

CHAPTER III DISCOURSE OF CATALONIA FREEDOM

A. Referendum Efforts

The president of Catalonia Carles Puigdemont said the people had decided to secede from Spain and agreed to sign a declaration of independence, but the plan of secession was postponed for the possibility of opening a dialogue first with the central government. However, only 43% of the Catalan who are eligible to vote to turn out to vote, meaning that 90% in favor is coming from only half of the Catalan population. That makes the central government of Spain judges this referendum unilateral and void.¹⁷

The referendum was followed by around 43% of the total voters, and from that figure, more than 90% said they had supported Catalonia independence. Speculation that Puigdemont would unilaterally announce Catalunya independence had circulated before. Puigdemont has on several occasions stressed that it would declare Catalunya independence despite widespread opposition, both from within Spain and from several countries in Europe. Politicians in Spain urged Puigdemont and PM Rajoy to hold a dialogue to resolve the crisis. Both were also asked to maintain an atmosphere conducive so that mediation or dialogue could be held.

Exclamations also came from the Mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, who specifically asked Puigdemont and Rajoy not to issue confrontational statements.

Colau also asked Rajoy not to eliminate Catalonia autonomy and urged thousands of police to withdraw.

1. The main reason for Catalonia referendum:

In the war, the Spanish succession led by King Philip IV was concluded with Valencia's loss in 1707, Catalonia in 1714, and the final archipelago in 1715, before the present Spain was finally born. However, in Catalonia, there was a rebellion to separate from Spain. The peak was in 1938 when

¹⁷ <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/09/26/why-the-referendum-on-catalan-independence-is-illegal>

Spanish dictator General Francisco Franco massacred 3,500 separatist militias in Catalonia. During Franco's leadership efforts to isolate Catalonia could be muffled. Catalonia was given broader individual autonomy. This further made separatist groups free to campaign for independence. The theory is defined by the Catalonia conflict resolution discussing another possible approach to realist view on international relations. It discusses the problem-solving approach to international conflicts specifically. The suggestion that political realism, that assumes that interstate violent conflicts is inevitable, brings threat and prevention approach to international relations. Yet, this approach was not sufficient as it could not assist the affirmative policy to avoid conflicts or promote stable peace. When group conflict extends to a country or tribe, the theory of government argues that the common danger of making citizens begin to have a strong sense of national identity or tribe, prefer a robust hierarchical political system, adopt discipline Punishment against its perverts, and expresses xenophobia and strict — religious and sexual morality.¹⁸

Regarding realists considering the things that will happen, the referendum will not happen because some things will lose the position of Spain in some aspects. “One of the most important verdicts of the Constitutional Court is to declare that the remark to Catalonia as a country in the opening of the law has no legal validity, for Spain is the only country approved by the constitution. Other changes to the law affect the Catalan language’s status distinguished to Castilian Spanish and the system of tax distribution. The people of Catalan were becoming more provoked by the court’s decision, and more than a million residents demonstrated in Barcelona just a day after the court’s verdict.

¹⁸ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/catalan-crisis-why-does-catalonia-want-independence-do-people-really-support-it-spain-latest-a8025836.html>

2. Political

Parties formed by the power in Madrid are very unpopular in Catalonia which has more than 7 million populations. The Catalan people are staunch supporters of the far-right party, Union, Convergence (CiU), head of Catalonia, Artur Mas. Spain's democratization brought many changes to the region. Spain "began and folded the democracy that "modifies Madrid stability of power." The regional party is rebuilt and gains recognition in the recently defined AC, and the authority was gradually shifted from the central government to the AC through Ley Orgánica para la Armonización del Proceso Autonómico (LOAPA.) Because of Franco's dictatorship, the people of Catalan's language, culture, and politics were suppressed. The political in Catalonia was growing from normal into high tension. When it is coming in October, the Spanish region wants to reduce the effect of referendum movement with blocking regional parliament but nowadays it seems impossible to block any movement because not only give voice but they also give prove that Catalonia people do the vote and the result shows that most of them in favor with referendum.¹⁹

The leaders of European countries and other countries did not agree that Catalonia split and establish its own republic from Spain. They support the Spanish central government and approve Catalonia. This started a compilation of Catalonia people choosing to improve themselves or carry out separatist movements from Spain in a referendum on October 1 which was declared illegal by the Spanish. Political uncertainty is also tightly initiated by the international community, and specifically the European Union, because the potential of Catalan population will be the biggest challenge for the bloc's relations. And European Council President Donald Tusk said that the statement stated that Catalonia had not changed anything. And he does not want the European Union to consist of 95 states.

¹⁹ Guillermo, M. (.n.d). Instituciones del Derecho Civil Catalan Vigente, Vol.2

Germany, which is the strongest country in Europe, said it did not approve of the declaration of Catalonia's independence and fully supported the Spanish government. Likewise, the United States says that it supports Madrid to remain united and Catalonia is an integral part of Spain and America in supporting that the Spanish constitution remains united.

The British Prime Minister's office said Britain would not accept the declaration of independence approved by the Catalan and Spain had the right to be approved of independence. Then other countries such as Belgium, France, Canada, Turkey said that together with other European countries they said they did not support Catalonia's independence because they did not find a declaration of independence that was legal and not in accordance with law and constitution in accordance with international law principles.

In recognition of these countries it was clear that Catalonia had declared independence from Spain but there was no international recognition. The Spanish central government imposed direct leadership on Catalonia which is a semi-autonomous region.

This Catalonia Declaration of Independence was a unilateral declaration called UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence). UDI compiled a new country that was established in an existing country, declared sovereignty and freedom without permission from the state or nation entity that it refused.

3. Economy

Barcelona was the first city in Spain to industrialize, especially around cotton mills, from raw materials from America. This brought immigrant workers and developing populations, and in 1854 the city came out of the medieval wall. In the interior, industrial centers such as Terrassa and Sabadell developed and industries (industrial work houses) grew along rivers where factories were reinforced by water. Just as the wealth of the 14th century inspired the first prosperity in Catalonia, so the wealth of the industry inspired

Renaixença, the rise of Catalan culture. Renaixença produces new pride in Catalonia, and "Catalanism" is at the heart of the region that accelerates the pace towards autonomy, a move echoing in Galicia and the Basque Country. The Mancomunitat, a local council founded in 1914, appeared on the arrival of 923 dictator primo de ivera, Barcelona's military overnor. In 1931 Francescacià declared himself President of the Catalan Republic, which lasted three days. Three years later the Lluís Companys was arrested and imprisoned for 30 years for trying to do the same.

Catalonia contributes approximately 20% of Spain's income and 21% of Spain's tax earning. However, people in Catalan believe that they give Spain too much but results in poor infrastructure and living condition. This view usually grows after the European economic crisis in 2008-2010.²⁰

The Catalonia region has long been the heart of the Spanish industry. Catalonia is one of contributing eighty point eight percent of Spain's GDP, and 17.6 percent of Madrid.

Separating will generate a product of US \$ 314 billion, as calculated by OECD. This fact will make Catalonia become more productive than Hongkong and Portugal.

As explained earlier, Catalunya felt excluded from the country for various reasons. Differences in history and language perpetuate of Catalonia from Spanish culture. Catalonia's economy has always been more developed and more successful than in other regions of Spain, including in Madrid. The first issue showed up in the 18th century when Catalonia became a diligent community and desired to implement industrial protectionism, economic policies popular to industries that did not adopt Spanish economic model, such as Spain as an entirety was not as advanced as Catalonia (this fact still applies today). The friction between Spain and Catalonia heated even more because of a financial crisis in 2008 and the old belief that Spanish state's

²⁰ <https://www.efe.com/efe/english/business/spain-s-public-debt-in-2016-stood-at-1-18-trillion-98-percent-of-gdp/50000265-3182407>

economic strategies endangered the stability, development and progress of Catalonia. This concept presently includes “us against them” in economic terms – “we” account for most Spanish production and tax revenues, and “those” who unfairly transfer “our” taxes to other regions and who create policies for “we.”

4. Food and football²¹

Catalonia did not only perceive its politics, economy, and language to be the only difference from Spain. They feel greatly proud of the cuisines and the cooks, such as Ferran Adria, from El Bulli, and Jordi Cruz who obtained the first Michelin star when he was only 25. El Celler de Can Roca was chosen as the world’s finest restaurants in 2013 and second in 2014.

Catalonia has an idol of its soccer club, FC Barcelona, which became Real Madrid's main competitor representing the ruler of Spain. The second club duel called "El Clasico" was a big event for the two cities.

B. Spain effort to keep Catalonia

The referendum for Catalonia’s independence was announced as invalid and violated the constitution by the court of Spain. Thousands of additional police have been sent to Catalonia. Not only that, but the Spanish government also filed regional forces, Mossos d'Esquadra, to help impose a referendum ban. The efforts of the Spanish government in banning referendums are indeed not playing games. Some time ago when the demonstration took place, Spanish authorities seized action material, imposed fines on officials, and detained dozens of politicians. Spain also needs to prepared lost a lot amount of citizens as Catalonia itself hold a lot amount of Spanish citizens. The police also occupied the telecommunications center of the local government of Catalonia.

Spain has made various efforts to prevent Catalonia from leaving its territory. The King of Spain King Felipe VI said that the referendum was not official. Many Spanish residents also

²¹ <http://sciencenordic.com/there-solution-sight-catalonia>

reject the independence of Catalonia. The Spanish government has made various efforts to prevent Catalonia from declaring independence. Here are three ways that the Spanish government tried to stop the efforts of separatism:

1. Stopping Regional Parliament

The Spanish **Constitutional** Court suspended the Catalonia parliamentary session scheduled for Monday, October 9, 2017. It was announced on Wednesday, October 2, 2017, which was planned will be held after discussion at a parliamentary session. The central government to enter and take over regional autonomy if the area is deemed not to fulfill the obligations given under the law or take actions that cause serious harm to the general public of Spain.

Imprescriptable Liberties

The area was distinct considering Spanish Government's refusal to permit a referendum. However, this raises a fundamental question: is a host country's approval critical if a country declares independence? The answer is certainly not because of arguing otherwise contradicting – and contrary to international law and common sense. Article 1.2 of the United Nations Charter approves self-determination principle-making this a right to exceed the domestic laws of any state. The basis of international law is that a country's constitution provision alone cannot be considered legally legitimate. Instead, they have to align with the international law. For example, in a constitution, it is subject to racial discrimination or genocide, but international law that prohibits them from replacing this. To allege that the constitution of a country is the only factor which determines the validity of actions taken within that state would also mean turning down the fundamental principle of international law.²²

From his explanation, self-determination creates an issue for the implementing nation. Accepting that there is a right to determine its destiny under international law but then

²² <https://unpo.org/article/4957>

declare that the right is dependent on the implementing state's approval - as Spain and its allies are currently debating it on Catalonia – only Unreasonable. This is equivalent to saying that all women have the right to divorce their husbands but only if their husbands agree. Spanish's rejection to allow the probability of Catalan independence contradicts the principle of self-determination. This position basically denies its destiny determination of its inherent right by submitting all force to the implementing country. If implemented in a global scale, this will sanction to borderless boundaries and trapping millions of people around the world in a government jurisdiction they are not supposed to be with. "Majority of people living in cities in Catalonia (like Barcelona) do not want independence because by becoming an independent country Catalonia must reapply for the membership of FIFA, which Catalonia depends on."²³

2. Pressing the Economic Sector

Catalunya is home to thousands of domestic and international companies with several employees reaching millions. A fifth of Spain's economy comes from there. One of Spain efforts prevents the declaration of independence Catalunya was to apply the threat of economic sanctions.

Bank Sabadell, the fifth largest bank in Spain, decided to move their registration from Catalonia. It will automatically make euro currency weakens in Spain. On Wednesday, October 4, 2017, Bank spokesman Sabadell said the administrative process of moving their offices was expected to be completed in the next few days. The most prominent creditor of Catalonia CaixaBank will also discuss the transfer of their precise location out of the area today.

3. Military Actions

The Spanish Defense Minister, Maria Dolores de Cospedal, said the involvement of the security forces in the Catalonia referendum conducted on Sunday last week was a

²³ Milan Schreuer (2017, December 17). Catalan Separatist Want Independent.

reasonable action. In a statement issued on Thursday, the Defense Minister also said the duty of the Spanish army was to maintain regional unity and statutory regulations. Unit forces also provided logistical assistance to officers sent to Catalonia.²⁴ In the heart of Barcelona saved bad memories of Spanish past. La Modelo Prison is located just a few blocks from the Catalan main railway station and many of the city's main attractions. The jail housed political prisoners for 40 years of dictatorship under General Francisco Franco. More than 1,000 people were executed there. Barcelona was the last fortress of the Republican resistance in the Spanish Civil War, and fell to Franco's troops in 1939. Many are secretly rebelling. Among them was Felipe Moreno, who was eventually arrested and imprisoned in 1975. He witnessed recent events anxiously.

The Spanish government held many leaders of the Catalan independence movement last October, after an ongoing self-separation referendum from Spain. Moreno said the government's actions repeated the pressure from the Franco era. In the hills outside Barcelona lies the village of Vilarsar, and the yellow ribbon adorns virtually every tree and lamppost – a support symbol for the independent, imprisoned Catalonia leader. The village is at the forefront of the campaign of Independence, headed by Mayor Xavier Godàs, whose grandfather fought for the Catalan Republic against the Army of General Franco. He felt a historical shadow behind his independence campaign.

The Spanish government claimed that it attempted to enforce the democratic principle. The people of Catalonia would vote in the regional elections Thursday, after Spain dissolved the local government following the last October referendum. Polls say the sound is divided between those who are pro-and anti-independence. Whatever the result, the mayor of Vilasar Xavier Godas said Catalonia would

²⁴ <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/spain/2017-10-18/brief-history-catalan-nationalism>

continue the struggle to escape Spanish rule.²⁵

The decision to break away from Spain was legalized in the Catalonia Parliament in Barcelona. Parliament says that Catalonia is an independent and sovereign democratic State.

The Parliament of Catalonia said he was ready to open talks with Madrid to collaborate in establishing the Catalonia Republic.

A group of Spanish prosecutors called for Catalonia's separatist figures sentenced to between seven and 25 years in jail for allegations of rebellion or misuse of public budget. A 25-year-old prison verdict was proposed to former vice president of Catalonia Oriol Junqueras. But the office of the Spanish attorney general announced it would only drop a verdict of 12 years in prison to Junqueras. The man will only be charged with article instigation and abuse of budget without involving rebellion. The Spanish government at that time moved rapidly and fired the Catalonia high, dissolved its regional parliament and called for local elections in December. While the former president of Catalonia, Carles Puigdemont, was spared from punishment for escaping abroad. Yet many other figures such as Junqueras chose to live in Catalonia and were imprisoned behind bars to wait for the trial next year.

The current Catalonia separatist leader, Quim Torra, is furious at the threat of a prison sentence that is to be filed with "good and peaceful people" in his area.

4. Football Aspect

Spain insists it will not approve any form of declaration of independence from Catalonia because it can have an impact on their position in FIFA. Instead of losing their biggest ever pride of football FC Barcelona and another 7 Catalans team and few players for Spain National football team.

²⁵ <https://www.politico.eu/article/why-catalans-want-to-break-away-from-spain/>

Some sanctions that Spain must face if they fail to maintain Catalonia as part of their country:

- a. frozen activities from all activities under the auspices of FIFA
- b. It is forbidden to enter competitions and tournaments under FIFA auspices
- c. do not get development activities, empowerment in any form from FIFA
- d. revoked its membership from FIFA²⁶

Sanctions are certainly burdensome to Spain if it materializes because given the position of Spain itself in FIFA is a big country and one of the European giants with the title of the world cup.

These provisional figures from the Bank of Spain suggested the government would achieve its objective of easing public debt to 99.4 percent of GDP. According to the bank, the combined debt of all public administrations grew 0.57 in Dec. 2016 from Nov., representing a 3.02 percent year-on-year increase.

The latest figures provided by the bank take into consideration the budget plan drawn up by the Spanish government at the request of the European Union.

²⁶ <https://www.fifa.com>

Table 3. 1 Spain Gain and Loss if Catalonia Referendum materialized

ASPECTS	Gain	Loss
ECONOMY	can regulate its economy without relying on some area.	Economic deficit because Catalonia holds the most significant contributor in Spain economic aspect. Loss 2% of Spanish GDP. Euro currency weakens. ²⁷
POLITICS	Has their autonomy rights.	Difficult to get independence recognition.
SPORTS	the Spanish national team played without the shadow of the boycott of several players from Catalonia.	Losing seven football teams from Catalonia including FC Barcelona. ²⁸
CULTURE	No more clash with Catalonia governments.	Loss a lot amount of citizens.

An only positive side from Catalonia referendum is that Spain will gain no more clash against Catalonia parliament and referendum activist.

In Cultural, it may be no more clash with Spanish governments, but it will be a significant loss to Spain because Catalonia holds a lot amount of citizen so that it will reduce some Spain citizen.

²⁷ <https://www.efe.com/efe/english/business/spain-s-public-debt-in-2016-stood-at-1-18-trillion-98-percent-of-gdp/50000265-3182407>

²⁸ Simon Kuper & Stefan Szymanski. 2009. *Soccernomics*. Haymarket house.

The Spanish nation of Catholicism was divided into several kingdoms, namely Leon, Castile, Navarre and Aragon. In 1469 when Ferdinand V, heir to the throne of Aragon, married Isabella I of Castile. When King Castile died in 1474, Isabella and Ferdinand succeeded him as joint ruler. Then unification was carried out in 1469. Five years later, Ferdinand inherited Aragon, and made Isabella the ruler of Aragon and became the greatest kingdom. With the unification of the two kingdoms, Spain became stronger. Under the rule of Ferdinand and Isabella, a Spanish inquisition was established. The Inquisition is a religious court that imposes severe penalties for people suspected of being heretics advocates (disagreeing with Catholic teachings). This very harsh trial made people secretly tried and tortured to confess. People who claim to be fined, while those who deny will be imprisoned or burned to death to erase their sins.