



Post-Transitional Justice?

Spain, Poland, and Portugal Compared

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Abstract: This dissertation elaborates on a new concept – *post-transitional justice* – to define the re-emergence of the issues of the authoritarian past onto the political agenda after democratic consolidation. The thesis sets out to understand the reasons why the past is coming back in certain consolidated democracies and not in others. It argues that in order to understand why these issues return to the agenda it is necessary to analyze them in light of the politico-institutional characteristics of each post-authoritarian democracy. The results suggest that ‘political willingness’ and ‘institutional capacity’, as they have been theorized in this research, are two strong factors that help explain the link between the ‘politics of the past’ and the ‘politics of the present’. The analysis of the two positive and one negative case have shown that the past returns to the political agenda because parties aim to change the dominant narrative of the past, but also the narrative of the transition and of the transitional justice process. The absence of post-transitional justice may result from either lack of willingness or capacity, but while the latter may represent a short-term constraint, the former is likely to be more structural and therefore more enduring. Hence, understanding the qualitative dimensions of ‘willingness’ to bring back the past (or the lack thereof) seems to lead to a more solid knowledge about the ongoing impact of authoritarian legacies in consolidated democracies. There are two major conclusions to be drawn from these cases: first, post-transitional justice seems to be more likely to occur when democracy emerges from a negotiated transition instead of a clear break with the past; second, post-transitional justice seems to be more likely to occur when the former elite has been legitimized in the new regime and has had formal access to government.



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Bio: Filipa Raimundo holds degrees in Sociology and Political Science from the New University of Lisbon (BA), the Institute of Social Sciences/University of Lisbon (MA), and the European University Institute (M.res). During her PhD she was a visiting student at the Juan March Institute (Spain), the Institute of European Studies/University of California, Berkeley (USA), and the Centrum Europejskie Natolin (Poland). Her work has been published by Social Science Monographs/Columbia University Press (2009) and Palgrave/Macmillan (*forthcoming*, 2012). Her interests include democratization, transitional justice, political elites and decision-making, and European Union studies. In 2011, she was awarded a six-year post-doc scholarship by the Science and Technology Foundation (Portugal) to conduct research on political elites and attitudes towards the past in Portugal and Brazil.