GDP per Capita (Thousands, Constant 2015 USD), 1980-2022, Panama



Source: World Bank (2022b)

Figure B2: Panama Canal Revenue/Direct Payments to Treasury 1990-2019



Source: Gabriel Fuentes Cordoba (2021)

Table B1: Approval of U.S. Invasion, Panama, 1992-1994 (%)

	Elites	Masses
Strongly approve	26.0	33.3
Somewhat approve	41.6	21.6
Somewhat disapprove	13.0	14.0
Strongly disapprove	19.5	31.1

N = Elites, 77; Masses, 500

Source: Perez (1999)

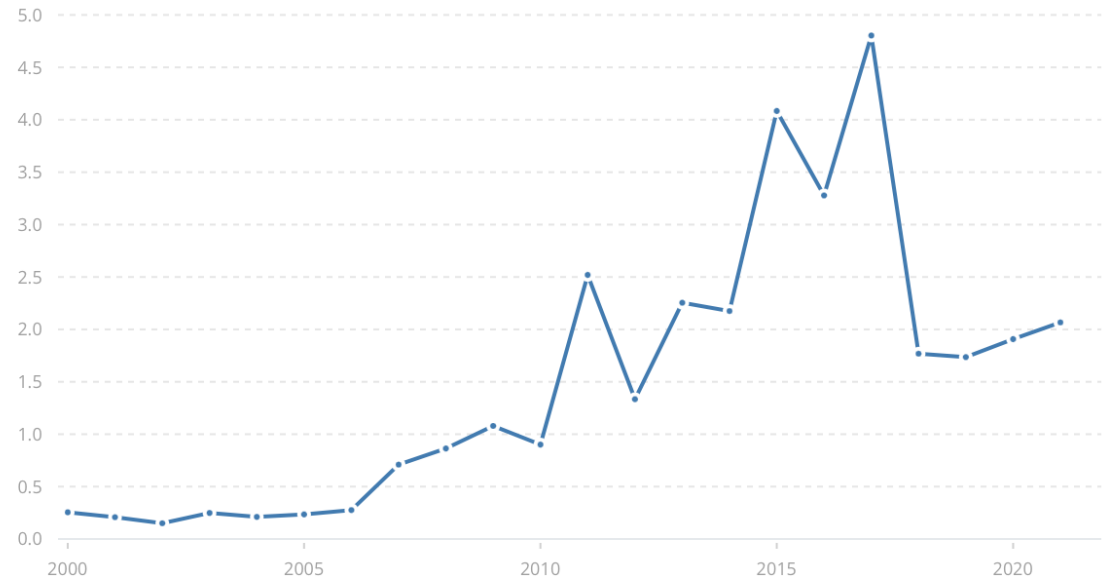
Table B2: Approval of U.S. Invasion by Party Elites, Panama (%)

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove
PRD			22.2	77.8
PDC	33.3	58.3	8.3	
PA	66.7	33.3		
PLA	50.0	50.0		
MOLIRENA	45.5	45.5	9.1	
PRC	75.0	25.0		
Other		50.0	33.3	16.6
None	21.7	47.8	13.0	17.4

Source: Perez (1999)

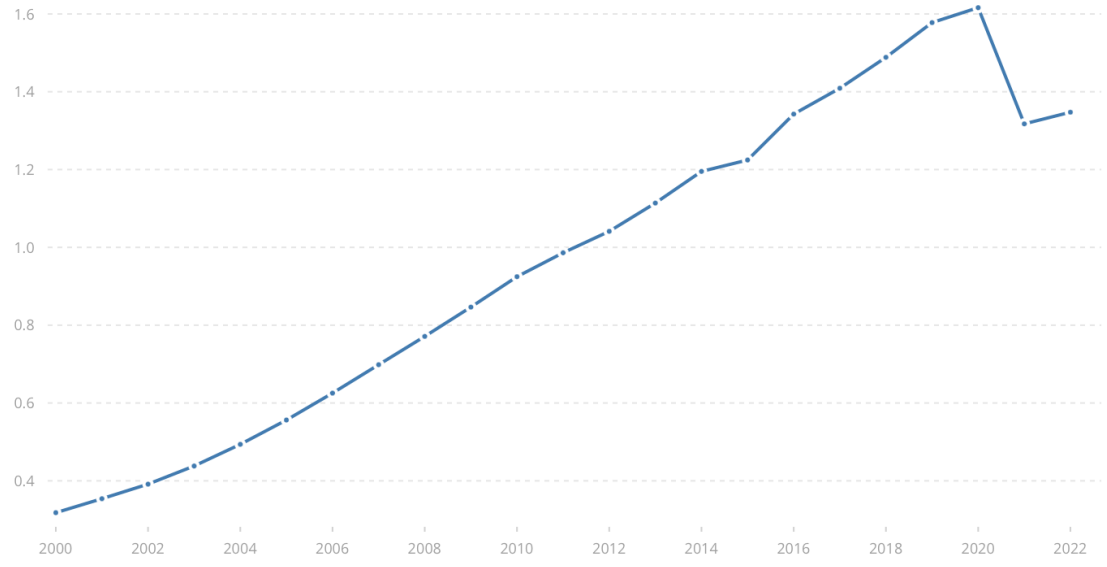
Appendix C

Figure C1: FDI, Net Inflows (Billions of US), 2000-2021, Myanmar



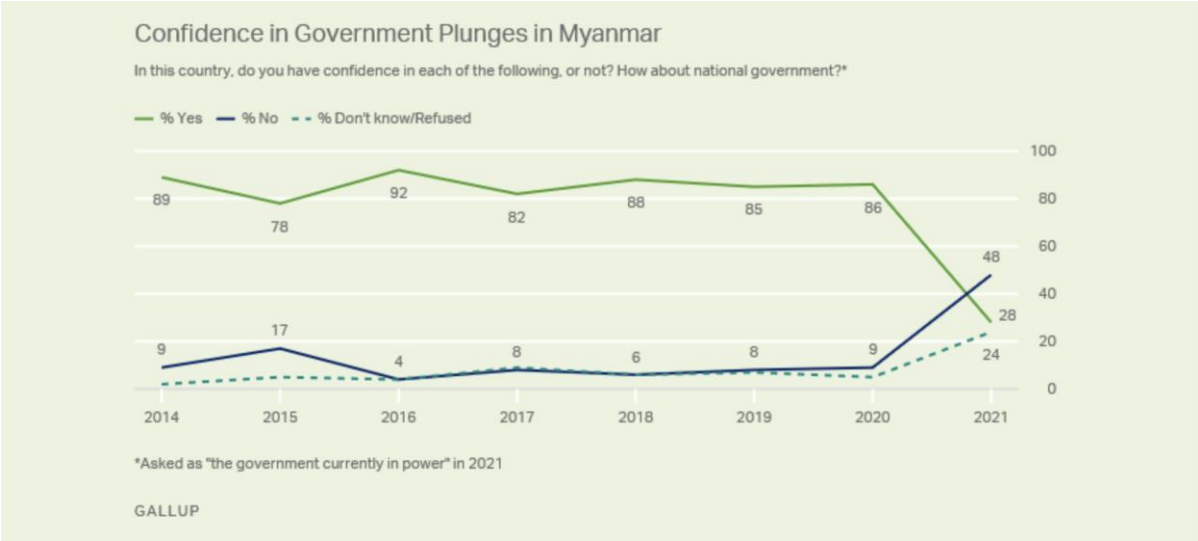
Source: World Bank (2021)

Figure C2: GDP per Capita Myanmar 2000-2021



Source: World Bank (2022a)

Figure C3: Myanmar popular confidence in government



Source: Reinhart (2022)