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The Multilevel Electoral System of the EU

Cees van der Eijk and Hermann Schmitt (eds.)

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Introduction

Multi-level electoral systems of the European Union: elaborating existing approaches and defining the research agenda for the future

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This volume contains the proceedings of a CONNEX-sponsored conference of the European Election Studies research group, which took place in March 2007 at Cadenabbia in Lake Como (Italy). The conference sought to explore the agenda for future research into a theme that has been of central concern to the group since its inception three decades ago: the study of multi-level elections. Since then, the European Election Studies research group has contributed tremendously to this field, and it has generated an impressive number of publications, many of which are listed on <http://www.europeanelectionstudies.net> in the “publications” sidebar. Moreover, the data collected as part of this programme – data about voters, candidates, parties, media and election results – have been deposited in the public domain, and keep generating – via secondary analyses – additional publications. In view of the intellectual preparations for studies of the European Parliament elections of 2009, the questions of what further research should be developed within the various strands of multi-level electoral

research (which are outlined below) and whether and how they can be integrated into more-encompassing theories of the quality of electoral processes have to be addressed. These questions motivated the papers and discussion during the conference.

Multi-level election research – theoretical and conceptual background

Democracy, representation, accountability – all of these “good things” in politics require well-functioning elections. In order to understand the conditions under which elections are more or less likely to yield these desired effects (or other, conceivably unintended consequences) comparative studies (cross-system as well as over-time) are invaluable as they make it possible to explicitly link differences in these conditions – contextual variables, in the jargon of comparativists – with variations in the functioning of electoral processes. The latter, in turn, is often defined in terms of the linkages and interactions between the behaviour, motivations and aspirations of the different actors involved in the electoral process: voters, parties, politicians, and media.

Contextual variables that have so far been studied most intensively relate to institutional characteristics of political systems, and to economic conditions. Institutional factors include the constitutional system and the electoral system. The constitutional system defines the offices to be populated by elections as well as the political relationships between the various elected and non-elected institutions. The electoral system defines the rules with respect to enfranchisement and electoral participation, with respect to the conversion of votes into election results, and with respect to the actual conduct of the electoral process (cf. Lijphart 1990; Farrell 2001; Blais and Massicotte 2002; Norris 2004). Economic contextual factors relate to

variations in important macro-economic parameters, such as growth in GDP, unemployment and inflation (cf. Lewis-Beck 1988; Anderson 1995; van der Brug, van der Eijk and Franklin 2007).

More recently, two additional groups of contextual variables have received considerable attention in comparative analyses, which bring us into the realm of multi-level electoral research: the character of elections, and transient aspects of the political context¹. The character of the election is largely defined by the perceived political importance of the office(s) to be filled. By-elections and elections for regional or local assemblies are of a different nature to those for the politically most important institutions such as the national parliament or the president with executive powers. Reif and Schmitt (1980) introduced the concept of second-order national elections to indicate the difference between the former and the first-order national elections embodied in the latter. The concept was used not only to distinguish local and regional elections from national ones but, primarily, to characterise European Parliament elections as second-order. These concepts have been invaluable in systematising and integrating otherwise disparate findings with respect to all kinds of different elections, and have spawned a tremendous amount of subsequent conceptual elaboration (e.g. Anderson and Ward 1996; Marsh 2007; Hix and Marsh 2007) and applied usage (Marsh 1998, Koepke and Ringe 2006; Carrubba and Timpone 2005). The second group of contextual variables of more recent vintage is political in nature – not in the relatively static institutional form of constitutional and electoral systems, but rather in its short-term forms that are collectively often – and vaguely – referred to as the ‘political climate’. More specifically this group of factors includes such matters as the closeness of an election (Schmitt 2007; van Egmond 2003), the extent and structure of electoral competition between parties (van der Eijk and Oppenhuis 1991; van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; Kroh et al. 2007; van der Brug et al. 2007), the strength of a particular (kind of) party (Peter 2003, 2007), and so on.

The two more recent contextual factors can to some extent be combined. This has been done already in those analyses that use as a contextual variable the temporal location of an election – usually a second-order national election – between other (first-order) elections (van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; Marsh 2007; Reif 1984; Schmitt and Reif 2003; Schmitt 2006). Such analyses invariably demonstrate that second-order elections have somewhat different characteristics depending on whether they occur at the beginning, in the middle, or close to the end of the domestic electoral cycle of first-order elections. In most member states of the EU this temporal location differs from one European Parliament election to the next. This is the consequence of the different lengths of terms of the European Parliament and national parliaments, of the absence of a fixed electoral calendar for first-order elections, and of the possibility that parliamentary elections are sometimes called before the end of Parliament's full term. We think that the logic of these types of analysis can be extended and generalised by focusing not so much on a single, particular election, but rather on the ongoing processes of electoral democracy which are determined by series of interconnected elections at different levels. Such a continuous multi-level perspective has a number of advantages. It avoids the implicit – but unrealistic – portrayal of all kinds of phenomena that occur before a particular election as exogenous. It stimulates research into habituation and learning processes that impact on the behaviour of citizens, political elites and journalists. Moreover, it promotes a perspective on the electoral process that calls attention to the ways in which different elections (taking place at different moments in time, at different levels of government, and possibly even in different political systems) influence each other by being a component of the context that affects the behaviour, and the strategic and tactical considerations of relevant actors.

Multi-level electoral research is thus a particular kind of comparative electoral research. Whereas traditional comparative research in electoral

studies is usually cross-sectional – focusing on the comparison of elections that are implicitly regarded as independent events – multi-level electoral studies are inherently of a dynamic nature –focusing on elections as interconnected events. In their full panoply, multi-level electoral studies apply this dynamic perspective not to a single case (i.e., to a political system or country) but to a larger number of cases, thus analysing variation simultaneously across space and time.

Elements of a research agenda for multi-level electoral research

Multi-level electoral systems are characterized by the fact that different elections are not independent but are related to one another, and, therefore, that such interdependencies also exist with respect to the motivations and behaviours of ‘electoral actors’ at different levels (e.g., national, sub-national, European). As a consequence, the way in which electoral democracy performs in the context of a particular election is partly determined by what happens in a set of elections². One of the most studied multi-level electoral systems is, of course, the European Union.

When we consider how multi-level election studies can be advanced, some strands of future research appear to us to be likely to be particularly fruitful, and, moreover, to be particularly suited to be tackled with the help of the collective and varied knowledge and experience of the group of scholars involved in the European Election Studies. These include:

- The interdependencies between previous elections and later ones
- The interdependencies between elections at different levels of government
- The interdependencies between elections in independent, but closely related systems

Each of these strands will be elaborated in slightly more detail below.

Interdependencies between previous elections and later ones

We all know that – at least in established, consolidated democracies – elections are not single and isolated events, but rather form a kind of repetitive game. Each election is fought on the basis of parameters determined by previous elections while, at the same time, setting the stage for subsequent elections. This has important implications that should not be ignored. How a party, a politician, a voter or a journalist perceives a particular election is to some extent influenced by how they experienced previous ones. As in all repetitive events, recurring exposure (in this case to the conduct of elections) leads to various kinds of spill-over from one to the next. This may involve changes in the intensity of party preferences (on the part of the voters), or of preferred ideological or issue positions (on the part of both voters and parties), the improvement of skills (e.g., in campaign organization), etc. Sometimes this accumulation of experiences may result in attempts to change the parameters within which elections take place: attempts to change the rules of the game – the electoral system – or to change the field of competitors by mergers, splits or new offerings. Such kinds of ‘learning’ are not limited to parties and politicians, but are also present – although in different forms – among voters, journalists, etc. The reason why we put the word learning in quotation marks is that we use it in a broad sense that also incorporates processes sometimes known by different words, such as habituation, socialisation, and so on.

It would, of course, be incorrect to say that the impact of previous elections on later ones is entirely ignored in electoral research. Traditions that deal with such matters involve work such as ‘surge and decline’ and second-order election research (Campbell 1966; Stimson 1976; Reif & Schmitt 1980, Schmitt & Reif 2003), some of the research about non-voting (e.g., Franklin 2004), and research about voters’ acquisition of party preferences (Converse 1969, 1976; McKuen et al. 1989; Cassel 1999; Schmitt 2002). This can be

expressed in various ways, such as ‘history matters’, ‘path dependency’, etc. Yet, in spite of this, most electoral research does not explicitly incorporate in its design or conceptualisation the notion that a particular election is just one in a series, and that preceding elections are of great importance for understanding what happens at the ones that follow. What we need to do is to take stock, as systematically as possible, of what we can learn from previous research in this respect, and to systematically speculate about all those aspects of the electoral process for which we cannot rely on previous studies.

Interdependencies between elections for different levels of government

It cannot be said that no attention is paid to the way in which different elections impact upon one another and, indeed, the awareness needed to do this is particularly developed amongst those who investigate second-order national elections, such as elections to the European Parliament. For justifiable reasons that are inherently tied to the conceptual difference between first- and second-order national elections, much of this research is about the way in which national politics constrains European or sub-national (“less important”) elections. Only rarely is the question raised as to how European or sub-national elections affect national ones, and this is unfortunate. The greater (perceived) importance of national elections compared to second-order ones cannot be taken to imply that the interrelations between them are entirely asymmetric. Reif and Schmitt (1980) acknowledged that European Parliament elections also affect the national electoral arena, but we seen little systematic follow-up of this notion. Anecdotal information in this regard is quite plentiful, deriving particularly from analyses of single countries (Blumler 1983; Reif 1984; van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; Schmitt and Wüst 2006). Systematic comparative analyses are still largely lacking, however, although Van der Brug et al. (2007) attempt to contribute to this by counterfactual analysis.

Similar questions about mutual impact can, of course, be raised with respect to other kinds of elections, leading to the more general question of how various elections – for national parliaments, for a presidency (if applicable), for local and regional assemblies, for the European Parliament – all impact on one another. It seems logical to hypothesise that such impacts will vary in strength with the temporal distance between elections, and with the degree of similarity of the respective slates of choice options.

When thinking about the ways in which elections can affect one another, one should remember that such influence does not necessarily have to follow the normal logic of causation, in which earlier events are causes and later ones embody consequences. It is not uncommon, for example, to see actors anticipate future events (such as elections), leading the later to influence the earlier. Moreover, indications are that the specific impact of one election on another differs according to which election happens first. Oppenhuis et al. 1996, for example, demonstrate that the effect of a first-order national election on a European Parliament election that precedes it is different in character from the effect of a first-order election on a European parliament election that follows it.

Interdependencies between elections in independent, but closely related systems

When considering the ways in which different elections affect each other we should not examine only those elections that take place within a single country. Elections in different countries also influence each other. Parties and politicians, journalists – and therefore citizens too – are aware of what occurs in other countries, and use this information in counterfactual reasoning that tells them about the opportunities and dangers, costs and benefits of particular courses of action. Examples of this are plentiful. One can think of the evolution of green parties, or more recently of anti-immigrant parties and

issues in European countries. The electorally successful example of the Danish anti-European integration movements has stimulated the emergence of their Swedish counterpart – Junilistan – which even named itself after its Danish inspiration. Indeed, recent history provides a multitude of examples that demonstrate that parties and politicians, as well as voters and journalists ‘learn’ not only from their experiences of previous elections in their own country, but also from the (second-hand) experiences drawn from elections and election outcomes in other countries.

One question relating to such cross-border spill-overs relates particularly to the conditions under which such influences are more or less likely to occur. It seems logical that such effects will be stronger the more countries are alike. Likeness however, can take different forms, such as geographical or linguistic proximity, similarity of cleavage structures and party systems, intensity of economic or migratory connections, ideological like-mindedness of incumbent governments, and so on. In view of the homogenising consequences of ongoing European integration it is likely that such cross-border impacts of elections will become increasingly important (for a more elaborate discussion, see van der Brug et al. 2007). Other questions about these cross-border effects relate to their locus of origin: under what circumstances are they triggered by parties and political entrepreneurs, or by media and journalists or by opinion leaders and social elites? And, how are voters (and which kinds of voters) affected by what they know about elections in other countries?

What follows in this volume

The papers given at the conference all address the interrelationship of elections at different levels of government. Effects of previous elections on later ones, and of elections in independent but closely related systems were taken up only in passing. Two of the eight papers compare national legislative

elections to regional elections, two address regional, national and European elections, one compares local and European elections, one national and European and one focuses on legislative and presidential elections at the national level. A final paper is of a more conceptual nature and does not engage in data analysis. The following table summarises which level of government elections is analysed in each of the papers.

Level of Government analysed	National		National		European	None
	Local	Regional	Legislative	Presidential		
Lago & Montero		X	X			
Perez-Nievas & Bonet		X	X			
Segatti		X	X		X	
Sanz		X	X		X	
Rohrschneider & Clark			X		X	
Skrinis & Teperoglou	X				X	
Magalhaes			X	X		
Gschwend						X

The paper by Lago and Montero addresses a general dilemma of electoral coordination which presents itself when multiple elections are held within a country, each for a different (territorially defined) level of government. How does the national party system evolve when voters participate in a variety of elections under a diversity of rules? The paper argues that, especially in multi-level countries, interaction or contamination effects exist between national

and sub-national electoral arenas that generate – like most mixed-member electoral systems – a centrifugal force that increases the number of parties in national elections. In these cases, electoral coordination is not limited to a single election at a specific point of time, nor does it require the homogeneity of its incentives structure. By dwelling on the Spanish case, the authors identify a coordination dilemma that appears in those multi-level democracies in which institutional features – in particular decentralization – create multiple opportunities for voters to pass judgments on parties. When parties can win seats in sub-national elections, but not in national elections, they face a dilemma: should they enter the race in elections in which they are unlikely to be viable anyway, or should they enhance their chances or resources through coordination with a larger party at the price of losing their distinctive identity? The main finding is that Duvergerian equilibriums are unlikely outcomes in democracies where state parliaments are elected according to significantly different rules to those, that apply in federal or regional elections. Moreover, the authors delineate the main causal mechanisms that explain how this dilemma is solved and test their empirical implications.

Perez-Nievas and Bonet's paper deals with differential voting patterns between general elections and regional elections in six European regions, the regional party systems of each of which contain at least one ethno-regionalist party. In the six regions under study one or two ethno-regionalist parties acquired more than 15% of the votes in the most recent regional election. These regions are Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia in Spain; Scotland and Wales in the UK; and Flanders in Belgium. The relationship between elections to regional parliaments (RE) and general elections (GE) within each region shows a number of similarities across cases, although important differences also exist. A first similarity is that turnout rates tend to be lower in RE's than in GE's (although the magnitude of the gap varies greatly from region to region). The second similarity across cases is that while state-wide parties (particularly big parties) fare better in GE's and do worse in

RE's, the opposite happens with the ethno-regionalist vote which grows in RE's and declines again in GE's. At first sight the second-order elections model suggests an explanation of these differential voting patterns. The authors' hypotheses for the differential voting between general and regional elections are: first, citizens regard regional elections as being less relevant than general elections because they feel that less is at stake; second, national government parties do better in general elections than in regional ones, because of protest votes against them which are expressed when less is at stake; third, larger parties do better in general elections while small parties do better in regional elections due to institutional features (proportionality). The paper subsequently describes the contrast between general elections and regional elections in the six regions. In the third part the paper reviews the hypotheses from the second-order model by using individual-level data. Alternatives to the second-order model are also assessed.

In his paper Paolo Segatti demonstrates the emergence of an electoral cycle in Italy. He argues that the engines generating this cycle are "asymmetric" producing differential levels of turnout in different elections. Asymmetric abstentions are likely to be connected to dissatisfaction with the previously chosen government parties, which leads him to ask why dissatisfied voters do not switch to other parties. The conclusion is that asymmetric abstentions may be indicative of a still deeply divided political system, and may be associated with cynicism and political disaffection. The second aspect of the electoral cycle he identifies is still more complicated. Differences in the institutional context, even seemingly innocuous differences in the format of the ballot, apparently affect electoral choices. The data suggest that such differences in institutions and political supply affect persistence and change in political preferences.

Alberto Sanz analyses the interrelationship between regional, national and European elections in Spain. He investigates the causes of split-ticket voting in concurrent multi-level elections. Previously, differences in the

electoral outcomes of concurrent elections in Spain have been understood as being a product of higher levels of tactical voting associated with second-order elections. Evidence against this interpretation is presented, and alternative explanations from the international literature are tested. Preliminary evidence shows that Spanish ticket-splitters weight motivational factors differently in their European, regional and local electoral choices. While they base their local vote on personal interests (egotropic vote), they use regional interests as criteria for casting their vote in the regional electoral arena. Finally, in European Parliament elections – in the absence of real executive power – ticket-splitters tend to base their votes on their general ideological preferences more often than do the rest of the electorate. As a whole, the evidence reviewed in this paper suggests the possible existence of a gradient in the impact that ideology can play in concurrent electoral choices. Understanding ideology as a heuristic, the closer the particular level of government is to the voter, the less relevant ideological shortcuts appear to be; whereas their relevance increases with the distance between the voter and the object of the election.

In their contribution to the conference Rohrschneider and Clark analyse the assumptions about individual-level motivations that are typically implied in second-order election models. Based on EES 1999 data, they confront a transfer hypothesis (individuals apply their evaluations of national-level phenomena to the EU-level when voting in EU elections) with a 1st-order hypothesis (voters evaluate the EU on its own performance terms). The paper tests these competing hypotheses and finds considerable support for both models. In contexts where national institutions – political parties – dominate the representation process, the transfer hypothesis receives considerable support. However, surprisingly strong support is also found for the 1st-order hypothesis: electoral choice in EU election is to a considerable extent influenced by EU-level factors. Furthermore, when voters evaluate the mechanisms of representation more broadly without a focus on elections per

se, we find much more support for the 1st-order than for the transfer hypothesis – voters clearly separate the national and EU levels and are able to evaluate each level on its own terms. These results have important implications, both for how voters' decisions in European elections are analysed and how the sophistication of voters has to be judged more broadly in the context of multi-layered institutions.

Skrinis and Teperoglou compare the results of different sorts of second-order elections (SOE's) in three Southern European nations: Greece, Portugal and Spain. Since the formulation of the second-order election model there have been many studies comparing first and second-order contests, in particular national and European elections; while only few analyses have looked at the relationship between different types of SOE's. The paper uses an Index of Dissimilarity to compare the results of different elections. Election results compared pertain to the capitals of Greek prefectures (51), the capitals of Portuguese districts (18 in mainland Portugal, plus the capitals of Azores and Madeira) and the capitals of Spanish provinces (50). Each of the last three municipal elections in each country is compared with the closest European (and parliamentary) contests. The findings suggest that in spite of the fact that local and European contests can both be seen as second-order national elections, they are nevertheless quite independent of each other and each evokes different factors motivating voting choices.

Pedro Magalhães compares vote choices in parliamentary and subsequent presidential elections in Portugal. The empirical data that are used derive from a panel survey conducted in two waves, following the 2005 legislative and 2006 presidential elections. The paper focuses on the empirical evaluation of four alternative theoretical interpretations of voters' choices and of shifts in vote share from legislative to presidential elections. The paper shows that, "candidate effects" are of predictable importance, yet are insufficient to override the dominant effects of partisan and ideological considerations. The dynamics of voter defection away from government

parties appears to be quite similar to what is often found in other “less important elections”. The paper argues that the extent to which similar findings are likely to be found in other semi-presidential regimes depends on particular institutional and political conditions.

Finally, the conceptual paper by Thomas Gschwend asks under what conditions the impact of the national arena on the sub-national arena will vary. More particularly, he is interested in different degrees of contamination. His argument is that the size of a contamination effect depends on the ease or difficulty of correctly attributing policy responsibility to particular political actors in the policy-making process. The assignment of responsibility is a necessary condition for electoral accountability, but more often than not voters misattribute responsibilities for governmental actions and thus hold an actor accountable for something that they are not responsible for. In multi-level systems of government policy-making responsibility is often shared across or even within levels of governance through mechanisms such as coalition governments and split executives (cohabitation or divided government). Multi-level systems of governance undermine the potential for citizens to hold policy makers accountable (retrospectively) or to provide (pre-electoral) coalitions with a clear mandate (prospectively) to govern. The diffusion of responsibility in multi-level systems of governance imposes, therefore, high informational demands on the voters. Moreover, in order to form relevant prospective or retrospective evaluations citizens’ need to be able to distinguish the track record of executives at different levels. Finally, multi-level systems imply multiple elections; if these elections are not held at the same time the likelihood of voter fatigue among satisfied voters and of the mobilisation of dissatisfied voters is high, jointly causing unpredictable election results.

The papers presented at the conference demonstrated impressive accomplishment of comparative research into multi-level electoral systems, as well as future potential. With regard to the latter, we believe it is high time

that a series of interconnected national comparative panel surveys be organised, with the ability to track the evolution of respondents' party preferences, political evaluations and actual choices over a period that spans at least two first-order and multiple second-order national elections for different levels of governance. Only then will we be able to analyse adequately the micro-processes that underlie macro-level regularities that are so far only partly understood. Moreover, such a set of studies should cover a range of electoral contests for levels of government differing as much as possible in terms of clarity of responsibility for policy. We hope – and expect – that some part of this agenda will be included in the design of the European Elections Study 2009. Additional comparative projects focusing on national and regional legislative elections are currently being prepared. The combination of these initiatives on the one hand and of the academic rigour and creativity of comparative election researchers on the other – clearly exemplified by the participants in the conference of which these are the proceedings – make us look forward eagerly to the next generation of comparative studies and publications on multi-level elections.

Notes

¹ To avoid confusion, we have to point out that the term 'multi-level electoral research' is used here to refer to studies of elections occurring at different levels of government, e.g., local, national and European elections. Unfortunately, the multi-level designation is also used in the literature to refer to something entirely different, but also of particular relevance to the kind of comparative electoral studies that we describe: methods of statistical analysis that simultaneously analyse information with respect to different levels of aggregation, e.g., individual voters, electoral districts and countries. Where necessary we will refer to the latter by the roughly synonymous designation of HL-models (hierarchical linear models).

² What the boundaries of such a set are cannot be stated in the abstract, but has to be determined empirically. As is common in situations where systems have to be demarcated, the criterion for inclusion and exclusion of elements in the system is determined by a loss-function in clustering procedures (or, conversely by a gain-function in reverse clustering): elements are considered to belong to the system as long as the number or the strength of their ties with other system-elements is sufficiently large or strong.

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Chapter 1

Coordination between electoral arenas in multi-level countries¹

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Since the seminal contribution of Duverger (1954), the effects of electoral systems on party system fragmentation have been understood as being a matter of electoral coordination. As defined by Cox (2000: 49), “electoral coordination refers to a variety of processes by which groups of voters and politicians coordinate their electoral actions in order to win more legislative seats or executive portfolios”. Every electoral system stipulates a method of translating votes into seats that poses coordination problems for electoral competitors insofar as there are fewer seats to be filled than there are potential candidates wishing to fill them. Those who win the seats will be those who have succeeded in amassing a sufficient level of support among the electorate through (1) persuading voters that they are better than the alternatives or, when this is not enough, (2) limiting the number of actual competitors (e.g., via electoral coalitions, joint lists, or apparentement of lists), (3) limiting the number of competitors for whom voters actually vote (strategic voting), or (4) mechanisms (2) and (3) at the same time (Cox 1999: 146).

A major result of these assumptions about electoral coordination is that a generalization of Duverger's Laws will hold in either single-member district plurality (SMD), single-member with runoffs, or proportional representation (PR) electoral systems: the number of viable parties or candidates (i.e. all competitors who expect to win a seat and those who are tied for the M th seat) in these three systems is equal to the district magnitude (M) plus one. Cox (1997: ch. 4) called it the "M+1 rule". In particular, when the prospective parties or candidates in a district are all primarily interested in the election at hand (i.e. are short-term instrumentally rational) and have good information about the relative chances of potential competitors (i.e., they have reasonably accurate and publicly available information on candidate standings), two different M+1 rules apply in any district. First, the number of competitors entering a given race tends to be no more than M+1. Second, if more than M+1 parties or candidates enter because of a failure of the entry coordination rule, votes tend to concentrate on, at most, M+1 of them. The M+1 rule says that, under specified conditions, strategic voting will reduce the contest with more than M+1 parties or candidates to one in which, at most, M+1 competitors are seriously running for seats: this is a Duvergerian equilibrium. But even if all the preconditions of the model are met, non-Duvergerian equilibria can arise when two or more candidates are tied for second; in this case, neither will be obviously "out of the running" and hence their supporters will have no clear incentives to desert them.

However, in the real world Duvergerian and non-Duvergerian equilibria are unlikely results of electoral competition. Some recent literature on electoral systems and electoral coordination has emphasized different strategic dilemmas faced by party elites within and across districts when there is an unexpected increase in the number of competing parties. There are (a) severe collective-action problems when parties cooperate to run the optimal number of candidates in each district (Christensen 1996), or (b) interaction effects in mixed-member electoral systems between proportional

representation and single-member district plurality rules (Herron and Nishikawa 2001; Cox and Schoppa 2002; Gschwend, Johnston, and Pattie 2003; Ferrara and Herron 2005), or (c) negative incentives for party aggregation where there is a lesser degree of political and economic centralization (Chhibber and Kollman 1998 and 2004), or (d) impacts of federalism through the concentration of small parties in some regions, producing, when they are added up, a higher number of parties at the national level (Geddes and Benton 1997; Jones 1997).

With the exception of the research on mixed-member electoral systems, a common assumption in this literature is the homogeneity of the incentives for electoral coordination within countries, be they at the representative body, the electoral system, or the territorial level. But what if, in a given country, there are distinctive elections for separate parliaments representing different territorial units? This paper addresses a different and more general coordination dilemma, which appears when several elections at different territorial levels are held within a country: how does the national party system evolve when a set of voters is enfranchised to participate in a variety of elections under a diversity of rules? We maintain that, especially in multi-level countries, there are interaction or contamination effects between national and sub-national electoral arenas that generate, as in most mixed-member electoral systems, a centrifugal force that multiplies the number of electoral parties in national elections. In these cases, electoral coordination is not limited to only one single election at a specific point in time, nor does it require the homogeneity of structural incentives.

In this paper we make two contributions by dwelling on the Spanish case. On the one hand, we identify a coordination dilemma that appears in those multi-level democracies in which institutional features, in particular decentralization, create multiple opportunities for voters to render judgments about parties. When parties can win seats in sub-national elections, but not in national elections, they face a dilemma: should they enter the race in elections

in which they are not viable, or should they enhance their chances or husband their resources through coordination with a larger party but pay the price of possibly losing their marks of identity? Our main finding is that Duvergerian equilibria are unlikely outcomes in democracies where state and federal or regional parliaments are elected according to significantly different rules. On the other hand, we point out the main causal mechanisms that explain how this dilemma is solved and test their empirical implications.

This paper is laid out as follows. In the next section, we discuss some theoretical approaches and we present our hypotheses on the coordination dilemma that parties face in multi-level countries when they compete in elections held at different territorial levels for distinctive representative bodies under different electoral rules. The third section justifies the suitability of Spain as a particularly interesting case, describes the data used, and examines the operationalization of both the dependent and the independent variables. The results of our empirical analysis are presented in the fourth section. The last section is the conclusion.

The theoretical setting: approaches and hypotheses

The mechanical and psychological effects of electoral systems depend on electoral permissiveness: the higher the number of seats to be filled, the less the Duvergerian gravity. The empirical evidence of cross-national analyses is conclusive.⁽²⁾ Once social heterogeneity is controlled, the number of parties is explained by the *strength* of electoral systems, that is, their capacity to constrain party strategies and voters' decisions at the ballot box (Sartori 1994: ch. 3). But the consequences of electoral rules are not as straightforward as most comparative studies present them as being. Besides varying across countries as expected, incentives to electoral coordination can also vary *within* a country. We can conceive of at least two sources of variation. The first is

that a given single parliament is chosen with different electoral systems; the second is when there are two or more parliaments chosen at different territorial levels in a given country with different electoral systems. In both cases, parties and voters are the same. But there are no reasons to expect that their strategic decisions are absolutely independent across those *arenas*.

Let us now examine the basic assumptions of these two sources. As for the first, the most recent literature on mixed-member electoral systems has identified interaction or contamination effects between the proportional representation (PR) and the single-member district plurality (SMD) systems according to which there are a larger number of parties in the SMD tier than the average for pure SMD systems. In mixed-member systems, small parties face a complex situation with difficult decisions to be made as a consequence. On the one hand, to do their best in the PR contest, they need to run candidates in every SMD under their own party's banner. But, on the other hand, the decision to enter the SMD race presents small parties with a dilemma, since they face incentives from (either to cooperate (in order to efficiently translate votes into seats on the SMD side of the ballot) or to field their own candidates (in order to avoid the trade-offs related to their cooperation with larger parties). If small parties resolve the dilemma through electoral coordination with a major party to maximize seats in the SMD ballot, the interactive or contamination effects are weaker (Cox and Schoppa 2002: 1049). But if they resolve this dilemma in favour of the "go it alone" approach, the number of parties winning votes in the SMD tier is likely to be higher because of the extra supply of candidates.

Why should small parties field candidates in the SMD contest if they have no realistic chance of winning? Because by placing a candidate in the SMD tier, a small party might heighten voter awareness and potentially gain more votes (and eventually seats) for the PR portion of the election. In addition, by running many SMD candidates, small parties can develop their own internal strategies; for instance, they may fill in the requisites for

receiving public funding or decide to test new, aspiring politicians in districts where they expect to do poorly. Thus, these parties, in contrast with those in pure SMD electoral systems, can place their candidates in the SMD portion of mixed-member electoral systems regardless of their strength. And this decision will create centrifugal tendencies of some relevance in opposition to Duvergerian gravity. Therefore, we should not expect the number of parties in SMD contests in mixed-member systems to approach two because of these contamination or interaction effects, particularly when the proportional component is dominant (Herron and Nishikawa 2001: 69; Cox and Schoppa 2002: 1031; Gschwend et al. 2003: 114; Ferrara and Herron 2005: 17).⁽³⁾

The second source of variation in incentives for electoral coordination has a different scenario. Instead of parties and voters deciding, using two different sets of electoral rules for the same national parliament with a mixed-member electoral system, electoral arenas are now more complex. They are constituted by national and sub-national contests under distinctive electoral systems for separate representative bodies located in different territorial levels of a given country. Although limited, there are a number of studies on the connections or interactions between these two electoral arenas, particularly in federal countries.⁽⁴⁾ But the questions that arose from the preconditions and outcomes of electoral coordination in these polities remain mostly unanswered. Accordingly, the scant reflections that can be found in the literature are much more intuitive and preliminary. Deschouwer (2006: 292), for instance, has stated that “political parties in multi-level systems face particular problems that are the direct consequences of the organization of the political system”; but then he only mentions the question of parties confronting the choice of participating in elections at only one or at both levels of the polity. Cox (1997: 21) has suggested that, in the American case, “one would hardly expect that the party systems for House and Senate elections would fully adapt to their respective electoral systems, in splendid isolation from one another. If a party can run and elect candidates under the

more permissive system, it may decide to run candidates in the other system as well not to win seats, perhaps, but to keep its electoral organization in good trim, to establish its blackmail potential, or for other reasons". Park (2003) has also challenged the assumption of the alleged isolation: in Korea, a rather decentralized unitary state whose legislative elections are run under a single-member plurality electoral system, electoral fragmentation at the district level in local contests is directly related to the degree of electoral multipartyism for legislative elections at district-levels. Similarly, Cox, Rosenbluth, and Thies (2000) have shown that the differences in electoral incentives between Japan's Upper and Lower Houses produce different patterns of factional affiliation. And Blais and Carty (1991: 85) have added that "federal institutions ... may encourage party elites to maintain smaller regional parties rather than fuse with others as Duverger expected".

Of course, many studies have taken into account federalism as a key factor for analyzing the impact of electoral laws in national party systems. Since federalism works as an institutional constraint to coordination, it can produce the failure of Duverger's laws (Cox 1997; Chhibber and Kollamn 1998 and 2004; Magaloni 2000). Gaines (1999), for instance, has claimed that federalism is the main explanation for multipartyism in Canada: beyond the standard Duvergerian logic, the most relevant explanatory factors are to be found in the coexistence of different party systems in given sub-national units and the corresponding contamination effects of different electoral arenas. Jones (1997) has shown that the timing of gubernatorial elections has an important impact on the fractionalization in the Argentinian parliament. Samuels (2002a and 2002b) has chosen the Brazilian case to exemplify the coattail effect, according to which candidates for the gubernatorial offices pull up the electoral support of candidates running in concurrent congressional or sub-national elections. In a similar vein, Shugart and Carey (1992: ch. 11) have documented that the timing of presidential elections is also relevant to national legislative elections: the level of parliamentary fractionalization is

lower when the gubernatorial and congressional elections are held concurrently than when both elections take place at different times.

Thus, the analysis of electoral coordination should take into account the existence of electoral arenas. In other words, the more decentralized political power is in a multi-level country, the less compelling an analysis will be if it only considers the rules governing *national* elections. Empirically, decentralization here means both the existence of directly elected *sub-national* parliaments and the analytical necessity of distinguishing between national and sub-national parliamentary elections along a number of indicators. And this distinction leads directly to the research question of considering the interaction between these two electoral arenas and more particularly the potential effect of sub-national elections. In multi-level countries, small parties (i.e., local or regional parties with chances of winning a seat in sub-national elections but not in national ones) face a different strategic dilemma. To do their best in sub-national elections, they need to run candidates in national elections under their own party's banner. But, at the same time, they face incentives to cooperate with a national party (or to coalesce with one or several local parties with the same dilemma) to efficiently translate votes into seats in the national contest. Again, if they resolve this dilemma in favour of the "go it alone" approach, the number of parties winning votes in national elections is likely to be higher because of the extra supply of competitors. And if they resolve the dilemma through electoral coordination to maximize their chances of winning at least one seat in national elections, electoral fragmentation will be lower.

For sub-national parties, any cooperation agreement with national parties has both advantages and disadvantages.⁽⁵⁾ On the positive side, the advantages of cooperation are obvious. Sub-national parties can increase their probabilities of receiving more votes and hence win a seat in national elections –which seems to be the equivalent, in the theoretical approaches, of the institutional goal of entering the government in the standard nationwide

pre-electoral coalitions (Golder 2006: 196–198). On the negative side, sub-national parties face severe risks. In the short run, and in the case of identity-based nationalist parties, substantial segments of their supporters may decry the agreement as their probably concessions directly subvert the very essence of their nationalist ideology, usually in conflict with most if not all national parties. More generally, sub-national parties may lose the opportunity to recruit new voters in high-profile national election campaigns and endanger their presence in national politics. As a consequence, they will see their blackmail potential drastically reduced, as well as their visibility. In the medium or long-term, sub-national parties face the risk of being absorbed or dispensed with by the national party.

On the other hand, the strategy of non-cooperation also entails clear benefits and costs. Since most regional organizations usually belong to the category of *small* (irrespective now of their actual size) parties, their decision to participate in national elections is, in the short run, contingent on the ideological reputation, media coverage, and public funding they might eventually enjoy. If they are successful, sub-national parties can obtain nationwide visibility, ideological support, and material resources, a combination that may reinforce their ability to win seats. As Lutz (1997: 4) puts it, “it can be useful for a party to participate in an election when their utility of being present in the political arena is higher than the costs of taking part in an election”. However, this short-run perspective may prove inadequate for sub-national parties. Their platforms are obviously dominated by demands for more or less drastic changes in self-government in their respective territories. And the *locus* for these policy goals is national parliaments. If they are able to enjoy representation in the national parliament and may additionally play a pivotal role in national politics for the legislature, particularly with minority governments, their policy success in the medium or long-term is much more likely. Consequently, as de Winter (1998: 211) has shown, “most major [sub-national,] ethnoregionalist parties participate in

general elections, in elections for the European Parliament, and in regional, subregional (provincial) and communal elections, [and] tend to focus on increasing their political weight at the level of the national parliament ...”.

On what does the resolution of this strategic dilemma depend? According to Cox (1997: 5-6), the nature of the electoral coordination problem that arises in any given system is defined by three components: electoral institutions, political preferences, and expectations. In our multi-level scenario, these components may be easily translated into incentives for enhancing strategies of electoral competition at the district-level. Consequently, decisions by sub-national parties to either coordinate at their district-level with national parties in national elections or to run under their own flag depend on three incentives. They stem from the electoral rules that govern elections to both national and sub-national parliaments, the strength of the cleavage that presides over the electoral competition among sub-national and national parties, and the expectations they all have about the electoral fortune of their competitors. Those incentives also constitute our hypotheses, and can be presented as follows:

1. *The difference in the permissiveness of electoral rules in national and sub-national elections.* Electoral rules determine the available opportunities for trading votes in order to win more seats. In this regard, their permissiveness is directly related to the size or number of contested seats in the district: as is well known, “magnitude is the decisive factor” (Taagepera and Shugart 1989: 112). Electoral competitors’ incentives to coordinate their actions and resources are given by district magnitude: the less the number of seats to be filled in a district, the higher the necessity of coordination, and vice versa. This implies that, all else being equal, the opportunity for electoral coordination between arenas exists when district magnitude is different in both types of elections. As this difference increases, (a) the number of parties facing the dilemma also increases and (b) they are thought to be provided with higher

incentives to either prudently withdraw from the competition, enter stand-down agreements with other parties, or form broad electoral coalitions. Given that in most decentralized countries sub-national district magnitudes are higher than national ones, particularly in Spain, the higher the difference in district magnitude between national and sub-national elections, the higher the probability of sub-national parties deciding not to enter the race in national elections under their own party's banner.

2. *The existence of sub-national or regional cleavages.* Electoral coordination also depends to a large extent on the political preferences of party elites. As the number of distinct ethnic, religious, or linguistic groups in a district increases, the chances of malcoordination increases and hence the number of entrants or parties (Cox, 1999). After all, party elites define the terms of the cooperation, assess benefits and costs, shape cleavages, hold expectations, implement electoral strategies, and enjoy or suffer the consequences. Their preferences are usually strongly related to the cleavage structure of the party system, and more particularly in our case, to the regional cleavage. For both the sub-national and the national parties, the outcome of the coordination process is contingent upon the distance between their locations along the ideological cleavage and, above all, once again, upon the regional cleavage. If the distance between parties in both cleavage lines is small, their preferences are more likely to be quite similar and, consequently, the coordination outcomes have more chances of becoming successful. But the contrary is also true. As Golder (2006: 203) phrases one of her stronger findings, “electoral [pre-]coalitions are less likely to form the more ideologically incompatible the potential coalition members”. Since sub-national parties for the most part have to coordinate their actions with national parties, the most important incentives in this regard depend on the intensity of the regional cleavage: *the stronger the*

cleavage, the higher the distance between the preferences of party elites and, therefore, the less the probability of electoral coordination.

3. *The possession of good information about the relative chances of potential competitors.* Since candidates and parties decide whether to enter a race primarily on the basis of their chance of winning seats, their expectations about who might or will win under various entry scenarios are obviously crucial in determining who will actually enter. Expectations can be rational (Cox, 1997: chs. 4 and 5), or adaptive, or based on election history (Forsythe et al. 1993; Lago 2007). In general terms, parties can easily ground their electoral expectations in the existing information about voter preferences in each arena by looking at the last pair of national and sub-national elections; other sources generating common knowledge on candidate or party chances are polls, news analyses, candidates' statements, and other bits of essentially free information (cf. Johnston et al. 1992: 197–211). Therefore, *the clearer the information about the identity of viable parties in national elections, the higher the probability of electoral coordination.*

The empirical analysis: the case, the data, and the variables

The case of Spain is particularly well suited for analyzing electoral coordination between national and sub-national arenas.⁽⁶⁾ Spain appears to us to be an ideal case of multilevel political representation, according to which voters have the opportunity to express their preferences through different layers of representative institutions, and party elites have both strong incentives and strategic dilemmas as to whether to compete or not in some or all of these layers. We can think of at least four reasons. First, the recent and remarkably intense process of decentralization; second, the strength of the

regional cleavage both between national and regional or nationalist parties, and among these sub-national parties as well; third, the systemic relevance of both regional parties and regional voting; and fourth, the use of PR electoral systems in both national and regional elections, but with a significantly lower district magnitude in the former case.

The very outcome of decentralization is one of the most notable successes of Spain's transition to democracy in the late 1970s, in itself a process with many achievements. The extraordinary process of the construction of the *Estado de las autonomías* replaced in just a few years a highly centralized territorial distribution of power with a *de facto*, asymmetric federal state with 17 Autonomous Communities, each of them enjoying a wide range of institutions, powers, and resources (Gunther, Montero, and Botella 2004: ch. 6). According to the provisions of the new 1978 constitution, all Communities have their own elected parliaments, governments, public administrations, budgets, and resources. As Subirats and Gallego (2002: 3) have summarized, the process of decentralization has converted "a unitary state into one of the most decentralized in Europe. ... In twenty years the Autonomous Communities [have been created] to administer over one-third of all public expenditures, ... nearly one million employees, ... [and about] three thousand laws ... through institutions that have been directed by two hundred regional presidents and ministers, and over a thousand members of parliaments".

From the early 1980s, the regional cleavage has been a permanent characteristic of Spanish politics. In most federal states, the dominant pattern is that of a federation-wide party system with occasional variations in the electoral strength of one of the major parties or the eventual presence of third, minor parties. However, some complex multinational states have different party systems in both the national and some sub-national arenas. This has been the case in Belgium over the last twenty years, and is also the case in Spain. Here the interaction does exist among the various components

of (i) the national party system, (ii) some sub-national, regional party systems, and (iii) a number of specific national party sub-systems. In the multilayered character of these party systems, parties follow patterns of coordination and competition at different electoral, parliamentary, governmental, and institutional levels. As would be expected, the structural incentives for electoral coordination are distinct (and more complicated) than even those existing in federal states. Table 1 illustrates this complexity.

Table 1. Electoral arenas in Spain: Autonomous Communities with parties in the national parliament and in regional parliaments, 2003-2005^a

		Sub-national parties in the Congreso de los Diputados ^b		
		More than one	Only one	None
Sub-national parties in regional parliaments ^b	More than one	Basque Country ^c PNV, EA <hr/> Catalonia ^d CiU, ERC	Canary Islands ^e CC, PIL-FNC, CC-AHÍ <hr/> Navarre ^f UPN, Aralar, CDN, PNV <hr/> Aragon ^g ChA, Par	Balearic Islands ⁱ PSM-EN, UM
	Only one		Galicia ^h BNG	Andalusia ^j PA <hr/> Cantabria ^k PRC <hr/> Castile and Leon ^l UPL <hr/> La Rioja ^m PR
	None			Asturias Castile-La Mancha Extremadura Valencian Community Madrid Murcia

^a General, national election of 2004, and sub-national, regional elections of 2003 in Catalonia, 2004 in Andalusia, and 2005 in the Basque Country and Galicia.

^b In bold, nationalist parties; in italics, regionalist parties; underlined, local parties.

^c Partido Nacionalista Vasco, Eusko Alkartasuna.

^d Convergència i Unió, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya.

^e Coalición Canaria, Partido Independiente de Lanzarote-Frente Nacionalista Canario, Coalición Canaria-Agrupación Herrerena Independiente.

^f Unión del Pueblo Navarro, Aralar, Convergencia Democrática de Navarra y Partido Nacionalista Vasco.

^g Chunta Aragonesista, Partido Aragonesista.

^h Bloque Nacionalista Galego.

ⁱ Partido Socialista de Menorca-Entesa Nacionaista, Unió Mallorca

^j Partido Andalucista.

^k Partido Regionalista de Cantabria.

^l Unión del Pueblo Leonés.

^m Partido Riojano.

As a consequence of the multilayered character of party competition, the regional cleavage has crystallized in major variations of the vote distribution across most Communities. The resulting mosaic has been labelled the “electoral Spains” (Vallès 1991), or more simply the “many Spains” (Gunther, Montero, and Botella 2004: ch. 6), to underline the great diversity of patterns of party coordination and competition in different regions. Table 2 shows basic data for some of these patterns. The so-called *regional voting*, for instance, measures the electoral distinctiveness of each Community; that is, the extent to which its voters support nationalist, regionalist, or local parties and/or the extent to which they give proportional support within the region for national parties.⁽⁷⁾ Nearly all the regions have high indices, which have moreover remained remarkably stable. In comparative terms, the Spanish levels of regional voting in national elections are among the highest in Europe (Lee 1968; Hearl and Budge 1996: 172-173; Linz and Montero 2001: 181).

Table 2. Regional voting in national elections (1977-2004) and votes for sub-national parties in general (1977-2004) and in regional elections (1980-2000) (in percentages) ^a

Autonomous Communities	Regional voting	Vote to sub-national parties in general elections	Vote to sub-national parties in regional elections
Basque Country	47.3	49.9	62.5
Catalonia	34.5	36.4	61.6
Canary Islands	26.2	19.1	35.2
Galicia	22.9	11.7	21.3
Navarre	21.9	21.4	59.0
Andalucía	19.4	4.7	7.1
Balearic Islands	17.0	5.1	17.9
Extremadura	15.2	1.6	5.9
Castile and Leon	15.0	1.6	4.0
Madrid	14.5	0.3	0.6
Aragon	14.5	11.4	24.4
La Rioja	14.2	2.4	6.6
Asturias	14.0	1.5	3.7
Valencian Community	13.4	6.3	9.9
Murcia	13.4	0.5	2.0
	12.8	0.3	0.5
Castile-La Mancha			
Cantabria	12.8	2.0	22.9

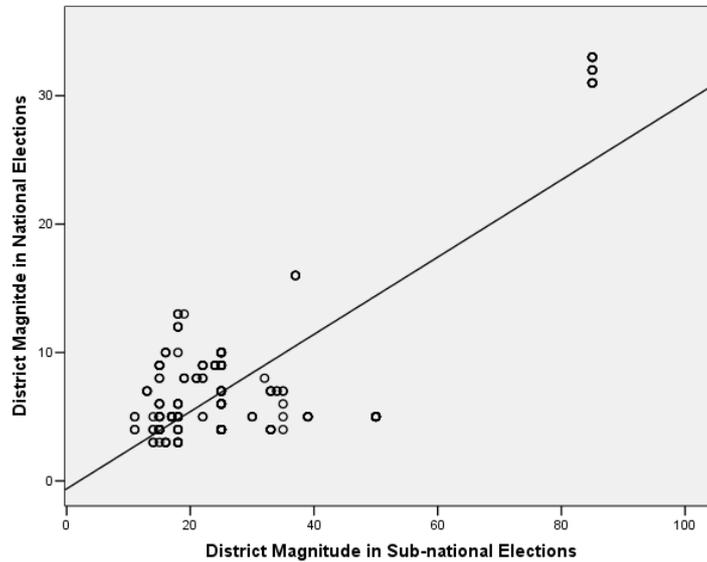
^a Communities are ranked by their regional voting scores.

Sources: Lago (2004: 29), and Oñate and Ocaña (2005).

There is still an additional reason for selecting Spain as our empirical case. National and regional sub-national electoral rules create very different incentives for the formation and sustenance of parties. In both arenas the allocation of seats to parties is proportional to the votes following a D'Hondt formula of party list proportional representation. While in national elections there is a 3 percent legal threshold at the district level, in regional elections there are 3 or 5 percent legal thresholds at the district or regional level⁽⁸⁾. With the exception of seven districts (out of a total number of 52) in national elections, electoral districts are the same in both arenas.⁽⁹⁾ Those exceptions will be excluded. Hence, our empirical analysis will be limited to *districts* with the same geographic area in both types of elections.⁽¹⁰⁾ The most relevant feature for our purposes is that district magnitude is substantially lower in national elections than in regional ones.⁽¹¹⁾ Figure 1 shows conclusively that

the number of seats to be filled in those districts where at least one sub-national party faced the coordination dilemma is *always* higher in sub-national elections than in national ones.

Figure 1. Differences in district magnitudes between national and sub-national elections in Spain



Our empirical analysis assesses strategic entry at the district level or local electoral coordination in Spanish national elections over the period 1982–2004.⁽¹²⁾ We are interested in evaluating pre-electoral coordination when parties are viable in sub-national elections, but not in national ones. Should they abstain or participate in national elections? And if they decide to participate, should they contest both elections independently, or in coalition or other forms of cooperation with other parties in national elections? If this latter dilemma is resolved in favour of the “go it alone” approach, the number of parties winning votes in national elections will be greater because of an extra supply of competitors: only parties that are viable in one arena enter the race in the other, independently of their (bad) electoral expectations. The interaction between electoral arenas would generate a

centrifugal force that would soften Duvergerian gravity and pull up the number of electoral parties. But if the dilemma is resolved through electoral coordination to maximize resources or, above all, the number of seats won, then Duvergerian gravity works. Those party elites who foresee that their own candidates will bear the brunt of strategic desertion in national elections are likely to decide that mounting a (hopeless) campaign is not worth the cost, and will seek instead to throw their support behind more viable candidates. To the extent that withdrawals of this sort do occur, the number of competitors will decrease (Cox 1997: 151).

The analysis of entry decisions in national elections entails the selection of one indicator that may reveal whether sub-national parties employ “go it alone” strategies or engage in some form of pre-electoral coordination. The measurement of sub-national parties’ entry decisions at the district level in national elections, our dependent variable, is based on a comparison between strategies in sub-national and national elections. We have created a dichotomous variable, *Entry*. It is coded 1 when in a given district a sub-national party ran candidates alone (i.e., under its own party’s banner) in both national and sub-national elections: the strategic dilemma is resolved in favour of the “go it alone” approach. It is coded 0 when in a given district a sub-national party ran candidates alone only in sub-national elections, whereas in national elections it may choose to withdraw, or to make some type of cooperative agreements with other parties, or to enter into a more or less broad electoral coalition: the strategic dilemma is resolved in favour of electoral coordination.⁽¹³⁾ All non-national parties are included in the analysis (235 cases according to Table 5), but we control for previous national success, as we will see later. The dependent variable compares sub-national parties’ entry decisions, in each one of the districts in national elections, to the situation in the immediately preceding sub-national election.⁽¹⁴⁾ And as has been already said, our empirical analysis will be limited to *districts* with the same geographic area in both types of elections. Seven districts (out of a total

number of 52) in national elections had to be excluded from the analysis because the drawing of district boundaries is different in sub-national elections.

What are the consequences of the interaction effects between national and sub-national elections in Spain for the national party system fragmentation? As Table 3 makes clear, the strategic dilemma is very common between electoral arenas in Spanish elections.⁽¹⁵⁾ Focussing only on sub-national parties in regional elections, but not in national ones, a total number of 141 of these have faced the coordination dilemma at least once in an average of 14 districts per national election. In most of these elections, parties have resolved this dilemma in favour of the “go it alone” approach. Of the 13 parties facing the dilemma in the 1982 election, for instance, all of them entered the race in all 12 districts where they had to reach a decision; the mean share of their vote was 4.42 percent. And in the 1986 election, 20 parties facing the dilemma in 16 districts entered the national race, while only 2 decided not to enter. In the rest of the elections, most sub-national parties did decide to compete with their own flags. Considering the number of districts in which sub-national parties decided on the entry strategy, there were considerable oscillations between a minimum of 27 percent in the 1982 and 2004 elections, and a maximum of 40 percent in 1993. For those parties, the average support was 5.30 percent, with a minimum of 2.48 in 1989 and a maximum of 7.25 percent in 2000. Given that, according to Duvergerian theories, these parties would not compete in the counterfactual world where they are not in the sub-national legislature, an average number of 17 parties per election, receiving a mean of 5.30 percent of the vote in an average of 14 districts, is the extra supply of competitors because of the interaction between electoral arenas in Spanish national elections.

Table 3. Parties, districts, and coordination between electoral arenas in Spain, 1982-2004

<i>Dilemma</i>		National elections							
		1982	1986	1989	1993	1996	2000	2004	Mean
Entry	Number of sub-national parties making a decision	13	20	13	24	18	18	15	17
	Districts Number (% [calculated on the basis of districts where parties have to make a decision])	12	16	9	18	15	16	12	14
	(% [calculated on the basis of the total number of districts selected, N=45])	(100)	(80)	(69)	(75)	(83)	(89)	(80)	(81)
	Mean vote (in %)	4.42	4.98	2.48	6.59	5.76	7.25	5.61	5.30
No entry	Number of sub-national parties making a decision	0	2	4	3	6	1	4	3
	Districts Number (% [calculated on the basis of districts where parties have to make a decision])	12	16	9	18	15	16	12	14
	(% [calculated on the basis of the total number of districts selected, N=45])	(0)	(20)	(31)	(25)	(17)	(11)	(20)	(19)
	Mean vote (in %)	(73)	(64)	(72)	(60)	(67)	(64)	(73)	(68)

These findings have important implications for the empirical analysis of electoral and party systems. We have demonstrated that the interaction between electoral arenas generates a centrifugal force that softens Duvergerian gravity and increases the number of parties in national elections. That is, the institutional features of multi-level countries generate outcomes in national elections that differ from those that would be observed if only the national arena existed. This is one reason for the lack of Duvergerian or non-Duvergerian equilibria in the real world, even if all the preconditions of the model are met (Cox 1997: ch. 4).

According to the three hypotheses already stated, we have selected three independent variables as the causal mechanisms behind electoral

coordination between arenas. The first refers to the electoral systems. Since electoral rules in the Spanish *Estado de las autonomías* are neither *congruent* (between the national and the sub-national levels) nor strictly *uniform* (among the sub-national levels), their variations provide distinct incentives to party elites (Massicote 2000: 102). As we know, at least since Rae (1971), the most influential variable in the explanation of electoral fragmentation is district magnitude. To capture the different incentives provided by each district in both types of elections, we use the concept of effective electoral threshold, that is, the proportion of votes that secures parliamentary representation to any party with a probability of at least 50 percent (Lijphart 1994; Taagepera and Shugart, 1989). As the effective electoral threshold increases, the likelihood of strategic behavior among voters and elites rises. The effective threshold is calculated as being an average of the inclusion threshold (the minimum percentage of the vote that gives a party a seat under the most favourable circumstances) and the exclusion threshold (the maximum percentage of votes that, under the most unfavourable conditions, is still insufficient for a party to obtain representation⁽¹⁶⁾):

$$T = \frac{50\%}{M+1} + \frac{50\%}{2M}$$

where M is the number of seats in the district. We have created a variable, *Permissiveness* (*P*), calculated according to the following formula:

$$P = T_{\text{National}} - T_{\text{Sub-national}}$$

where T_{National} is the effective threshold in a given district in national elections and $T_{\text{Sub-national}}$ is the effective threshold in the same district in sub-national elections. If $P > 0$, the electoral system is more permissive (or weaker) in sub-national elections than in national elections; on the contrary, if $P < 0$, the electoral system is more permissive (or weaker) in national elections than in

sub-national elections. The mean of the variable, 7.52, and its minimum value, 0 (in 18 districts) and maximum, 16.81, included in Table 5, tells us much about its long range, and easily justifies why the coordination dilemma arises in national elections in Spain.

The second independent variable refers to the regional or sub-national cleavage as a political constraint on electoral coordination. As we already know, sub-national party elites enjoy incentives or suffer constraints for their electoral strategies of coordination depending on the distance between parties along this cleavage. Given that sub-national parties are particularly likely to coordinate their actions with national parties, the intensity of the regional cleavage is an excellent proxy for indicating the distance between parties. Obviously, the more intense the cleavage, the greater will be the distance. Our measurement is far from being what used to be the most common strategy in the literature. Sociopolitical heterogeneity is usually quantified by aggregate indicators or alternatively by placing individuals into groups and then applying either the index of ethnic or religious fragmentation or the effective number of ethnic or religious groups (for instance, Amorim Neto and Cox 1997). In the Spanish case, we are fortunate in being able to measure the *intensity* of the regional cleavage instead, using a survey indicator of national or regional subjective identity. As can be seen in Table 4, this indicator takes the percentage of individuals who, in each Community, declare that they feel more regional than Spanish along a scale that includes the positions of being “only [regional, i.e. Catalan, Basque, etc.]”, “more [regional] than Spanish”, “as [regional] as Spanish”, “more Spanish than [regional]”, or “only Spanish” (Linz 1986).⁽¹⁷⁾ We have created an aggregate measure of the intensity of the regional cleavage in each Community, *Preferences*, by simply adding together the percentage of individuals who declared they were “only [regional]” and “more [regional] than Spanish” (Lago 2004).⁽¹⁸⁾

Table 4. Subjective regional identity in the Autonomous Communities, 1979–2000 (in percentages) ^a

Autonomous Communities	Elections							
	1979 ^b	1982	1986	1989	1993	1996	2000–04	Mean
Basque Country	38	59	49	54	40	53	48	49
Canary Islands	36			41	43	45	45	42
Navarre			38	45	31	32	48	39
Catalonia	31	30	31	42	45	38	42	37
Galicia	43	28	34	36	31	43	31	35
Asturias	33			28	25	39	29	31
Balearic Islands				17	27	24	21	22
Andalusia	25	28	20	22	14	16	20	21
Aragon	12	13	13	17	14	18	21	15
Valencian Community	27	25	11	9	8	11	10	14
Extremadura	11			16	8	13	12	12
Cantabria				4	7	12	11	9
La Rioja				10	4	12	6	8
Castile and Leon	14			5	4	4	7	7
Madrid	14			6	6	2	5	7
Murcia				7	7	5	7	7
Castile-La Mancha	4			7	4	1	4	4

^a Includes respondents identifying as "only [regional]" or "more [regional] than Spanish". Communities are ranked by their means.

^b In this survey the regional identity scale had only four categories (instead of the usual five categories): "more [regional] than Spanish", "more Spanish than [regional]", "both" or "neither".

Sources: For 1979 and 1982, DATA Surveys; for the other years, post-electoral surveys included in the Data Archive of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS).

Finally, the third independent variable attempts to tap expectations. Since electoral coordination primarily depends on the ability to predict the chances of the main competitors, one can expect a reduction in the number of viable competitors through party elites' coordination only *after* both the general *and* regional founding elections have been held; local and regional party elites will learn who is in a condition to win seats in national elections and will decide

accordingly whether or not to enter the race (Reich 2001: 1260). Therefore, we have created a categorical variable, *Expectations*, coded 0 when a party decided to enter but did not win seats in the district in the previous national election; 1 when a party won at least one seat in the district in the previous national election; and 2 when a party did not previously enter national elections (i.e. when it has no expectations). Additionally, this variable allows us to control for the size of sub-national parties. As Reed (1990) has shown, parties learn about the electoral game through trial and error and collective learning is evolutionary.

Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 5. As can be seen, the mean of the dependent variable, *Entry*, is 0.91. This value deserves particular attention, because it means that 91 percent of the time regional parties do run their own candidates in national elections. That is, the strategic dilemma is seldom resolved through electoral coordination.⁽¹⁹⁾

Table 5. Descriptive statistics

Variables				Standard Deviation	Number of
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum		Observations
Entry	0.91	0	1	0.36	235
Permissiveness	7.52	0	16.81	4.30	235
Preferences	34.14	4	59	14.88	235
Expectations	0.61	0	2	0.69	235

The results: explaining electoral coordination or strategic entry

In order to test our hypotheses on strategic entry at the district level in national elections, we have run a logit regression:

$$Entry = \beta_1 + \beta_2 Permissiveness + \beta_3 Preferences + \beta_4 Expectations$$

The results are displayed in Table 6. The model performs much better than a null-intercept-only model, as is clear from the Wald χ^2 coefficient,

statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Our three independent variables have the expected signs. On the one hand, *Permissiveness* and *Preferences* are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. As was hypothesized, the higher the difference in the effective threshold at the district level between national and sub-national elections, the less the probability of sub-national parties entering the race with their own separate flags in national elections. And the stronger the regional cleavage (i.e., the more distant the preferences of the party elites who must coordinate), the higher will be the probability of sub-national parties fielding their own candidates in national elections. On the other hand, only the category *No expectations* in the variable *Expectations* is statistically significant at the 0.1 level. This means that the probability of entry is lower when parties did not previously enter national elections (or have no expectations regarding viability) than when they did, whether or not they won seats. There are no statistically significant differences in the probability of entry between viable and non-viable parties in the previous election. In short, the nature of the electoral coordination problem that arises when national and sub-national elections are considered together is simultaneously a function of electoral institutions, of political preferences and, to a lesser extent, of expectations.

Table 6. Strategic entry of sub-national parties at the district level in national elections (Logit Regression Estimates)^a

<i>Independent Variables</i>	Model
Permissiveness	-0.11** (0.04)
Preferences	0.06** (0.03)
Expectations: (ref. no seat)	
Seat in the previous national election	1.16 (1.15)
No expectations	-1.04* (0.58)
Constant	1.65** (0.77)
Wald chi² (4)	27.13***
Pseudo R²	0.24
% Predicted correctly	91.91%
Number of Observations	235

^a Estimation is by maximum-likelihood; Robust Standard Errors in parentheses. The levels of statistical significance are ***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1.

The parameters of the logit model cannot be interpreted directly, since the model is nonlinear and the effect of a given variable on the probability of entry depends on the values of the other independent variables. To examine the effect of permissiveness and preferences on entry in national elections at the district level, we have used the (statistically significant) estimated parameters to compute predicted probabilities as permissiveness changes for fixed values of preferences, and vice versa. The fixed values of the variables are their means. Figures 2 and 3 include these probabilities. The clear negative (positive) effect of permissiveness is shown by the increasingly small probabilities as we move across the values of the variable. And the opposite happens when the *preferences* variable changes.

Figure 2: The effect of permissiveness on the probability of entry for sub-national parties in national elections

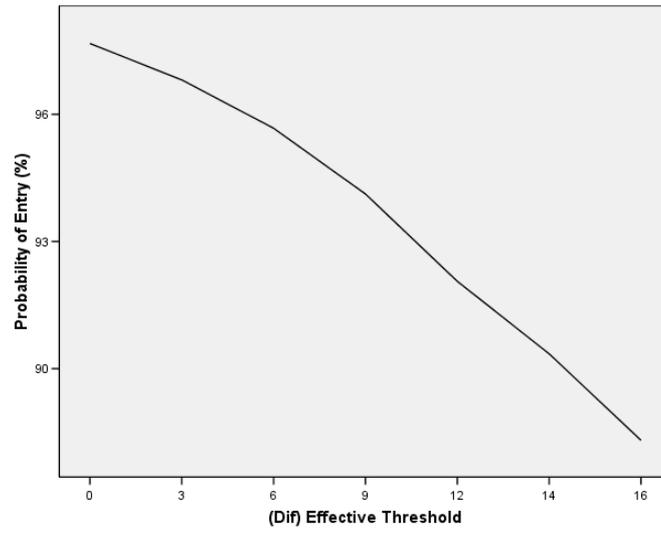
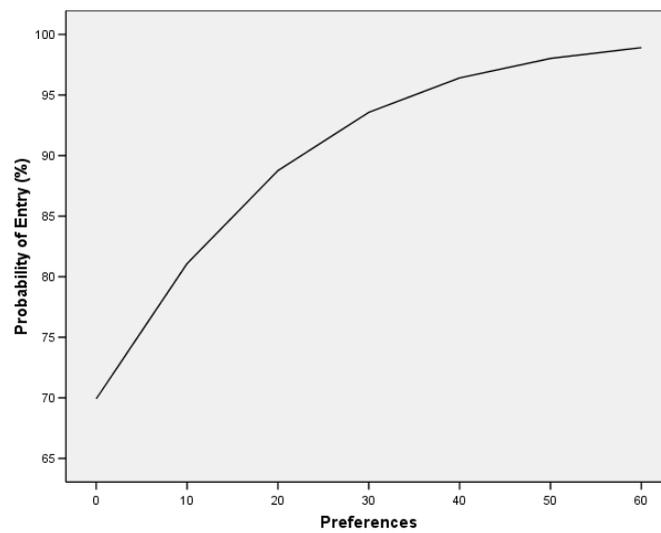


Figure 3: The effect of preferences on the probability of entry for sub-national parties in national elections



Conclusions

In this paper, we have proposed a framework to the electoral coordination literature that in our opinion offers a number of advantages over existing studies. Taking into consideration the interaction effects between national and sub-national arenas in multi-level countries, we have been able to provide some answers to some relevant questions on electoral incentives and dilemmas that party elites have to address when competing in multi-level polities.

This paper has identified a coordination dilemma that the literature had clearly overlooked when attempting to explain the failures of many Duvergerian predictions in multi-level countries. Following standard approaches, some recent studies have considered electoral coordination as a process that (a) takes place during only one single election at a single specific point of time, (b) allows for political parties to behave as short-term instrumentally rational actors only in the electoral campaign at hand, and (c) requires homogeneous incentives regarding the parliament, the electoral system, or the territorial level. But in multi-level countries these assumptions simply do not hold. Given the existence of elections for different parliaments chosen with different electoral rules at different territorial levels, this complexity expands the opportunity structure for party elites, forces them to make decisions for the medium- or even long-term, and enlarges the number of incentives at their disposal. Electoral coordination may take place between distinctive arenas of national and sub-national elections, which nonetheless are not completely detached from another. In the end, voters are one and the same, and these sets of elections are obviously “connected” (Gaines and Crombez 2004) or at least “contaminated” (Shugart and Carey 1992: 241). In multi-level countries, there are interaction effects between national and sub-national electoral arenas that qualify the dilemmas parties face for coordinating their efforts and resources.

Strictly speaking, this strategic dilemma refers to the decision of sub-national parties to compete or not in national elections when they already have seats, or have at least chances of winning a seat, in regional elections but not in national ones. In this paper, we have elaborated a theoretical assessment of the extent to which sub-national electoral arenas contaminate, or influence, the national ones in multi-level countries through a number of mechanisms that might explain electoral coordination among parties. Using data from Spain, we have hopefully demonstrated that the resolution of this dilemma depends fundamentally on the difference in the permissiveness of electoral rules between both arenas and the existence of intense preferences built around the regional cleavage. Moreover, these dimensions interact with the structure of regional party systems, given the incentives provided by federalism to soften Duvergerian gravity. Expectations regarding viability at the time at which entry decisions must be made also matter, but they play a less important than electoral institutions and political preferences. In sum, the explanation based on the number of parties in a multi-level country has to take into account not only institutional and sociological variables, but also processes of coordination or dis-coordination between electoral arenas: the more perfect this coordination, the higher the precision of Duverger's laws.

In a similar vein as when Gaines and Crombez (2004: 316-318) finished their article with a plea for more research on the topic, we also take our contribution as a first step. In order to know how widespread this coordination dilemma is, other studies, that are both country-specific and cross-national, are crucial. Since this dilemma depends on the incongruence between electoral systems, it can be researched within either national and sub-national arenas in multi-level countries (as for instance in Belgium, Italy, Germany, or the United Kingdom in Western Europe, and Brazil or Argentina in Latin America), in national and European elections, or even in more general national and local elections. In this regard, processes of coordination between electoral arenas in multi-level countries are, together

with mixed-member electoral systems, *also* “crucial experiments”; in Shugart’s (2005: 34) words, “case studies in which the effects of specific electoral rules can be isolated from other variables. ... [And] crucial experiments can lead to accumulation of knowledge”.

Notes

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² Cf., among many others, Jones (1993); Lijphart (1994); Ordeshook and Shvetsova (1994); Amorim Neto and Cox (1997); and Clark and Wittrock (2005).

³ The empirical evidence provided by Katz (2001), Herron (2002) or Moser and Scheiner (2004), however, challenges the findings that contamination or interaction effects discourage electoral coordination.

⁴ Cf., for instance, among others, Lutz (1997); Brizinski, Lancaster, and Tuschoff (1999); Hamann (1999); Jeffery and Hough (2001); Pallarès and Keating (2003); Park (2003); and Gaines and Crombez (2004).

⁵ What follows in the next two paragraphs applies to electoral coordination with national parties. When the response is a coalition between various sub-national (either regional or local) parties, these costs and benefits are lower. Although they can easily maintain their individual weight in national politics, their possibilities to win seats in national elections continue to be lower.

⁶ In what follows, we will use sub-national to mean either, or both, regional or local arenas vis-à-vis national ones; more specifically, sub-national parties will generally include nationalist, regional, and/or local parties; and regions will be synonymous with Autonomous Communities. Sub-national parties are defined as parties fielding candidates only in specific regions or districts.

⁷ The index is calculated by adding the absolute difference between the percentage of votes received by each party inside each region and the average vote received by it across the 17 Communities, divided by two; see Hearl and Budge (1996: 169) and Muñoz, Boso, and Pallarès (2005).

⁸ In The Canary Islands there are two legal thresholds: parties have to win at least the 20 percent of the votes at the district level or, alternatively, the 3 percent of the votes at the regional level.

⁹ These seven districts are Asturias, Baleares, Ceuta, Melilla, Murcia, Gran Canaria, and Tenerife.

¹⁰ The only changes in the regional electoral systems have been an increase in the electoral threshold in four Communities from 3 to 5 percent (or 13 districts in our dataset) and in two Communities from 5 to 3 percent (or 8 districts in the dataset). The national electoral system has not been changed.

¹¹ For short descriptions of the features of each electoral system, see Lago (2004), Linz, Montero, and Ruiz (2005: 1078-1080, and 1084), and Linz and Montero (2001: 185).

¹² There were no regional elections before the 1979 national election. The data set can be obtained at www.upf.edu/dcpis/.

¹³ In our data set there are no cases of pre-electoral coalitions in national elections between sub-national parties.

¹⁴ The pairs of elections analyzed are 1982/1982, 1986/1986, 1990/1993, 1994/1996, 2000/2000 and 2003/2004 in Andalusia; 1980/1982, 1984/1986, 1988/1989, 1992/1993, 1995/1996, 1999/2000 and 2003/2004 in Catalonia; 1981/1982, 1985/1986, 1989/1993, 1993/1996, 1997/2000 and 2001/2004 in Galicia; 1980/1982, 1984/1986, 1986/1989, 1990/1993, 1994/1996, 1998/2000 and 2001/2004 in the Basque Country; and 1983/1986, 1987/1989, 1991/1993, 1995/1996, 1999/2000 and 2003/2004 in the remaining Autonomous Communities. The first year corresponds to the sub-national elections.

¹⁵ District-level electoral results can be found at www.elecciones.mir.es (for national elections) and at www.pre.gva.es/argos/archivo/index.html (for regional elections).

¹⁶ The effective threshold is equal to the legal threshold when the legal threshold is higher than the threshold of inclusion and the threshold of exclusion.

¹⁷ A simplistic application of this indicator would be misleading, since two asymmetric distributions would have the same value. And it is obvious that, for measuring the fragmentation of a regional party system, it is not the same if the distribution in percentages was, for example, 5, 10, 20, 30, and 35, respectively, or 35, 30, 20, 10, and 5. In the latter, there are notable preconditions to organize a nationalist or regionalist party, and consequently the number of competitors in the Community could be high. On the contrary, in the former distribution there is no space for a sub-national party: *ceteris paribus*, the number of competitors in the national and regional level would probably be the same.

¹⁸ These data are only available at the regional level. Since there are no reasons to expect significant differences among the provinces or districts that make up each Autonomous Community, the data have been extrapolated to the district level; see Lago (2004) for further details.

¹⁹ Although party persistence is fairly path dependent, our data analysis takes each air of elections as an independent observations. The reason for this decision is that using the lag of the dependent variable would imply a very significant reduction in the number of observations and in the reliability of the statistical inference.

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Chapter 2

Differential voting for Ethno-regionalist Parties in Multilevel electoral Systems

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Introduction

This paper deals with differential voting patterns between General Elections and Regional Elections in six European regions in which a common factor is the existence in their regional party systems of at least one ethno-regionalist party. In our six regions, one or two ethno-regionalist parties won more than 15% of electoral support in their last regional election. The regions we deal with in this paper are Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia in Spain; Scotland and Wales in the UK; and Flanders in Belgium.

These six regions all have devolved regional parliaments, although there are great differences with regard to the length of time they have had decentralization and the degree of self-government and powers granted to each of these regional chambers (very extensive in the Basque Country and very limited in the case of Wales, to cite only the two ends of the scale). As we will see in more detail, the contrast between elections to these regional parliaments and general elections within each region show certain similarities

across cases, although there are also important differences. The first similarity is that, as a general rule, turnout rates tend to be lower in regional election than in general elections (although the gap between election types varies greatly from region to region). The second similarity across cases is that while state-wide parties (particularly big parties) fare better in general elections and do worse in regional elections, the opposite happens with the ethno-regionalist vote which grows in regional elections and declines again in general election.

Taking a first look at these differential voting patterns, the Second Order Elections (SOE) Model would seem an appropriate theory to explain these differences in electoral behaviour between general elections and regional election. Reif and Schmitt (1980) coined this phrase in their study of elections for the European Parliament as a means of describing voting patterns in elections considered by the voters to be less relevant, and the results of which are influenced heavily by issues beyond the arena in which the elections are taking place. Based on these arguments, Reif and Schmitt offered three propositions to characterize regular differences between aggregate behaviour in European elections and previous (and subsequent) general elections (Marsh, 1998: 592; see also Norris, 1997: 112). After adapting them to study the validity of the SOE model when looking at regional election, the three propositions are as follows: 1) Turnout will be lower in regional elections than in general elections; 2) National government parties will suffer losses in regional elections and will fare better in general elections; and 3) Larger parties will do worse and smaller parties will do better in regional elections than in general elections.

However, in this paper we do not assume the SOE model to be valid for regional elections. This is because the SOE model was thought to explain electoral patterns for the European Parliament elections in relation to general elections, but there are some important characteristics of the European Parliament elections, which cannot be transposed to the regional elections.

First, European Parliament elections do not generate an executive power as is the case for regional elections; second, and consequently, the output that European Parliament elections produces is not accountable to the citizens, unlike the output of the regional election; thirdly, citizens awareness of regional arenas might be higher than their awareness of the European one. Therefore, we only take SOE literature and propositions as a departure point to frame our first hypotheses to explain the difference in voting patterns between general elections and regional elections in regions with relevant contending *ethno-regionalist* parties.

The SOE model is an important starting point in framing some hypotheses of voters' behaviour that can be tested empirically with individual level survey data. In this way, the first of the three propositions quoted above is explained by making the assumption that citizens regard regional elections as being less relevant than general elections because they feel that less is at stake in general than in regional elections, but this assumption should be contrasted empirically because some single case studies suggest that this might not be the case for differential voters (Pérez-Nievas and Fraile 2000; Riba 2000). Regarding the second proposition, according to which national government parties fare better in general elections than in regional elections, we can depart from theories proposing a concept of differential voting as an effect of the protest vote against the governing parties, which would be expressed in the regional elections because they would be conceived of as being elections where less is at stake. Finally, concerning the third proposal (larger parties do better while small parties do worst in general elections than regional election) we could depart from the Marsh 1998 explanation according to which there would be an institutional feature (proportionality) giving incentives to vote strategically (not first order preferences) in the general election while giving more room in regional elections to vote sincerely (vote for the first order preference).

In Part 2 of this paper we describe the contrast between general elections and regional elections in our six regions. The purpose of this description is to identify similarities and differences in differential voting patterns across regions. Also in Part 2, we will try to validate the three SOE propositions for aggregate data when looking at differential voting patterns in regions with an ethno-regionalist cleavage (though only with regard to the contrast between general elections and regional elections). We hope this initial validation will help us in framing some of the questions and hypothesis that will allow us, later on, to analyse differential voting patterns with individual data. In Part 3 of the paper we review some of the hypotheses derived from the SOE model when using individual data. These will have to be adapted to the analysis of regional elections (which surely has different implications and leads to different hypotheses to those derived from the analysis of European elections). Also in Part 3, we will look at alternative explanations to the SOE model when looking at individual data, and though we will also consider other existing theories, we will pay particular attention to the two-dimensional model to explain similarities and differences in differential voting patterns across our six regions. The aim of this review is only a first attempt to search for indicators and concrete hypotheses to explain differential voting patterns at the individual level in the six regions.

As we will see in Part 3, the centrality we give in our analysis to the two-dimensional model is because, unlike the SOE model or other theories, this model is only relevant to explain differential voting patterns in regions that have an ethno-regionalist cleavage. Thus, contrasting the explanatory power of this last model against other theories of voting justifies our selection of six regions, which have in common the presence of at least one ethno-regionalist party.

Differential Voting in regions with ethno-regionalist parties

The six regions in which our eight ethno-regionalist parties operate face different forms and degrees of differential voting (DV). Thus, our first task is to describe the phenomenon in the six regions with the aim of identifying similarities and differences between regions and between ethno-regionalist parties. Although in all six regions there are at least four electoral arenas, European, national, regional, and local, we will only focus on the contrast between the national and regional arena.

Differential voting in Spanish regions with ethno-regionalist parties: Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia

Owing to a longer experience with decentralization, the contrast between general elections and regional elections has perhaps been better studied in the Spanish regions and, above all, in Catalonia, where differential voting has been more marked. The most striking feature of Catalan electoral behaviour is the high inter-block volatility from general elections to regional elections (and vice versa) between ethno-regionalist vote and the vote for state-wide parties (see Table A1 in the Appendix). This high volatility between different types of elections has been at the centre of most analyses of Catalan electoral behaviour (Montero and Font, 1991; Padró-Solanet and Colomer, 1992; Font and Pallarés, 1994; Riba, 2000; Pérez-Nievas and Fraile, 2000). Since the first Catalan regional election in 1980, this high inter-block volatility has determined which party emerged as the winner in every single election: the PSC, the Catalan branch of the PSOE, has won a majority of votes in every general election; whereas CiU has won a majority of votes in every regional election; the only exception in this respect was the 1999 regional election when the PSC-PSOE won, by a small margin, more votes than CiU.

Looking at both aggregate and individual level voting it was soon realised this high inter-block volatility had its roots in a differential voting pattern that in fact had two components. In Spain as a whole, electoral turnouts for regional elections are usually lower than for general elections, but this gap is wider, 14% on average, in Catalonia than in any other Autonomous Community (Riba, 2000: 61). This low electoral turnout in regional elections did not affect all parties to the same extent and it was especially detrimental to state-wide parties and, most of all, to the PSC-PSOE. Thus the latter's electoral victory in all general elections is partly due to the behaviour of a section of the Catalan electorate that opts for abstention in regional elections and mobilises (particularly to vote for the PSOE) in general elections. This is known as differential turnout and is the first component of differential voting in Catalonia.

Together with differential turnout, early studies of Catalan elections showed a steady transfer of votes from state-wide parties to Catalan ethno-regionalist parties when moving from general elections to regional elections. In the 1980s and early 1990s this transfer was particularly pronounced from the PSOE-PSC, forming the central government for the period 1982-1996, to CiU, forming the regional government for the same period; although there were also lesser transfers from the PSOE to the ERC, and from the PP again to CiU (Montero and Font, 1991; Font and Pallarés, 1994). Since the late 1990s, with the growth of the PP (and its occupation of central government in the period 1996-2004) as well as the electoral upsurge of the second ethno-regionalist party, ERC, the Catalan party system became more fragmented and transfers began to show a more multilateral pattern. Nonetheless, on the whole, they continue to be detrimental to state-wide parties (and beneficial to ethno-regionalist parties) in regional elections; and vice versa in general elections.

In sum, Catalan electoral behaviour in regional elections at the aggregate level confirms many of the predictions of the SOE model, though

not others. First, turnout rates are indeed lower. Second, national government parties, PP and PSOE, suffer losses in regional elections and recover in general elections. However, losses are greater (and tend to concentrate) in the PSOE, whether this party is in government or in opposition in Madrid (It was in the opposition from 1996 to 2004). Third, some large parties do worse and some small parties do better in regional elections; however, this only holds true if we define large in terms of a national framework, not a regional one. If we adopt a regional perspective we observe, first of all, that the two parties that benefit most from regional elections, CiU and ERC, came out as the second and third largest parties within Catalonia in the last 2004 general election. And second, those parties that are small, such as IC or CDS (see Table A1), whether smallness is defined in regional or in national terms, do not change their electoral support very significantly depending on the election

The picture offered by the contrast between general elections and regional elections in the Basque Country is quite different from that of Catalonia. To begin with, turnout differences between different type of elections are not so pronounced in the Basque Country: in the period from 1982 to 1993, there was only a 3-4% turnout difference between general elections and regional elections (Riva, 2000: 61; see also Table A.2 and Table A.3 in the Appendix). As politics became more polarised in the Basque Country from the second half of the 1990s onwards, turnout grew in regional elections, reaching the region's highest ever for any type of elections in the 2001 regional election. Nonetheless, regional election turnout declined again in the last 2005 Basque elections (68%), showing a 7 point difference compared with the previous 2004 general election turnout (75%) in the region (Pérez-Nievas, 2006a: 37-38; see also Table A.2 and Table A.3 in the Appendix).

In the second place, the Basque Country presents a less marked inter-block volatility (that concerning ethno-regionalist vote versus state-wide vote) between the two types of elections, although some takes place. On the whole, over the last decade, there has been a 10 points difference in the votes gathered by each block depending on the type of elections, with state-wide parties winning a majority of votes in the last three general elections (between 52% and 58% of the valid vote), and nationalist parties winning the majority of votes in the last four regional elections (between 53% and 56% approximately: Pérez-Nievas, 2006: 37-38; see also Table A.2 and Table A.3 in the Appendix). Thus, some inter-block volatility does also exist in the Basque Country. However, the causes of this systematic change are less clear than in Catalonia. Basque differential voting has been less studied than its Catalan counterpart. This might be due to the fact that volatility has had less visible political effects since the main ethno-regionalist party, the PNV, has won every single election since 1977, whether regional or national.

Thus, turnout differences are less marked between type of elections, and when turnout has declined in Basque regional elections there is less strong evidence that this was detrimental to state-wide vote. On the other hand, there is clearer evidence of vote transfers from the PNV in regional elections to both the PSOE and the PP in general elections and back (Llera, 1999; Pallarés, 2002), although these probably take place to a lesser degree than in Catalonia. One last difference between the two regions deserves mentioning. In Catalonia the PSOE has always had the highest vote within the state-wide block, whether the party was in government or in opposition in Madrid. In the Basque Country, by contrast, PSOE and PP have swapped places, roughly coinciding with their status as governmental parties in Spain as whole. Nonetheless, the relative gains and losses of either state-wide party in the Basque Country come not only from transfers backwards and forwards from the PNV but also (and perhaps mainly) from transfers between the two state-wide parties themselves (Pérez-Nievas, 2006b: 66). In any case, Basque

differential voting has been less systematically analysed than its Catalan counterpart and one of the aims of this paper would be to contribute to a better knowledge and understanding of it.

In sum, at the aggregate level Basque electoral behaviour fits the SOE model even less well than does the Catalan case. On average, turnout rates are slightly lower in regional elections than in general elections, but the highest rate for any election in the Basque Country was in a regional election. Second, as in the Catalan case, regional elections are more clearly detrimental to the PSOE than to the PP, no matter which of the two occupies national government. There were important variations in the PP's electoral support from the 1990's onwards. However, these do not follow a differential voting pattern, but rather the more frequent one of electoral upsurge and decline across election types. Also, as in the Catalan case, only if we define smallness in national terms, can we argue that some small parties benefit from regional elections. Parties that are small, defined in either national or regional terms, do not change their electoral support across elections very significantly.

Looking at aggregate data, a differential voting pattern is also obvious in Galicia, the third of the Spanish regions with an ethno-regionalist cleavage, although this case has been even less studied at the individual level than that of the Basque Country. To begin with, turnout is on average 10% higher in general elections than in regional elections (Rivera et al. 1998: 296; Gómez-Reino 2006: 177; see also Table A.4 in the appendix). Second, over the last decade the only ethno-regionalist party in the Galician party system, the BNG, has obtained, on average, an 8-9% better result in regional elections than in general elections (a 7.5% difference in the last 2005 regional election in relation to the prior 2004 general election: see Table A.4 in the Appendix). The BNG's better result in regional elections is, of course, detrimental to the vote of state-wide parties in this type of elections, but this

is almost exclusively an impact on the regional branch of the PSOE. The PP has been the main party of the Galician Party System since 1982, and although the party has suffered a slow electoral decline in the last three elections, this decline does not show a territorial pattern and has been steady across election types. Electoral support for the Galician PSOE, on the other hand, has been much more irregular and dependent on the territorial level of election. All through the period from 1997 to 2004, the PSOE and BNG swapped places as second and third parties of the region depending on the type of election. In the last 2005 election for the Galician Parliament, the Galician PSOE was able to consolidate its position as the second party in a regional election, but it still obtained a 4 points worse result than in the 2004 general election which preceded it. Thus, Galician differential voting affects mainly the BNG and the PSOE, and not the PP, and this is so whether the PP or the PSOE occupies central government in Madrid. In sum, by looking simply at aggregate data, we dare to hypothesize that the changing results of the BNG and PSOE depending on the type of election might be due to the combined effect of a 1) a differential turnout that is detrimental to the PSOE and favourable to the BNG in regional elections; and 2) to transfers of votes back and forth from the PSOE to the BNG when moving from one election type to the other. It is nonetheless important to stress that the exchanged electoral fortunes of the PSOE and the BNG have not been more marked when the PSOE occupied central government, as the SOE model would predict, but rather the opposite, when the PSOE was the main opposition party in Madrid.

Thus, Galician differential voting confirms some of the predictions of the SOE model but not others. First, it is true that turnout rates are considerably lower in regional elections. However, losses for national parties in this type of elections, more markedly than in the previous two cases, tend to concentrate in the PSOE. In fact, losses for the socialists were greatest when this party was the main opposition party in Madrid. Regional elections

benefit the BNG; but, if we adopt a regional perspective, it is doubtful again whether we can define this party as small. The Galician party system is less fragmented than in the other two regions so we cannot check the effects of regional elections in other small parties.

It is worth saying that an explanation for the lower turnout levels in regional elections than in general elections for Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia, has been suggested which points to an institutional feature. These three Autonomous Communities stage their elections independently of the other Autonomous Communities, which hold regional elections simultaneously with local elections, and can therefore obtain higher levels of mobilization than Catalan, Basque and Galician regional electorates (Pallarés and Keating 2003). Although this explanation could account for the relatively lower levels of abstention in regional elections of the remaining Spanish Autonomous Communities, one would still have to explain why the general levels of turnout in regional elections are lower than in general elections for almost all the Autonomous Communities, and the SOE model may have something to say about this.

Differential voting in British regions with ethno-regionalist parties: Scotland and Wales

The first devolved assemblies of Scotland and Wales were elected in 1999, only eight years ago. Thus, decentralization is a much more recent phenomenon in Britain than it is in Spain. At the aggregate level there are, nonetheless, certain similarities in differential voting between Spanish and British regions. However, the shorter experience with decentralization and the more limited form of self-government (particularly in the case of the Welsh Assembly) should also be kept in mind when contrasting the SOE model against other theories of electoral behaviour in the British Regions.

In Wales, the two regional elections which have been held so far show a marked contrast between turnout rates in different types of election. In the 1999 regional election, turnout rate was 46%, nearly 30 points below the previous general 1997 election (74%); whereas the 2003 regional election rate, at only 38,3%, lagged far behind the 2001 general election rate, at only 61,4% (McAllister, 2004; Orriols and Andrews, 2005: 9-10). Thus, turnout differences between different types of elections are greater in Wales than in any other of the five regions examined here. Second, when moving from general elections to regional elections, electoral results have rewarded the only ethno-regionalist party of the region, Plaid Cymru (PC) and punished Labour (See Table A5 and Table A6 in the Appendix). However, the extent of these gaps was much greater in the first 1999 regional election than in the second 2003 regional election. Whereas in the 1999 regional election, PC obtained almost 20 points advantage compared to the 1997 general election, the difference was reduced to only 6% of the total vote in the 2003 regional election (Orriols and Andrews, 2005: 3)¹. In the case of Labour, the punishment was reduced from an 18 points difference in the 1999 regional election to only 10% in the 2003 regional election (see Table A5 and Table A6 in the Appendix) . Thus the 2003 Welsh elections have been regarded as a return to typical “first order” or Westminster Type elections (McAllister, 2004: 81). One should also note that Conservative electoral support in Wales has varied to a much lesser extent across elections than that of Labour (only around 2-3% of the total vote) while that of the Liberal-Democrats has not varied at all. Finally, as the SOE model would predict, in the 2003 regional election small parties such as the Welsh Greens and UK Independence Party increased their electoral support, although they did not gain representation.

There are some strong resemblances between the Welsh and the Scottish case, although there are also differences. In Scotland, turnout rates have been lower in regional elections than in general elections, although the gap is narrower than in Wales. Moving from general elections to regional

elections, electoral results have rewarded the SNP and punished Labour. Nonetheless Labour's punishment is on average 10%, much greater than the SNP reward, which is 4% on average; while Conservative and Liberal-Democrats support remains stable across elections (Orriols and Andrews, 2005: 5; see Table A7 and Table A8 in the Appendix). One should also note that in the Scottish case (much more so than in Wales), and particularly in the last 2003 regional election, several small parties such as the Scottish Greens and the Scottish Socialist Party increased their electoral support and gained parliamentary representation, thus confirming the SOE model predictions for aggregate data (see the growth of electoral support to Other parties in Table A7 and Table A8 in the Appendix).

Overall, the SOE model is better at predicting electoral behaviour in the British regions than in the Spanish ones. First of all, gaps in turnout rates are higher between election types, above all in Wales. Second, it is the national government party, Labour, which suffers the greatest loss of votes in regional elections. And third, small parties (both ethno-regionalist and others which are indeed small however we define it) fare better in regional elections than in general elections.

However, the experience in Spanish regions shows us that concentration of losses on Labour might be due to some other cause than its status as a governmental party in London. In Spain, up to the mid-1990s, when the decentralization process had only been experienced under PSOE's governments, the SOE model seemed better fit to explain differential voting parties in its different regions which have ethno-regionalist parties. However, when the conservative PP came to power, differential voting patterns (that is, losses in regional elections) continued to concentrate on the PSOE, something which is not properly explained by the SOE model. We hypothesize that it is also the case in the British regions that the concentration of losses on Labour is due to reasons other than its status as governmental

party. In this sense, we would expect losses to carry on concentrating on Labour, even after a governmental change in London. As we will explain later, individual data is a better strategy to validate this hypothesis.

Differential voting in Flanders

Although, as in British regions, the opening of a subnational arena is quite recent in Flanders (1995), this represents a quite different case from either Spanish or British regions. The combination of two institutional features marks these differences, although they have not remained constant since the Flemish regional assembly was first directly elected in 1995. To begin with, the 1995 and 1999 regional elections were concurrent with general elections. The 2004 regional election was not, although this last election was still concurrent with European Elections. Second, voting is compulsory in Belgium, so turnout rates are high and they have remained equally high even when the 2004 regional election did not coincide with elections for the national assembly.

Some general conclusions on the comparison between aggregate data in the six regions

First: generally speaking, turnout rates are higher in regional elections than in general elections, but there is great deal of variation between regions.

Second: losses in regional elections concentrate on national governing parties but much more on some national governing parties than others. In Spain, losses in general elections are greater for the PSOE, regardless of which party is in national government. We dare to hypothesize the same pattern will take place after a governmental change in London: differential voting patterns will carry on affecting Labour more than other parties. Therefore, changes might

be better explained by the position of these parties in the nationalist dimension than by a SOE hypothesis.

Third: Ethno-regionalist parties fare better in regional elections; but it is open to question whether we should regard these parties as small. On the other hand, there is great variation between regions with regard to the extent to which other small parties benefit in regional elections.

Differential Voting in regions with ethno-regionalist parties at the individual level

As we stated above, from SOE theory we should be able to derive hypotheses to predict differential voting patterns not only at the aggregate level but also with individual data. However, this is a more complex exercise. Testing the SOE model at the individual level makes us look into the reasons why voters might regard regional elections as less important and what the precise consequences of this perception in their voting decision-making are.

Most SOE literature argues that the main reason why European elections are regarded as less important is because they do not contribute to form governments (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Reif, 1985; Marsh, 1998). By contrast, regional elections in our six cases are the first step to the formation of regional governments. This reasoning has been used to criticize the use of SOE theory to explain differential voting in Spanish regional elections (see for instance Sanz, 2005). Nonetheless, some or most voters might believe (rightly or wrongly) that the reach or scope of the regional government is more limited than that of national government and, therefore, still perceive that there is less at stake in regional elections than in general elections. Although, at first hand, we assume that there might be a great variation with regard to the extent of this perception between our regions' electorates (depending not only on the political power granted to the regional tier but

also on the time experience with decentralisation) we also think this view might be shared by, at least, some voters in all our six regions.

Assuming that such a perception might exist in the six regions, SOE literature would predict a differential voting effect that would be empirically contrastable at the individual level with two type of changes: first of all, some electors who voted in general elections will not vote in regional election. If the view that less is at stake in regional elections is shared by the main actors in the political process – the voters, the parties, and the mass media – this would generally serve to reduce the expected benefits and increase the expected costs of voting for the individual elector and we would expect fewer people to turn out (Marsh, 1998: 593). Nevertheless, there are four out of our six regions where it is unclear whether this holds. The process of decentralization in Spain since the regaining of democracy has produced a territorial fragmentation of party systems and political representation and also has affected the institutional structures of the parties: given the weakness of mass parties in Spain, control of institutional resources is critical, providing the financial bases for hiring staff and advisors as well as public goods for distribution to build up client networks (Pallarés and Keating 2003:243). Alongside this, and for completely different reasons, Belgium has been said to have no state-wide parties but rather regional parties developing multilevel electoral programs (de Winter 2006). Because of this, at least in both the three Spanish Autonomous Communities and in Flanders, Marsh's thesis may not serve as an explanation of differential voting.

Next we will examine this hypothesis taking an interest in regional politics, in whole country politics and in politics in general, as proxies of “what is at stake” in regional elections and general election. Following Riba (2000) we will try to identify the profile of an electorate that fits with the hypothesis and compare it with the profile of those who do not fit it.

The second change in electoral behaviour predicted by the SOE model is one of party choice. Here we would face two possible mechanisms of

change (Marsh, 1998: 593-594). First is the context in which voters opt for a party in a national election because they perceive there is more at stake (the formation of a national government): they may be said to cast an insincere vote. Such voters may cast a sincere vote for the party they like best in a regional election and cast a vote strategically in a general election. However, the circumstances of a regional election might also see a voter moving in the opposite direction, from a sincere choice (in the previous general election) to an insincere one in regional elections. Thus, the voter would change their vote in order to send a message to his/her party expressing (temporary) dissatisfaction with it. This second mechanism could be better conceptualised as instrumental voting. Indeed, an instrumental logic might also be behind the decision not to vote in SOE (Marsh, 1997: 594), that is in regional elections. Governing parties would be particularly vulnerable to such decisions and they would be so around mid-term, when government popularity tends to reach its lowest (Reif and Schmitt, 1980). Hence, the timing of regional elections would also be an important contextual factor in the performance of governing parties.

In line with the argument of the expressive vote producing differential voting, this could be interpreted as a protest vote (Riba 2000) against the governing party in the central government. Dissatisfied electors who voted in general elections for the governing party can change their vote in regional elections to express a protest with low costs for the party – assuming that the voter believes that what is at stake in regional elections is lower than what is at stake in general elections.

The strategic/instrumental can be contrasted empirically using spatial modelling of voters' closeness to the different parties (Fiorina 1992). The problem in our six regions is that it has been assumed and largely proved empirically that there is not a single dimension but two: ideology and

nationalism (Riba 2000 even argues for a third dimension in Catalonia). In this situation it could happen that in one type of elections a party might be the first option for a voter following the ideological dimension but, in another type of election, another party might be the first option following the nationalist dimension. If the relative weight that voters give to each of these dimensions changes depending on the type of election the result will be a change in party vote. Indeed, some have claimed that each dimension should be weighted (for example Padró-Solanet and Colomer, 1992) strongly depending on the type of election. Thus, in general elections voters will vote mainly according to the ideological dimension, while they will weight the nationalist dimension more strongly when voting in the regional elections.. This two-dimensional voting as a general model and as an alternative to the SOE model to explain differential voting has also been used with success to explain differential voting in some of the six regions (Orriols and Richards 2005; Pérez-Nievas and Bonet 2006). The empirical contrast of the two-dimensional voting model is more complex than the SOE model because we need to work simultaneously with two factors to evaluate party closeness, one for each dimension.

First results of individual level data analysis

Tables A9 and A10 show the transfers from general elections to regional elections between parties in the Basque Country and Catalonia, respectively. The differential abstention – voted for the party in general elections and did not vote in regional election – affects all the parties in the Basque Country, although the big losers are the post-communist IU-EB (16.8%) and the PSE (12.9%), but party order reverses if we consider not the relative but the absolute numbers. In Catalonia all the parties also suffer from differential abstention although in this case, as might also be expected from the aggregate data, the magnitude is higher than it is in the Basque Country: PP has 35.4%

of differential abstention, PSC has 28.6% and ICV 26.7%. But in absolute terms differential abstention affects the PSC most.

As was suggested earlier the dual vote is also less pronounced in the Basque Country than in Catalonia. 7.1% of the PP voters in general election vote for the PSE in regional election, while 6.1% of the PSE voters in general elections change their vote to the PNV in the regional election. In Catalonia there are three parties suffering mostly the effects of dual voting: the PP (18.8% change their vote in regional elections to CiU), the PSC (10.8% vote in regional elections also for CiU) and the ERC (8.7% vote for ICV). As in the case of the differential abstention the biggest transfer of votes in absolute terms is the one that involves, both in Catalonia and in the Basque Country, the PSOE (PSE and PSC, respectively). This is also the dual vote that has the strongest effects on the electoral results.

These data confirm the first and second, and maybe also the third, propositions of the SOE model: there is a lower level of turnout in regional elections compared to general elections and large or state wide parties do worst in regional elections while regional parties do better. But we cannot say anything about the governing parties in the light of the second hypothesis because the governing party in Spain, the PSOE, obtains better results in general elections, but this is also the case for the remaining two state wide parties.

In the near future we will further discuss the implications for the SOE model of using the party systems of the general election to define what are large and small parties. We also will explore the adequacy of the third SOE model proposition with individual level data to see whether there is some kind of protest vote behind the differential voting phenomena. This will require the use of bivariate and multivariate analysis, which we will also use to contrast empirically the strategic/sincere and instrumental vote hypothesis, and the two-dimensional voting and accidental hypothesis.

First concluding notes

The SOE framework has some flaws when it is applied to the regional elections where the political arena includes an ethno-regionalist cleavage. First of all, from a theoretical point of view, it is unclear whether the general elections or the regional elections should be the reference framework from which to characterize which are big parties and which are small parties. The different electoral results are linked to different party systems between whole country political arenas and regional ones, thus what is a big party in the context of the whole country political arena can be a small party in the regional political arena.

Notes

¹ In the case of Scotland and Wales, electoral results for RE are the average gained by each party from both the constituency and the regional lists.

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Electoral Data Appendix

Table A.1. Electoral results in Catalonia, 1977-99 (% of the valid vote)

Year	CiU	ERC	Tot. nationalist	PSC- PSOE	PSUC/ IC	AP/ PP	UCD/ CDS	PSA	C- PdC	Tot.state- wide
1977g	16.9	4.6	21.5	28.4	18.2	3.5	16.8	-		66.9
1979g	16.2	4.1	20.3	29.3	17.1	3.6	9.1	-		59.1
1980r	27.9	8.9	36.8	22.5	18.8	2.4	0.6	-		47
1982g	22.5	4.0	26.5	45.8	4.6	14.6	2.0	2.7		67.5
1984r	46.8	4.4	50.4	33.1	5.6	7.7	--	0.5		46.2
1986g	32.0	2.7	34.7	41.0	3.9	11.4	4.1	-		60.2
1988r	45.7	4.1	50.1	29.8	7.8	5.3	3.8	-		46.7
1989g	32.7	2.7	35.4	35.6	7.3	10.6	4.3	-		57.7
1992r	46.2	8.0	54.2	27.6	6.5	6.0	0.9	-		41
1993g	31.8	5.1	36.9	34.9	7.5	17.0	0.8	-		60.2
1995r	41.0	9.5	50.5	24.8	9.7	13.1	-	-		47.6
1996g	29.6	4.2	33.8	39.4	7.8	18	-	-		65.2
1999r*	37.7	8.7	46.4	37.8	2.5/1.4(IU)	9.5	-	-		51.3
2003r	30.9	16.4	47.3	31.1	7.3	11.9				50.3
2004g	20.8	15.9	36.7	39.5	5.8	15.5				60.8
2006r	31.5	14.0	45.5	26.8	9.5	10.6		3.0		49.9

Source: own elaboration from Table 5.1 in Marcet and Argelaguet (1998) and from Generalitat de Catalunya. Departament de Governació. (<http://www.gencat.net/governacio-ap/eleccions/index.htm>) * In the 1999 elections the PSC-PSOE formed an electoral coalition with IC except in the electoral district of Barcelona. On the other hand IC had broken off its relationship with IU, which stood alone in that election. The results given for the PSC-PSOE are actually the sum of the vote obtained by the PSC in Barcelona and the vote obtained by the coalition with IC in the remaining districts. The results given for the IC are the vote obtained by this political force in Barcelona; the second percentage is the vote obtained by the former partner, IU.

Table A 2. Results of general elections in the Basque Country, 1989-2004. Percentages of the valid vote

	1989	1993	1996	2000	2004
PNV	22.9	24.4	25.4	31.3	34.2
EA	11.2	10	8.4	7.8	6.6
EE	8.9	--	--	--	--
HB-EH-Batasuna	17	14.8	12.5	-- ¹	-- ¹
Aralar	--	--	--	--	3,2
Total nationalist.*	60	49.2	46.3	39.1	44
PSOE-EE	21.3	24.9	24	24	27.6
PP	9.4	14.9	18.6	29.2	19.2
CDS	3.5	0.8	--	--	--
IU	3	6.4	9.4	5.6	8.4
Total sate-wide*	37.2	47	52	58.8	55.2
Voter turnout	66.9	69.7	71.5	64.8	75

* In this the total percentage of votes received by both the nationalist and the state-wide parties is a sum of the percentages received by the parties that are shown in the table. Therefore the sum does not add up to 100 per cent since there were other smaller nationalist and state-wide parties competing in all elections.

¹EH called for abstention, and therefore did not participate in the 2000 elections; the party's new brand, Batasuna, was outlawed in 2002 and therefore could not participate in the 2004 elections.

Source: *Departamento de Interior del Gobierno Vasco* in <http://www.euskadi.net>

**Table A 3. Results of regional elections in the Basque Country, 1990–2005.
Percentages of the valid vote (number of seats in the Basque Parliament)**

	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005
PNV	28.5	29.8	28	42.7 ¹	38.7 ¹
EA	11.4	10.3	8.7	-- ¹	-- ¹
EE	7.8	--	--	--	--
HB-EH-Batasuna/PCTV	18.3	16.3	17.9	10.1	12.5 ²
Aralar	--	--	--	--	2.3
Total nationalist	66	56.4	54.6	52.8	53.5
PSOE-EE	19.9	17.1	17.6	17.9	22.7
PP	8.2	14.4	20.1	23.1 ³	17.4
IU	1.4	9.2	5.7	5.6	5.4
UA	1.4	2.7	1.3	-- ³	0.4
Total sate-wide	31.9	43.4	44.7	46.6	45.9
Voter turnout	61	59.7	70	79	68

¹In the 2001 and 2005 elections PNV and EA formed an electoral coalition.

²Batasuna was outlawed in 2002 and could not participate in the 2005 elections; one week before the election Batasuna's leadership endorsed the "legal" candidacy of the PCTV and called on its electorate to vote for this list.

³In the 2001 elections PP and UA formed an electoral coalition.

Source: *Departamento de Interior del Gobierno Vasco* in <http://www.euskadi.net>

Table A4. Electoral Results in Galicia: General and Autonomous Elections (1993-2005)

	G 1993	R1993	G1996	R1997	G2000	R2001	G2004	R2005
PP	47.1	52.2	48.3	51.5	53.8	51.6	47,1	45,2
PSOE	36.0	23.5	33.5	19.4	23.4	21.8	37,1	33,1
IU	4.7	3.1	3.6	0.9	1.3	-	1,7	
BNG	8.0	18.7	12.8	25.5	19.1	22.6	11,3	18,8
Other	4.5	2.5	1.8	2.7	-	-	-	-

Source: Gómez-Reino (2006)

Table A5. UK General Election Results in Wales (%) 1992-2001.

Year	Conservative Vote	Labour Vote	Lib Dem Vote	Plaid Cymru Vote
1992	28.6	49.5	12.4	8.8
1997	19.6	54.7	12.4	9.9
2001	21.0	48.6	13.8	14.3

Source: Van Morgan (2006: 259)

Table A6. Welsh Assembly Election Results (%), 1999 & 2003

	Constituencies		Regional lists		Total Seats
	Vote	Seats	Vote	Seats	
1999					
Conservative	15.8	1	16.5	8	9
Labour	37.6	27	35.5	1	28
Liberal Democrat	13.5	3	12.5	3	6
Plaid Cymru	28.4	9	30.6	8	17
Others	4.8	0	5.0	0	0
2003					
Conservative	19.9	1	19.2	10	11
Labour	40.0	30	36.6	0	30
Liberal Democrat	14.1	3	12.7	3	6
Plaid Cymru	21.2	5	19.7	7	12
Others	4.8	1	11.8	0	1

Source: Van Morgan (2006: 260)

Table A7. UK General Election Results in Scotland 1992-2001.

Year	Conservative Votes	Labour Votes	Lib Dem Votes	SNP Votes
1992	25.7	39	13.1	21.5
1997	17.5	45.6	13	22.1
2001	15.58	43.26	16.37	20.06

Source: Lynch (2006: 232)

Table A8. Result of the Scottish Elections 1999 and 2003

Party	Constituencies				Regional lists				Total seats	
	% Vote		Seats		% Vote		Seats		Total seats	
	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999
Cons.	16.6	15.5	3	0	15.5	15.4	15	18	18	18
Labour	34.6	38.8	46	53	29.3	33.6	4	3	50	56
LibDem	15.3	14.2	13	12	11.8	12.4	4	5	17	17
SNP	23.7	28.7	9	7	20.9	27.3	18	28	27	35
Others	9.8	2.7	2	1	22.3	11.3	15	2	17	3

Source: Lynch (2006: 234)

Table A9. Survey data results for Basque Country: general election 2004 – regional election 2005

			regional election 2005					Total	
			PNV/ EA	PSE/ EE	PP	PCTV/ EHAK	IU (EB)	Did not vote	
general election 2004	PNV/EA	N	518	5	2	30	8	45	608
		general election 2004 (row)	85.2%	.8%	.3%	4.9%	1.3%	<u>7.4%</u>	100.0%
		regional election 2005 (col)	92.5%	1.5%	2.6%	38.0%	6.7%	11.4%	39.0%
	PSE/EE	N	24	310	3	2	4	51	394

	general election 2004 (row)	6.1%	78.7%	.8%	.5%	1.0%	<u>12.9%</u>	100.0%
	regional election 2005 (col)	4.3%	93.9%	3.9%	2.5%	3.4%	12.9%	25.3%
PP	N	0	6	70	0	0	9	85
	general election 2004 (row)	.0%	7.1%	82.4%	.0%	.0%	<u>10.6%</u>	100.0%
	regional election 2005 (col)	.0%	1.8%	92.1%	.0%	.0%	2.3%	5.5%
IU(EB)	N	2	2	0	3	97	21	125
	general election 2004 (row)	1.6%	1.6%	.0%	2.4%	77.6%	<u>16.8%</u>	100.0%
	regional election 2005 (col)	.4%	.6%	.0%	3.8%	81.5%	5.3%	8.0%
Did not vote	N	16	7	1	44	10	268	346
	general election 2004 (row)	4.6%	2.0%	.3%	12.7%	2.9%	77.5%	100.0%
	regional election 2005 (col)	2.9%	2.1%	1.3%	55.7%	8.4%	68.0%	22.2%
Total	N	560	330	76	79	119	394	
	general election 2004 (row)	35.9%	21.2%	4.9%	5.1%	7.6%	25.3%	1558
	regional election 2005 (col)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Underscored the differential abstention; bold the most important dual vote situations.

Source: CIS 2601, Post-electoral survey for Basque Country after regional election 2005

**Table A10. Survey data results for Catalonia: general election 2004 –
Regional election 2005**

		regional election 2006						Total	
		CiU	PSC	ERC	PP	ICV	abst		
general election 2004	CiU	N	241	2	16	3	1	37	300
		general election 2004 (row)	80.3%	.7%	5.3%	1.0%	.3%	<u>12.3%</u>	100.0%
		regional election 2006 (col)	70.9%	.8%	9.9%	6.0%	.9%	7.0%	20.6%
	PSC	N	58	247	34	2	43	154	538
		general election 2004 (row)	10.8%	45.9%	6.3%	.4%	8.0%	<u>28.6%</u>	100.0%
		regional election 2006 (col)	17.1%	94.3%	21.0%	4.0%	38.1%	28.9%	36.9%
	ERC	N	6	4	110	0	13	17	150
		general election 2004 (row)	4.0%	2.7%	73.3%	.0%	8.7%	<u>11.3%</u>	100.0%
		regional election 2006 (col)	1.8%	1.5%	67.9%	.0%	11.5%	3.2%	10.3%
	PP	N	18	1	0	43	0	34	96
		general election 2004 (row)	18.8%	1.0%	.0%	44.8%	.0%	<u>35.4%</u>	100.0%
		regional election 2006 (col)	5.3%	.4%	.0%	86.0%	.0%	6.4%	6.6%
ICV	N	0	3	1	1	50	20	75	
	general election 2004 (row)	.0%	4.0%	1.3%	1.3%	66.7%	<u>26.7%</u>	100.0%	
	regional election 2006 (col)	.0%	1.1%	.6%	2.0%	44.2%	3.8%	5.1%	

abst	N	17	5	1	1	6	270	300
	general election 2004 (row)	5.7%	1.7%	.3%	.3%	2.0%	90.0%	100.0%
	regional election 2006 (col)	5.0%	1.9%	.6%	2.0%	5.3%	50.8%	20.6%
Total	N	340	262	162	50	113	532	
	general election 2004 (row)	23.3%	18.0%	11.1%	3.4%	7.7%	36.5%	1459
	regional election 2006 (col)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Underscored the differential abstention; bold the most important dual vote situations.

Source: CIS 2660, Post-electoral survey for Catalonia after regional election 2006

Chapter 3

Some notes on an emerging Italian electoral cycle

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For many years the Italian pattern of voting behaviour was a good example of the well know dictum about a frozen party systems. This was true in respect of voters' mobility across elections of the same order and it was also in part true when considering voters' behaviour across different order elections (Parisi e Corbetta, 1984; Feltrin, 1991). From 1994 onwards a lot of things have been changing.

Among these changes one should note that an electoral cycle seems to be emerging across different order elections, as table 1 shows.

Table 1 Differences between Centre-left and Centre-right parties in the European, regional and parliamentary elections

	Eu1999	Reg2000	Parl2001	Eu2004	Reg2005	Parl2006
Difference Csx-Cdx	-2.9	-7.2	-9.1	0.5	7.9	0.1

The notion of the existence of an electoral cycle was introduced by Reif and Schmitt (1980) to explain European election outcomes. They suggest that different levels of election are perceived by electors as having different levels of importance. The consequence is that there is less participation in second-order elections and poor performance by governing parties. In the subsequent parliamentary election some recovery could be expected.

Table 1 indicates that in 1999 and 2000 the centre-left parties in government at the time lost support. However, they did not recover in the 2001 parliamentary election, as we would expect. The last three elections seem to fit an electoral cycle better. The centre-right parties in government at the time performed poorly in the second-order elections, but they later recovered, although they lost the game in the 2006 parliamentary elections. This note will deal with two conditions that made the emergence of the new electoral cycle possible.

The first has to do with a significant change in the electoral links between voters and governments. Before the 1992 election Italy was home to several governments. Cabinets were born and died for many reasons other than electoral ones. These were not ineffective, but the reasons for a cabinet change were sometimes so distant from electoral outcomes that voters might have the perception that government was almost independent of their votes. We do not have direct evidence about how voters perceived the links between voting choice and government after 1994, but it is plausible that the government seemed to be even more at arms' length from the voters than they had been in the past. It is also plausible to think that voters, under some conditions, can be tempted to send a message to the government in an election in which "there is less at stake as compared to first order elections" (Reif 1985:8)

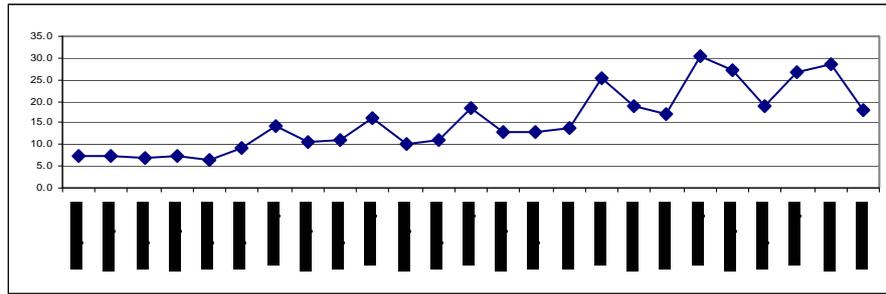
The second condition concerns what we may call the engine of the electoral cycle: turnout trends across different order elections and their consequences.

Finally I will show that the electoral cycle between different order elections may also imply a learning process by voters if they are forced to express their vote through different electoral systems. This is the case in Italy. European elections have a proportional system. For regional elections there is a mixed system, majoritarian as to the vote for the regional president, and proportional with a majority premium for the regional representative body. It should be noted that in the regional election voters are also allowed to express a vote for the president only without expressing any party preferences. They are also allowed to split their vote, that is, to vote for a party in one coalition and to vote for the candidate for president of the other coalition. Until the last election there was a mixed electoral system for parliamentary elections. The 2006 parliamentary election was based on a proportional system, with a nation-wide majority premium for the Camera dei Deputati and a region based majority premium for the Senate.

Both aspects raise some interesting questions for our discussion on the interdependencies between elections for different levels of government. I will present some evidence of how the second condition allows the cycle.

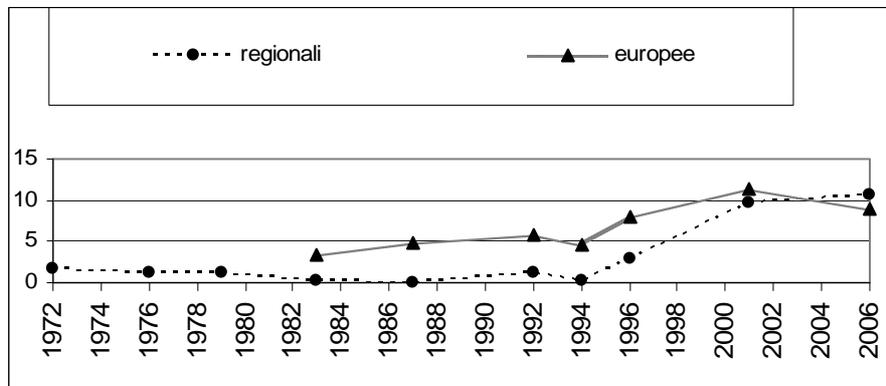
The basic determinant of the electoral cycle in recent years is the increasing number of intermittent or discontinuous voters that is voters who turned out in the first order election but had abstained in the preceding election. The phenomenon is quite recent, as we can see from fig. 1 and fig. 2.

Figure 1. Percentage of voters who did not turn out in three different types of election from 1968 to 2006.



Source Legnante and Segatti, 2001

Figure 2. Difference between levels of abstention in national elections compared to levels of abstention in the previous second-order elections.



Source Legnante and Segatti, 2001

As both figures show, from the early '80s onwards, but to a greater extent in the '90s, the differential in non-voting behaviour across different kind of elections has been becoming wider.

This phenomenon seems to reflect the increasing number of voters who enter and leave the area of electoral participation, election after election.

How many of those voters are there and who are they?

We have information from a few studies. Some of them are based on individual data collected by the public electors' registrar across different elections. Others are based on surveys.

Table 2. Continuous intermittent voters and continuous non-voters according to different studies, local and national. Data are collected with different instruments (percentage values)

	Continuous voters	intermittet	continuous non-voters	Total	N
Trieste*	36.1	57.1	6.7	100.0	4.483
Catania**	36.3	52.9	10.8	100.0	4.658
Istituto Cattaneo***	78.8	17.0	4.2	100.0	60.206
Ispo 2000****	59.7	32.4	7.9	100.0	4.487
Ispo 2001*****	71.8	21.4	6.8	100.0	4.495

* 5 elections dal 1996 al. 1999

** Source: Cuturi et al. (2000)

*** Source: Istituto Cattaneo (Prospex Archive). Elezioni 1994-1995-1996

**** Source: panel Ispo-Cra-Nielsen. Distribuzione delle risposte alla domanda: "Quando ci sono le elezioni alcune persone vanno a votare mentre altri si astengono. Pensando alle elezioni degli ultimi anni, Lei: è andato sempre a votare / è andato il più delle volte a votare, ma non in tutte / qualche volta è andato, ma più spesso si è astenuto / non è mai andato a votare"

Source Legnante and Segatti, 2001

Table 3 Sociodemographic profile of continuous intermittent voters and continuous non-voters

	Continuous voters	Intermittent voters	continuous non-voters	Difference continuous-intermittent	Difference intermittent-continuous
Age (Average)					
Trieste	54.0	52.0	64.0	2.00	-12.00
Cattaneo	48.0	50.9	64.3	-2.90	-13.40
Ispo 2000	47.9	48.2	50.1	-0.30	-1.90
Ispo 2001	47.0	47.1	47.3	-0.10	-0.20

Gender (% Women)						
	Trieste	51.0	55.0	66.0	-4.00	-11.00
	Cattaneo	52.0	56.0	69.0	-4.00	-13.00
	Ispo 2000	50.0	53.0	66.0	-3.00	-13.00
	Ispo 2001	51.0	44.0	50.0	7.00	-6.00
Education (1 = no education; 1 = University degree)						
	Trieste	0.50	0.49	0.33*	0.01	0.16
	Cattaneo	0.22	0.20	0.09	0.02	0.11
	Ispo 2000	0.30	0.27	0.21	0.03	0.06
	Ispo 2001	0.30	0.27	0.24	0.03	0.03

* N < 50 non continuous voters. Other values N > 100

The basic considerations suggested by the two tables are that:

1. Some voters are more likely than they were before to turn out or not to turn out in a cycle of elections.
2. The intermittent type of voter is similar to the “continuous” voter. But they need to be mobilized in each election. Their decision to turn out is not an ongoing decision.

Most of our detailed evidence on the consequences which follow from the behaviour of this type of voter comes from the last electoral cycle and in particular from close observation of the outcomes of the regional election of 2005. We should remember that in the 2005 election the centre-left gained 12 regions out of 14. Newspapers, as well as leaders, claimed that the electoral cycle was turning against the centre-right because many voters crossed the coalition lines. According to this interpretation the results were produced by a significant amount of voter mobility. In other words the centre-left had gained a promising electoral majority as a consequence of this and was ready to sail safely toward the next national election. Others claimed the opposite of this hypothesis, the cycle seemed to revolve against the centre-right coalition just because of selective abstentions by previous supporters of the centre-right government in charge (Segatti, 2005, and D’Alimonte and De Sio, 2007).

So there is an electoral cycle in Italy. The engine of it is the propensity of a significant portion of the electorate to abstain in second-order elections. Furthermore, abstentions can be politically asymmetric depending on who is in government at the national level. Third, this does not mean that the individual propensity to abstain is more likely in one ideological camp than in another. Propensity to abstain seems to be activated by the national context in which a particular second-order election is taking place.

An important aspect of the electoral cycle between different order elections is that voters can express their vote in different ways if there are different electoral rules across different types of election. In other words they learn.

Some preliminary information is in order.

Italy is a garden of delights in which different electoral systems are blooming for the pleasure of the observer (some doubt if it is the same for the voters).

In Italy regional elections are based on a mixed majoritarian/proportional system. The majoritarian part concerns the vote for the candidate to the presidency. At this level voters are allowed to vote only for the candidate or even to split their vote, voting for the candidate of one coalition and voting for a party in another coalition. The proportional vote is about the choice of parties and concerns the distribution of the seats in the regional council. The candidate who comes first in the majoritarian competition also gets a majority premium in council seats. Considering the aggregated vote one could just calculate only the votes for the president of one or another coalition.

Students of the Italian political system agree in interpreting a vote for a candidate only for regional president without the expression of a party preference as behaviour determined by the increasing disruption of party identification among Italian voters. Some of these voters may be motivated by the appeal of leaders, others by an emerging political identity within a

coalition. Yet others may be motivated by the fact that voting for their candidate only for president is a very simple way to deal with a complicated ballot paper, on which too many things are allowed. (D'Alimonte and De Sio, 2007). In any case, it seems likely that parties are no longer the primary objects of electoral choice.

Table 4 Percent of vote to centre-left candidate only, according to five geopolitical areas in 2005 regional election (percentages are calculated on the total valid vote).

	Percent
North-west	9.5
North-east	8.0
Red Belt	6.2
Centre	8.4
South	2.6

Source: Segatti and Vezzoni (2007)

Table 4 shows the level of this particular vote in five traditional geopolitical areas. As one can see, in the South the level of the majoritarian vote is considerably less than in the rest of Italy. This is an intriguing outcome. Where parties have always been weak and voters tend to be more mobile across party and coalition lines, less electors express a vote for a president without expressing any preference for a party.

The second piece of preliminary information is as follows. In 2006 elections were conducted with the same rules for both chambers. The only choice offered to voters on the paper ballots was between parties or lists. Voters were not allowed to express any preference for one or another candidate. The system was strictly proportional. The institutional context of the parliamentary election of 2006 was therefore completely different from the institutional context of the regional election of 2005. In particular voters made a choice between parties or lists in the parliamentary election. In the regional election a personal or coalition or simplified vote was allowed.

The third piece of preliminary information is that in the parliamentary election of 2006, the political leaders of the two biggest parties of the centre-left, Margherita and the Ds decided to compete in the lower chamber with a single list, called *Uniti nell'Ulivo*. However, each decided to run alone in the Senate race. There was a considerable debate about the meaning of the new list and how electors might have perceived such a list. The two sides of the issue took the following positions. On the one hand some observers argued that voters had accepted this experiment, as they accepted a similar experiment in the 2004 European elections. On the other hand many claimed that it was a mistake to make one party from two, given the distance between the political identities of Margherita and the Ds. The first party collected the remnants of the Dc left factions. The second acquired the former Pci. In this perspective the decision to combine as Italians say “*il diavolo con l'acqua santa*” (the devil with the holy water) is an interesting experiment in finding out to what extent centre-left voters still care about *il “diavolo”* and *“l'acqua santa”*.

In the end it turned out that the *Lista Unitaria* got almost 3% more than the sum of vote for the two parties in the Senate election. This was an intriguing phenomenon. Apparently some voters decided to vote for a list that was not gifted with a strong political identity, when they could vote for other parties who to interpret the old identities better (on the left as well as on the right). But more intriguing is the phenomenon we discovered when we analysed the performance of the *Uniti nell'Ulivo* list in the last election (Segatti and Vezzoni, 2007).

Across Italy, the performance of the *Lista Uniti nell'Ulivo* in the Lower Chamber vote, relative to the support for the two parties in the Senate vote, was higher in the local municipalities in which the percentage of the vote only for the presidential candidate in the 2005 regional election was higher, as table 5 shows.

Table 5. Percentage differences between Ulivo list vote in the Camera and the sum of votes of the constituent parties in the Senato according to the level of vote only for the candidate for the presidency in 2005 election and according to geopolitical areas.

	Vote for the candidate to the presidency only			Difference Third group – first group
	First group	Second group	Third group	
	Low	Intermediate	High	
North-west	1.6	2.9	4.0	2.4
North-east	2.5	3.4	3.4	0.9
Red Belt	3.7	4.0	4.7	1.0
Centre	1.4	2.1	2.9	1.5
South	0.9	2.8	2.2	1.3

Note. The average percent of vote for the president only is: first group 1.4% (low majoritarian profile); second group 5.8% (intermediate majoritarian profile); third group 10.3% (strong majoritarian profile).

Source: Segatti and Vezzoni (2007)

Local municipalities were classified in three percentiles according to the percentage of vote only for the president in 2005 regional election. Then the difference between the vote for the Lista uniti nell'Ulivo in the lower chamber and the sum of the votes for the two parties in the Senate race was calculated for each group of local municipalities. The results are quite interesting. Although the institutional contexts were very different, in the communes where the segment of voters that abstained from expressing a party preference was larger in 2005 the segment of voters that put a premium on a list with an unclear identity was also larger. In other terms voting for a list and not for one of the parties that founded it seems to be a sort of functional equivalent of the majoritarian simplified vote only for the president in the 2005 regional election.

Instead of a conclusion we have some open questions

Even in Italy an electoral cycle is emerging whose engine is asymmetric non-voting behaviour. We need to know this phenomenon better. We need to improve our survey measure of non-voting behaviour. This instrument has some well-known limits in this regard. In particular recall of turnout in previous second-order elections in post-parliamentary election studies is clearly unreliable.

But, if we are able to get some respondents to report non-voting, we could ask very interesting questions such as if asymmetric non-voting behaviour is connected with dissatisfaction with the government previously voted for, why do dissatisfied voters not change their minds? Asymmetric non-voting behaviour appears to be likely in political systems that are still deeply divided.

Furthermore, asymmetric non-voting behaviour could be connected with cynicism and political disaffection. Because such behaviour is more likely to occur in deeply divided political systems, what is the relationship between political disaffection and the persistence of ideological cleavages? Are there voters who are disaffected but who still prefer to abstain when dissatisfied with their party?

In Italy this seems to be the case.

The second aspect of electoral cycle we indicated is still more complicated. Apparently, the institutional context, even the format of the ballot, may stimulate unusual electoral choices. This behaviour may be activated by a political supply that is able to imitate the previous effects of the institutions. The data also suggests that institutions and political supply can affect the persistence of or the change in political identity.

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Chapter 4

Split-Ticket Voting in Multi-Level Electoral Competition: European, National and Regional Concurrent Elections in Spain

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Abstract

This paper is intended to shed new light on the causes of split-ticket voting in concurrent multi-level European, national and regional elections. Up to now, differences in electoral outcomes shown in Spanish concurrent regional elections have been understood as being a product of higher levels of tactical voting associated with second-order elections. Evidence against this interpretation is presented and alternative explanations drawn from international literature are then tested. Preliminary evidence shows that Spanish ticket-splitters weight their European, regional and local electoral choices in a different manner: while they are particularly noticeable for basing their local vote on personal interests (egotropic vote), they are also outstanding in the regional arena for using regional interests as criteria for

voting. Finally, in European elections – in the absence of real executive power – ticket-splitters tend to vote on the basis of their ideological preferences more often than do the rest of the electorate. As a whole, the evidence reviewed in this paper suggests the possible existence of a gradient in the impact that ideology has in concurrent electoral choice. Understanding ideology as being a heuristic, the closer the elector is to the focus of election, the less relevant the ideological shortcut appears to be; the further the focus of election is from the voter, the more useful the ideological shortcut.

Introduction

The appearance of new political entities such as the European Union or the Spanish Estado de las Autonomías, offers a challenge to some classical theories of electoral behaviour, since these new institutional settings allow new behaviours – such as split-ticket voting – for which those theories can not account.

Split-ticket voting appears when one elector simultaneously chooses two or more different party options in different elections that are held concurrently¹. When this happens, split-ticket voting provides particularly interesting electoral behaviour, since the simultaneity of the elections offers a quasi-experimental situation in which many of the socio-demographic and attitudinal characteristics of the elector remain constant across the different electoral situations, but despite this a proportion of electors behave differently in each electoral arena. Up to now, the field of horizontal split-ticket voting has been intensively studied and specific explanations have been found within the majoritarian and presidential American political system (Campbell and Miller 1957, DeVries and Tarrance 1972, Fiorina 1992, Jacobson 1990, Petrocik and Doherty, 1996) or in the context of parliamentary democracies with mixed-member electoral systems, such as Germany or New Zealand (Jesse 1988, Karp et al. 2002, Gschwend and van der Kolk 2006, Gschwend,

2007). On the other hand, theory is far less developed in the field of vertical² split-ticket voting, and it has not been empirically studied, an exception being the recent work of Elklit and Kjaer (2005, 2006) on vertical split-ticket voting in Sweden and Denmark.

Research question and goals

What causes voters to behave differently on each of the electoral levels in a situation where there are concurrent elections in countries with proportional electoral systems and multi-level government, the socio-demographic dimensions of the electors being controlled? Is it possible to identify some general behavioural pattern?

In Spain, discrepancies in the results of concurrent elections have usually been assumed to be an outcome of some of the mechanisms identified by Reif and Schmitt (1980) in the European Elections, understood then as being second-order national elections (Montero, 1988a; Montabes, 1996; Pallarés and Keating, 2003); however, none of these studies tested the aforementioned mechanisms.

In order to answer the research question, this study has set three goals. The first is to show that the mechanisms associated with second-order national elections cover a limited range, in order to explain split-ticket voting in the case of concurrent multilevel elections in Spain. Our second goal is to review and test, in the case of Spain, other classic explanations of split-ticket voting, such as the balancing hypothesis of Morris Fiorina (1992) or the accidental theory of Gary Jacobson (1990). Finally, in the light of the evidence presented, we will search for some pattern in that evidence.

Vertical split-ticket voting in Spain

Until now, national and regional elections have taken place concurrently four times in Spain. At the end of the first Regional Parliament legislature in

Andalucía autonomous community (1982-1986), national prime minister Felipe Gonzalez called for national elections to take place concurrently with the regional elections which had already been arranged. Since then, regional and national elections have been held concurrently in Andalucía in 1986, 1996, 2000 and 2004. With almost 8 million inhabitants, Andalucía is the most populated region in Spain, and it is also one of the so-called historical autonomous communities.

Table 1. Electoral results for the main parties in national and regional elections in Andalucía. Entries are vote percentages. In parenthesis the number of parliamentary seats.

	PSOE		AP/PP		IU		PA	
	Aut.	Gen.	Aut.	Gen.	Aut.	Gen.	Aut.	Gen.
1986	46.44 (60)	56.53 (42)	21.89 (28)	22.47 (15)	17.58 (19)	8.02 (3)	5.78 (2)	2.76 (0)
1996	43.78 (52)	46.39 (32)	33.75 (40)	35.18 (24)	13.88 (13)	13.40 (6)	6.62 (4)	3.51 (0)
2000	44.03 (52)	43.55 (30)	37.77 (46)	40.28 (28)	8.05 (6)	7.76 (3)	7.39 (5)	5.07 (1)
2004	50.03 (61)	52.54 (38)	31.58 (37)	33.48 (23)	7.46 (6)	6.35 (0)	6.12 (5)	4.02 (0)

Source: www.eleweb.net

Electoral results in the concurrent elections show important advantages in the outcomes that the parties obtain in each of the electoral arenas, while turnout levels were almost identical. Tables 1 and 2 show the results for the main parties in each electoral arena, and the regional advantages in the vote for those parties expressed in percentage points³.

Table 2. Regional and national aggregate vote advantages by year and party. Entries are regional percentage advantages.

	1986	1996	2000	2004	Mean 1986-2004
PSOE	-10.10	-2.58	0.47	-2.71	-3.73
AP/PP*	-3.00	-1.45	-2.59	-2.00	-2.26
IU	9.80	0.48	0.29	1.13	2.92
PA	3.10	3.52	2.36	2.15	2.78
Total regional advantage	12.90	4.06	3.12	4.80	6.22
Total national advantage	-13.10	-4.03	-3.04	-4.71	-6.22

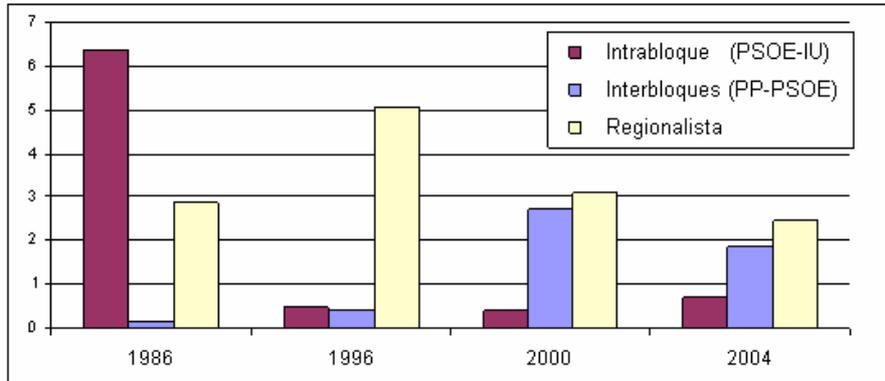
* For 1986 AP + CDS

Source: Ministerio del Interior and Junta de Andalucía

The PSOE and the AP/PP/CDS appear as vote losers in the regional elections (and therefore as vote winners at national level), while the IU and the PA obtain positive balances in the regional elections and negative ones at national level. The greatest advantages are found in 1986, with 13 percentage points, and the lowest in 2000, with an advantage of just over 3 percentage points. The average of the advantages in the elections studied is slightly over 6 percentage points. This data shows the existence of differences between electoral results in the regional and national arenas, and raises the question of the possible existence of split-ticket voting patterns between certain electoral options. We have studied these patterns at individual level by constructing transference tables for regional and national vote, using data from CIS post-electoral surveys. These tables (appendix I) demonstrate that of all possible vote transferences, split-ticket voting only takes place in the national (Nat.) to regional (Reg.) direction and that it follows three patterns: intra-block ticket splitting from the PSOE (Nat.) to the IU (Reg.) in 1986, regionalist ticket splitting from majority national parties to the PA (Reg.) and inter-blocks ticket splitting from the PP (Nat.) to the PSOE (Reg.).

Figure 1 represents the evolution of the levels of these three types of split-ticket voting between 1986 and 2004.

Figure 1. Percentage of split-ticket voters, by type of transfer and year.



*From all parties to PA.

Source: Banco de datos del CIS.

Elsewhere (Sanz, 2006) we studied all three types of split-ticket voting in depth; here, because of space constraints, we will focus on the case of intra-block (PSOE-IU) vertical split-ticket voting.

Theoretical frame and hypothesis

In the seminal work by Reif and Schmitt (1980) a series of mechanisms operating in (not necessarily concurrent) European Elections was identified. These mechanisms, accounting for discrepancies between national and European electoral results, allowed us to understand this last type of elections as second-order national elections. As we have mentioned, many of those who have published on the Spanish situation have understood the discrepancies between concurrent regional and national elections in Andalucía as being the result of their intrinsic nature as second-order elections. Here we will review the mechanisms proposed for European Elections by Reif and Schmitt (1980) [and revisited by Schmitt (2005)], in

the context of concurrent national and regional elections in Andalucía; and we will deduce some contrastable hypotheses.

Participation is lower

In second-order elections the level of politicization is lower than in national elections. This would lead to differential mobilization in both types of elections. It has been suggested that in Spain these differences between the electorates that actually vote in each type of election explain the differences in the outcomes that some parties regularly get in each electoral arena. In the case of our study, the concurrence factor, with almost identical levels of participation in both electoral arenas, neutralises the potential impact of this mechanism as an antecedent of split-ticket voting.

Government Parties Lose

In second-order elections, parties in the national government systematically lose support in comparison with previous national elections. At least two mechanisms have been proposed to explain this. The first is the idea of a popularity function effect, in which support for the party represented at national executive level is at its maximum immediately after election day, is at its minimum in the middle of the legislature and is restored to the initial levels by the time of the next national election. Thus, the election timing for second-order election would be a factor in the differences in electoral outcomes, compared to national elections. Again, the concurrence factor neutralises any impact of this mechanism on split-ticket voting.

The second explanation for government parties losing is related to the opportunity for a number of electors to voice their dissatisfaction with the performance of the party for which they voted at national elections by voting for another party in an election at a level where this behaviour will have

lower costs. This mechanism is perfectly applicable in our case, and will be tested in the first hypothesis.

If split-ticket voting is to some extent the product of voicing dissatisfaction with the performance of the national executive at a regional level, then:

(H1) The greater the dissatisfaction with national executive performance, the higher the probability of ticket splitting.

In second-order elections big parties systematically lose ground to small ones. Again we find that at least two mechanisms have been suggested which might explain these differences.

The first is an institutional factor: it is suggested that differences in proportionality between regional and national electoral system can introduce differences in the incentive to vote strategically, that is to vote for a party other than the one that would be the elector's first preference⁴. In Spain, regional electoral systems are more proportional than the national one, and this can be seen as an encouragement to vote more sincerely in regional elections (which favour small parties) and more strategically in national elections (which penalise small parties).

The second mechanism proposed is that there are differences in what is at stake in each level of election. Since there is less in the balance in regional election it is suggested that electors may behave more sincerely in this type of elections, favouring small parties.

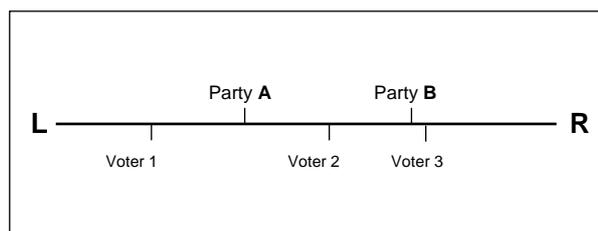
Both mechanisms (the one related to the electoral system and the one related to what is at stake) share a common structure of incentives, favouring a more honest vote in regional elections and a more strategic vote in national elections. These mechanisms are applicable to our case of concurrent elections, and will be tested in the second hypothesis.

If split-ticket voting is to some extent the product of a more honest regional electoral behaviour, then:

(H2) Split-ticket voters will vote for their first preference at the regional level and for their second preference at the national level.

Another explanation of split-ticket voting is found in the influential book *Divided Government* by Morris Fiorina (1992), where he suggests an intentional split-ticket voting model of policy balancing in the United States. According to his model, when voters split their tickets between two parties that present candidates to the Presidency and the Congress, the voters act as if they had the intention of favouring a divided electoral result, in such a manner that power would be distributed between two parties that, by dominating different institutions, would produce a situation of balance and mutual control. Ticket splitters would be moderate voters who do not fully identify with any of the electoral options that they perceive as being extreme and they would choose candidates of both parties simultaneously, with the final intention of obtaining moderate policies. Fiorina models voters' behaviour, specifying that a voter will tend to split his vote when, in the space of the partisan identification, it is located between the parties for which it is possible to split the vote. Figure 2 represents an adaptation of his model to the left-right (L-R) ideological space, more suitable to the structure of European politics.

Figure 2. Adaptation to the ideological Left Right space of Fiorina's (1992) model for split-ticket voting.



In this model, voter 2, located in the inner space defined by the positions of parties A and B in the L-R scale, will be more likely to split their vote between the two parties, than will voters 1 and 3; who are located in the space outside both parties because they are more extremist than the closer party, and it is therefore not possible to attribute to them any intention of obtaining a final situation of moderation in government policies. Fiorina's intentional model was originally presented to account for split-ticket voting in the context of the American two party system. In our multi-partisan and multi-level context, the model maintains its original sense as long as the assumption is made that the parties for which it is possible to split the vote are contiguous on the main competition axis; that is to say, whenever there is no third party located ideologically between parties A and B, the parties between which the splitting of the vote takes place.

If split-ticket voting is to some extent the product of Fiorina's intentional balancing:

(H3) Split-ticket voters will tend be ideologically self-positioned between the two parties for which they split the vote.

The last explanation of split-ticket voting that we will consider is the one introduced by Gary Jacobson (1990 and 1991), which is known as the accidental model of split-ticket voting. This explanation also arises in the American context, and proposes that voters' decisions in both electoral arenas (Presidential and Congressional) are independent; that is to say, they do not depend on any preference of the voters about the final configuration of forces in different institutions. Thus, the reasons for voters to split their vote would reside in differences in the political offer that the parties present in each electoral scene, and most particularly in differences in the quality and visibility of candidates. On the other hand, Jacobson also suggests that split-ticket voting could happen because of differences in what the citizens

demand in each type of election. In the American case Jacobson maintains that, although the voters demand of the executive an effort to maximize collective goods, they demand of legislative power an effort to minimize individual risks, to optimize wealth distribution and to minimize local costs (Jacobson 1991: 641).

A final situation where divided government occurs would be accidental, or not arising from the intention of the voters, as they would not be looking for any type of compensation between powers. They would be simply maximizing their preferences, which are different in each type of election⁵.

If split-ticket voting is to some extent the product of the offer of specially visible or valuable candidates in some of the electoral arenas then:

(H4.1) The better voters evaluate a candidate as being, the higher their probability of ticket splitting.

(H4.2) The higher the voter's evaluation of two candidates from different parties, competing in different electoral arenas, the higher probability of ticket splitting.

It is important to note that while H4.1 proposes that split-ticket voting is about *leadership* on at least one electoral level, H4.2 proposes that split-ticket voting is about *leadership* on both electoral levels.

Summing up, we have reviewed three families of relevant explanations for split-ticket voting. The first one stresses the role of the voters. One mechanism proposed by Reif and Schmitt (1980) argues that electors voice national executive dissatisfaction in second-order elections; the other mechanism presented by Fiorina (1992), argues that ticket splitting is an intentional behaviour and proposes that it would depend on voters' relative positions in respect to two partisan options. The second family of explanations, started by Jacobson, puts the emphasis on the role of parties in

presenting an offer that is different in quality for each type of election and also emphasizes the importance of the differences between the candidates in each election type. The third and final family emphasizes the importance of institutions when it proposes that split-ticket voting is a form of strategic vote, and that two possible mechanisms may be involved. For the strategic explanation, differences in the electoral system permissiveness would be an antecedent for split-ticket voting; whereas from second-order elections theory (Reif and Schmitt 1980), differences between what is at stake in each level of election would constitute a relevant incentive for differentiated electoral behaviour: more sincere in second-order elections, more strategic in first order.

Data and method

In this work we used data from a panel survey from the Spanish *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (CIS) (CIS 1536 and CIS 1546) with a representative sample of the electorate in Andalucía, in the 1986 regional and national elections⁶. In order to test the aforementioned hypothesis, and at the current state of development of this research, we used both bivariate analysis and a multinomial logistic regression model. In the next development of the research we plan to operationalize the concepts related to hypotheses 2 and 3 in such way that they could also be tested concurrently in a unique multinomial logistic regression model, using data from the different (and bigger) available datasets, and also in different electoral years.

In the multinomial logistic regression model, the dependent variable had three possible values. The first was straight vote PSOE-PSOE (Nat-Reg) (base category), the second was straight vote IU-IU, and the last was split vote PSOE-IU (Nat-Reg). The independent variables were the evaluation of national executive performance (measured in a 1 to 5 scale), the ideological self-position (measured in a 1 to 10 scale), the PSOE national candidate

evaluation (incumbent Felipe Gonzalez, measured in a 0 to 10 scale) and the IU regional candidate evaluation (Julio Anguita) (measured in a 0 to 10 scale). As a control variable we used the vote recall from the recent NATO integration referendum which had taken place three months previously, in which the PSOE campaigned for a “Yes” vote, while prior to taking control of national executive in 1982 they had publicly defended the “No” option.

In addition, we explored the results from of another post-electoral CIS survey, conducted after European, regional and local elections took place concurrently in Spain in 1987. Using this data we studied the different declared reasons for voting, at the three levels, and explored the different levels of association between ideology and vote probability, again at the European, regional and local levels.

Results

The results of fitting a model of intra-block split-ticket voting to the 1986 national and regional elections in Andalucía show us that - when compared to the base (and majoritarian) behaviour of straight voting for the PSOE - straight voting for the IU is significantly related to ideology and to the evaluations of the regional communist (and charismatic) leader Julio Anguita. On the other hand split-ticket voting is statistically independent from ideology, and is significantly related to the positive evaluation of both national and regional candidates from the PSOE and the IU respectively. Positive evaluation of the national executive does not reach the level of statistical significance.

Finally, the control variable for NATO vote recall, while also not reaching significance levels is close to doing so (p-values of 0.06 and 0.09 for IU-IU and for PSOE-IU respectively), and both cases share the same pattern. Having voted ‘No’ in previous NATO referendum is related to a (non-

significant) increase in the probability of a straight IU vote or a split PSOE-IU vote.

Table 3. A multinomial model of vertical intra-block split-ticket voting in 1986 national and regional elections in Andalusia, Spain. Entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parenthesis¹.

	Straight IU-IU	Split PSOE-IU
Evaluation of national executive ²	-1.23 (0.90)	0,17 (0,55)
Ideology ³	-1.17* (0.57)	-0,05 (0,34)
PSOE national candidate evaluation (Felipe González) ⁴	-0.56 (0.32)	-0,67** (0,25)
IU Regional candidate evaluation (Julio Anguita) ⁴	0.72* (0.33)	0,51* (0,22)
NATO 'Yes'	-2.38 (1.24)	-1,31 (0,78)
Constant	6.43 (4.40)	0,66 (3,03)
(n)		111
Nagelkerke R ² :		0.64

¹ Base category is straight vote PSOE-PSOE.

² 1 Very bad, 5 Very well.

³ 1 Left, 10 Right

⁴ 0 Very Bad, 10 Very well.

* Significant at 5% ** Significant at 1%

In order to make the interpretation of the coefficients in the logistic model more accessible, we have presented the predicted probabilities derived from the equation coefficients in the form of graphs. Predicted probabilities were calculated, keeping the values of other independent variables at their means. Now we will review the impact of each of the independent variables on split-

ticket voting probability, and the implications of this for the hypothesis presented.

Figure 3 demonstrates the relationship between a positive evaluation of national executive performance and the probability of vote options IU-IU and PSOE-IU. In the case of a straight IU-IU vote (solid red line), an increase in this positive evaluation decreases the probability at the lower levels of the scale. In the case of split-ticket voting (green broken line), we can see a flat slope, indicating that split-ticket voting does not appear to be related to a (negative) national executive performance evaluation. This evidence is not favourable to H1, which relates a negative evaluation of national executive to voicing dissatisfaction only at the regional level.

Figure 3

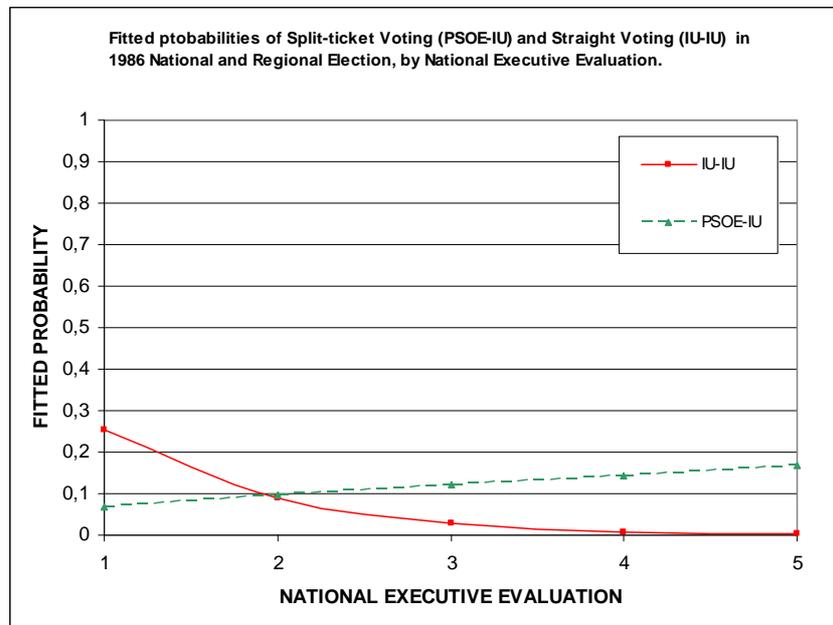
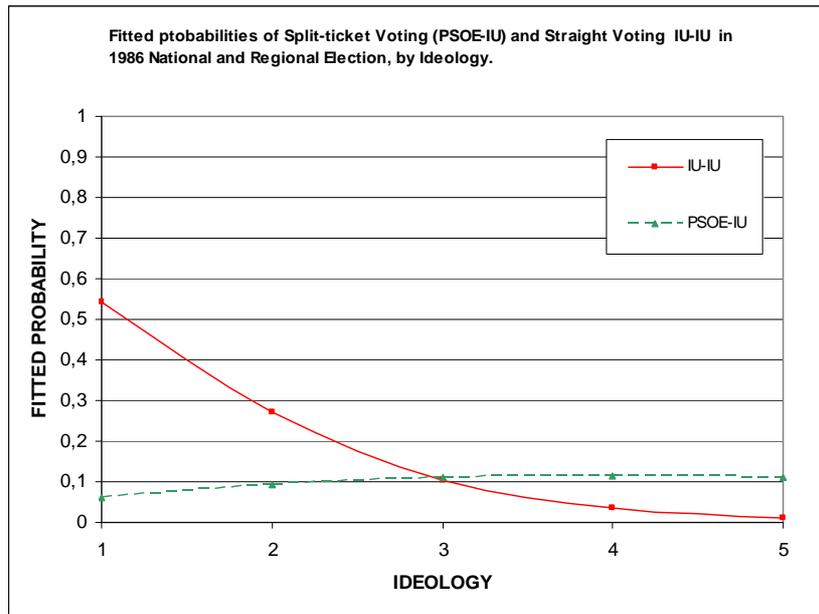


Figure 4 shows the relationship between ideology (L-R) and the probability of vote options (IU-IU and PSOE-IU). In this case, and also in reference to voting straight PSOE-PSOE it can be clearly appreciated that the further on

the right an elector is, the less probability there is of a communist straight vote. On the other hand it also appears clear that a split social democrat-communist vote it is not related to the ideology of the elector. Another way to express the same idea is to say that ideology is related in the same way to issuing a straight PSOE-PSOE vote as to issuing a split PSOE-IU vote. Or, as we can also see in figure 8 (appendix II), the ideology of split-ticket voters is the same as the ideology of straight PSOE voters.

Figure 4

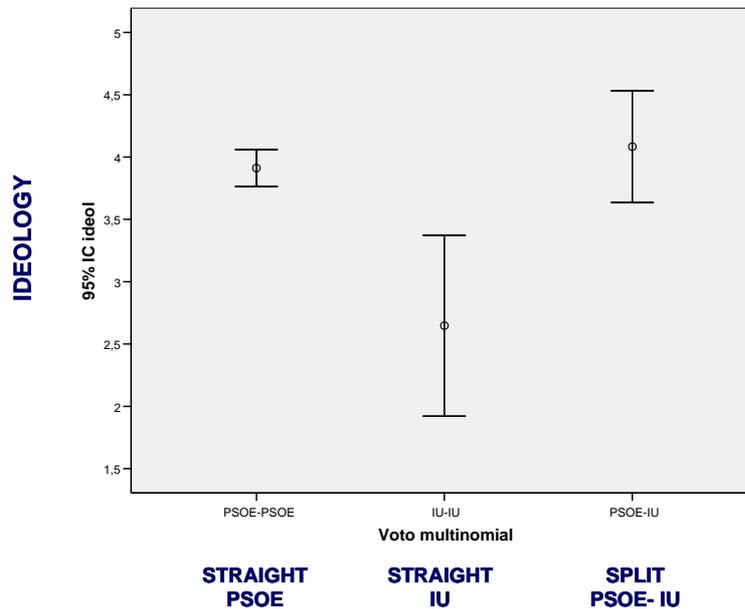


This evidence is contrary to H3, since, as can also be appreciated in the bivariate analysis presented in Figure 5, split-ticket voters do not show a characteristic ideological pattern that is different from both IU-IU and PSOE-PSOE straight voters (they are ideologically different from IU straight voters, but the same as PSOE straight voters).

Figure 5

Confidence intervals for the mean of ideology, by vote

(n)=223



Source: Banco de datos del CIS

In the same way this evidence completely contradicts H2, since split-ticket voters choose their first (ideological) preference (PSOE) at the national level.

So, if intra-block split-ticket voting seems to be about neither voicing dissatisfaction at the regional level, nor strategic or ideological voting, what can explain the fact that some electors, ideologically close to the PSOE and not influenced by national executive performance, vote for the IU in the regional elections?

Figures 6 and 7 give us some useful clues to the understanding of the 1986 high levels of intrablock split-ticket voting in Andalucía.

In figure 6 we can appreciate how a positive evaluation of the communist regional candidate Julio Anguita is directly (and significantly) related to an increase in the probability of a split PSOE-IU vote. This increase is comparable to the one shown by straight communist voters, as they rate the IU candidate more highly. This evidence supports H4.1, since the more highly the electors value the candidate who get inter-level vote advantages, the more probable it is that they will split the regional vote in his (party's) favour.

Figure 6

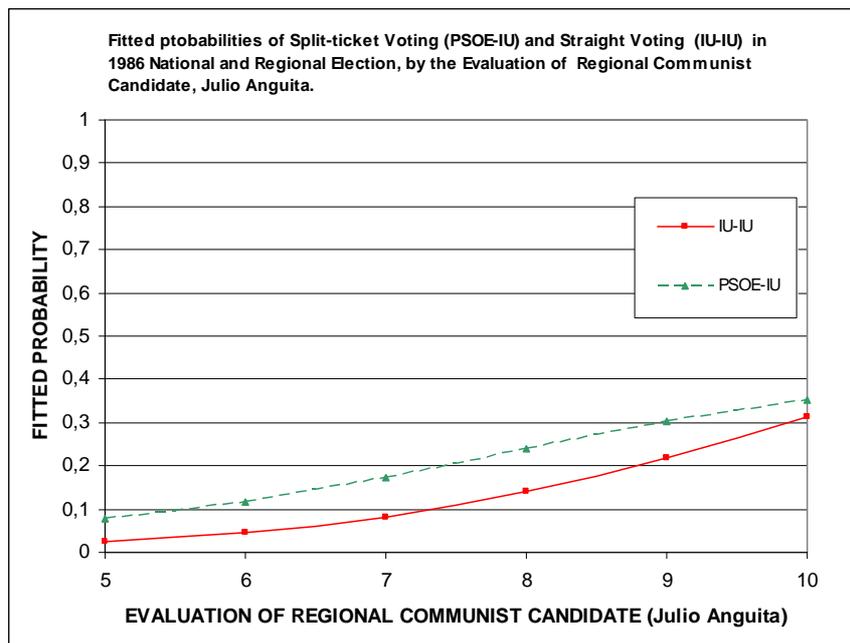
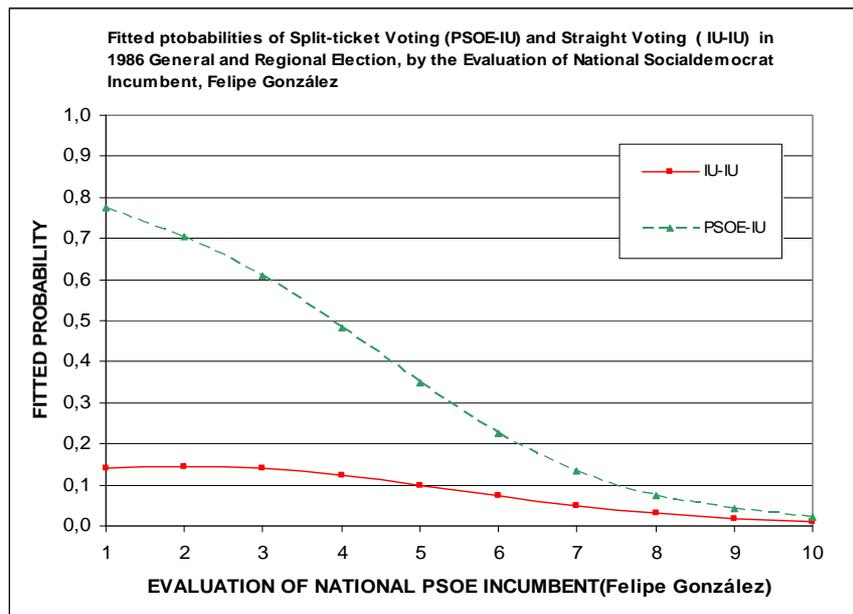


Figure 7 gives us the opposite situation, since a positive evaluation of the national PSOE candidate Felipe González drastically decreases the probability of split-ticket voting, in favour of a straight PSOE-PSOE vote (base category). This evidence is contrary to H4.2, since it shows that it is not necessary that two visible leaders should pull the electorate in different directions, for different parties.

Figure 7



Section conclusions

In this section we have tested several hypotheses drawn from the literature on split-ticket voting on multi-level electoral competition in Europe and Spain. Through this process of hypothesis testing we have learned about several characteristics of intrablock split-ticket voters in Andalucía which give us a better picture of the situation. We know that ticket splitters vote for the PSOE at national level, that ideologically they are close to the PSOE, and that their main party identification is also with that party. We also know that they tended (though not significantly) to vote 'No' in the NATO referendum, that they give Prime Minister Felipe González a poor evaluation, and that they rate the communist regional leader Julio Anguita very highly.

While a formal procedure would lead us to reject all the hypotheses presented, with the exception to the Jacobson accidental theory, which is based on the differences in the visibility and quality of candidates supplied by the parties, a more contextual interpretation would draw a different

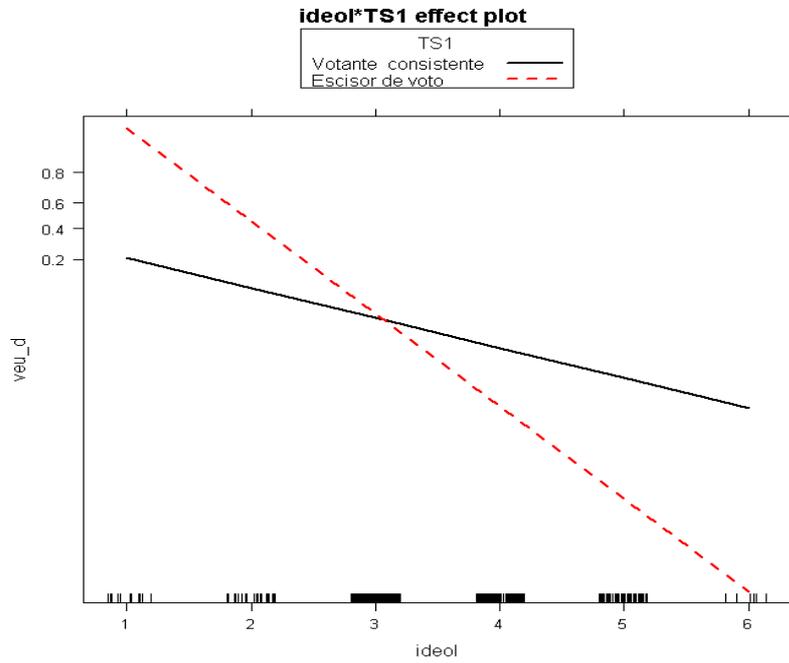
conclusion. In fact, we completely agree that 1986 inter-block split-ticket voting in Andalucía was not caused by ideological balancing, nor by the strategic considerations of the electorate. But although formal analysis would ask us to reject the regional voice of national dissatisfaction hypothesis we consider that it is still possible to defend the idea that a number of electors who fully belonged to the PSOE caucus, dissatisfied with the executive performance on the NATO issue, may have “channelled” their disgust through leader evaluation: their negative evaluation of Felipe Gonzalez and their positive evaluation of Julio Anguita (the latter strongly campaigned for ‘No’ to NATO) provides evidence for this. Again the task of disentangling second-order election voicing from the differences in the quality of candidate on offer does not appear to be simple and direct.

Context and further research

The small piece of research that we have just presented is part of a wider project. In that context these results gain in robustness and clarity since they are a replication of a part of a previous work (Sanz 2006) in which we have tested similar hypothesis on bigger datasets and at different moments in time. In that research we have studied intra-block, inter-block, and regionalist split-ticket voting in the concurrent national and regional elections of 1986, 1996 and 2000. These three modalities of vertical split-ticket voters have a number of peculiarities compared to other ticket splitting, but all of them show a regularity: Split-ticket voters in Andalucía tend to follow their ideological preferences at the national election level, while there are a number of changing factors (or issues) that pull the electors to cross their ideological lines at the regional level. To some extent this does not fit with those predictions from the second order elections paradigm that expect a more sincere (or more ideological) vote at the regional (rather than the national) second order elections.

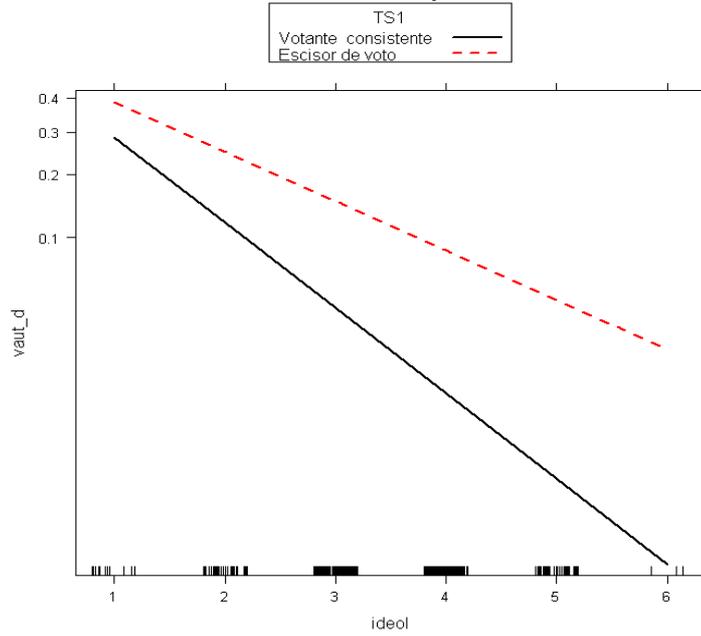
Figure 8. Fitted vote probabilities for the PSOE (0) and the IU (1) in 1987 European, regional and local elections, by ideology. Solid black lines represent straight voters. Broken red lines represent ticket splitters.

**Fitted Vote probability in 1987
European Parliament election, by ideology**



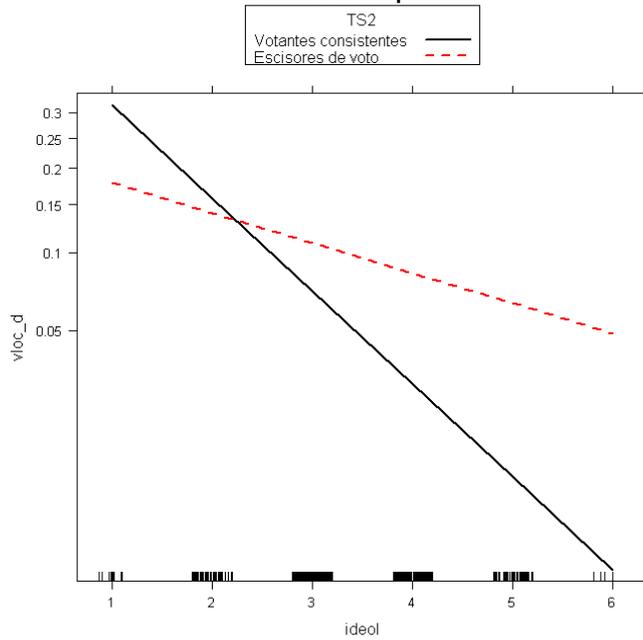
Fitted vote probability in 1987 regional election, by ideology

ideol*TS1 effect plot



Fitted vote probability in 1987 local election, by ideology

ideol*TS2 effect plot



In order to solve this apparent contradiction, we raised the question of what would happen in respect to vertical split-ticket voting if two (or more) second-order elections were held concurrently. At which electoral level would voters abandon their ideology and party identification? Spanish concurrent 1987 European, regional and local elections gave us an excellent opportunity to explore voting behaviour again in a quasi-experimental situation⁷. On that occasion the level of vertical split-ticket voting was more than 15 percentage points. Again, the more frequent modality of ticket splitting was the intra-block PSOE-IU/IU-PSOE. Using data from the 1987 CIS post-electoral survey, we have fitted binomial logistic models of electoral choice between the PSOE (0) and the IU (1) separately at each of the electoral levels, using ideology as the independent variable and leader and national executive performance evaluations as the control variables.

As comparing the coefficients from different logistic regression models is not a commonly accepted method, we used the straight voters, who logically maintain a constant relationship between their ideology and their vote at all the levels, as our internal control for comparison. Figure 8 shows the fitted vote probabilities for voting for the PSOE (0) and the IU (1) in 1987 European, regional and local elections, by ideology and type of vote (straight or split). Solid black lines represent straight voters and broken red lines represent ticket splitters.

In figure 8 it can clearly be seen that for split-ticket voters the impact of ideology on the choice between the PSOE and the IU, reaches its maximum in the European elections (higher than for consistent voters), is intermediate in regional elections (lower than for consistent voters) and is at its minimum at the local level (much lower than for consistent voters).

Finally, and only for descriptive and exploratory reasons, we have studied what ticket splitters answer when they are openly questioned on their reasons for voting at each level of election.

Tables 4 and 5 show the different reasons for their vote given (in an open response question) by split-ticket and straight-ticket voters. Table 4 shows this comparison between split-ticket voting in the European and in the regional elections, and table 5 shows the same comparison for split and straight-ticket voting in regional and local elections.

Table 4. Declared reasons for regional and European vote of straight- and split-ticket voters in 1987 concurrent regional and European elections in Spain. Figures are row percentages. In parenthesis Haberman's standard residuals¹.

	Declared Reasons for Regional Parliament Vote		Declared Reasons for European Parliament Vote	
	Straight Vote	Split Vote	Straight Vote	Split Vote
The Candidate	4.8 (-2.1)**	9.6 (2.1)**	13.5 (-4.9)**	32.3 (4.9)**
The Party	42.1 (3.6)**	24.0 (-3.6)**	36.6 (3.7)**	18.2 (-3.7)**
Ideology	9.6 (0.6)	7.7 (-0.6)	9.7 (1.2)	6.1 (-1.2)
Executive Performance	7.8 (-1.6)	12.5 (1.6)	5.9 (0.8)	4.0 (-0.8)
Regional Interest	3.7 (-2.9)	9.6 (2.9)**	2.6 (0.3)	2.0 (-0.3)
Personal Interest	1.0 (0.1)	1.0 (-0.1)	1.0 (1.0)	0.0 (-1.0)
Lack of information	0.0 (-3.0)**	1.0 (3.0)**	3.0 (0.6)	0.0 (-0.6)
Other	31.0 (-0.8)	34.6 (0.8)	30.3 (-1.4)	37.4 (1.4)
n		1060		1025
Cramer's V		0.173**		0.182**

¹ Values over 1.96 indicate statistical signification (Haberman 1973).

* Significant at 5% ** Significant at 1%

Source: Banco de datos del CIS.

Table 5. Declared reasons for regional and local vote of straight and split-ticket voters in 1987 concurrent regional and local elections in Spain. Figures are row percentages. In parenthesis Haberman's Standard residuals¹.

	Declared Reasons for Municipal Vote		Declared Reasons for Regional Parliament Vote	
	Straight Vote	Split Vote	Straight Vote	Split Vote
The Candidate	9.8 (-4.3)**	23.1 (4.3)**	4.8 (-2.0)**	9.1 (2.0)**
The Party	36.1 (4.5)**	15.7 (-4.5)**	40.8 (0.9)	36.4 (-0.9)
Ideology	10.6 (2.5)**	3.3 (-2.5)**	9.9 (1.5)	5.8 (-1.5)
Executive (local/regional) Performance	12.6 (-5.5)**	31.4 (5.5)**	8.3 (0.0)	8.3 (-0.0)
Regional Interest	3.2 (0.4)	2.5 (-0.4)	4.3 (0.1)	4.1 (-0.1)
Personal Interest	1.6 (-2.5)**	5.0 (2.5)**	1.1 (0.2)	0.8 (-0.2)
Lack of information	0.1 (0.4)	0.0 (-0.4)	0.0 (-2.8)**	0.8 (2.8)**
Other	25.9 (1.6)	19.0 (-1.6)	30.9 (-0.9)	34.7 (0.9)
n		1048		1060
Cramer's V		0.258**		0.117*

¹ Values over 1.96 indicate statistical signification (Haberman 1973).

* Significant at 5% ** Significant at 1%

Source: Banco de datos del CIS.

As a group, when asked about voting decision criteria split-ticket voters tend to declare "Candidates" as a reason for their vote, more often do the rest of the electorate, and "partisanship" less often than do straight voters. But when we compare their given reason between electoral levels they stand out at the local level for a lesser use of ideology and a more intense use of personal interest, while at the regional level they stand out because they declare regional interest to be a key factor.

Conclusions

In this paper we have reviewed some preliminary findings about vertical split-ticket voting in national and regional elections in Spain. We have identified a variety of factors which persuade the electorate to cross their ideological preferences at the regional level. On the other hand, despite the variety of antecedents for vertical split-ticket voting, a regularity was also noticed: the majority of split-ticket voters tended to vote according to their ideological preferences at the upper or national level in the 1986, 1996 and 2000 concurrent elections in Spain. Since this did not seem to fit with the strategic predictions for second-order elections, the impact of ideology on split-ticket voters in 1987 concurrent European, regional and local elections in Spain was compared. Results from this comparison (together with those previously presented) suggest a possible gradient in the impact of ideology on split-ticket voters' choices. The closer the elector is to the "object of election" the less will be the impact of ideology on their choice. The further the elector from the "object of election" the bigger will be the impact of ideology on their electoral choice. Further, more refined, confirmations of this hypothetical regularity are needed. In order to do this a cross-national comparative study (in the frame of my doctoral research) is under theoretical discussion. Concurrent elections in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Sweden are candidates to take part in a comparative research design. If the suspected regularity were further confirmed, the suggestion that ideology has a role as a heuristic or cognitive shortcut would be strengthened, at least for the small group of sophisticated voters that split their votes across different electoral arenas.

Notes

¹ Some examples of institutional settings that allow for split-ticket voting would be the Presidential and Congressional elections in the United States, simultaneous choices of seats and candidates in German and New Zealand national elections and other countries with mixed electoral systems, or the coincidence in time of regional, national or European Parliamentary elections in Spain and other European countries.

² Following the Gschwend and van der Kolk (2006) categories, vertical split-ticket voting refers to a vote for two (or more) different parties in concurrent elections taking place to elect representatives to two (or more) supra-ordinate levels of governance (*i.e.*: European, national or regional concurrent elections)

³ This advantage index is calculated by subtracting the number of votes that each party received in regional elections from the number of votes received (only in Andalucía), in the national elections and expressing it as a percentage of candidature votes. The index provides us with a good measure of the vote advantage for each party, at each of the electoral levels. Positive values indicate regional advantage while negative values indicate national advantage.

⁴ There is a theoretical discussion on the definition and operationalization of the first preference concept. In this paper, for reasons of space and simplicity we will follow the one that understands first preference as being defined by ideological proximity and party identification.

⁵ This explanation, while being very tempting, is not exempt from problems as it is difficult to test because it encompasses two complementary sides of the problem. On the one hand, the accidental explanation signals the causes of ticket splitting on the supply side of the problem (differences in the quality and visibility of the candidate offer), but on the other hand and simultaneously, the reasons for ticket splitting are also signalled on the demand side (citizens demand a strong President but a risk-minimizing House). Therefore, it is difficult to disentangle the impact of general evaluations of competence on actual voting behaviour from the evaluation of competence specific to each of the electoral arenas. Being aware of this intrinsic difficulty we will try to test one side of the problem in this research.

⁶ Because of sample attrition this study has a limited sample size compared to other available studies for the same elections (*i.e.*: CIS 1539), but it offers the added value of being a panel survey. This fact allows us to measure the independent variables (ideology, executive performance, candidate evaluation, etc.) in the pre-electoral wave, along with the dependent variable (vote recall) in the post-electoral wave. This is important because measuring both the consequences and the antecedents at the same time raises concerns about the direction of causality. This is especially relevant when leaders and executive evaluations and vote recall are

measured concurrently. Despite its reduced sample size the analysis presented in this paper gains in robustness because there is good replication of previous analysis performed on data coming from the aforementioned bigger sample but only “one wave” pre-electoral survey (Sanz 2006).

⁷ In 1987 local and European elections took place in the whole of Spain. The same day were celebrated also regional elections in all autonomous communities except from Andalucía, Cataluña, Galicia and País Vasco.

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Chapter 5

Second-Order Elections versus First-Order Thinking: How Voters Perceive the Representation Process in a Multi-Layered System of Governance

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Abstract

2nd-order election models are based on several assumptions about individual-level motivations. These can be summarized by a *transfer hypothesis*: individuals presumably apply their evaluations of national-level phenomena to the EU-level when voting in EU elections. In contrast, a *1st-order hypothesis* stipulates that voters evaluate the EU on its own performance terms. This paper tests these competing hypotheses. We find considerable support for both models. In the election context, where national institutions—political parties—dominate the representation process, the transfer hypothesis receives considerable support. However, we also find surprisingly strong support for the 1st-order hypothesis: electoral choice in EU election is to a considerable extent influenced by EU-level factors. Furthermore, when voters evaluate the mechanisms of representation more broadly without a focus on elections per se, we find much more support for the 1st-order than for the transfer

hypothesis--voters clearly separate the two levels and evaluate each level on its own terms. These results have important implications, both for how we analyze voters' decisions in European elections, and for how we view the sophistication of voters more broadly in the context of multi-layered institutions.

Introduction

The EU's democracy deficit is becoming an increasing concern to analysts and observers of the European Union (Majone 1998; Schmitt and Thomassen 1999; Rohrschneider 2002). A key element of the presumed deficit is that elections are not evaluations of the EU's performance per se but typically reflect voters' judgments about national political issues (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Marsh 1998; Hix and Marsh 2007). Accordingly, the EU may suffer from a democracy deficit because voters do not evaluate Europe-related issues but mainly use the EU-level to reward or penalize national governments. It is consistent with this argument that numerous studies show that the national economy influences EU election outcomes, national government parties lose vote shares in EU-elections, especially during the midterm of a parliamentary cycle, and smaller parties typically gain in EU-wide elections (Marsh 1998; Hix and Marsh 2007).

The key premise, then, of second-order election models is a *transfer* hypothesis: voters transfer evaluations from the national to the EU level. In light of the centrality of this premise, it is surprising how few analyses examine the individual-level mechanisms that presumably underlie the 2nd-order election phenomenon. Only recently have analysts begun to directly examine the transfer hypothesis at the individual-level (Carrubba 2005; Schmitt 2005). None, however, examines the extent to which voters' evaluations of national *and* EU-based performance evaluations affect their

vote choice. Consequently, we know little about the reasons for voters' electoral choice in a multi-layered system of governance.

This gap in our knowledge is unfortunate because there actually are several reasons why one might plausibly argue that voters increasingly evaluate the EU *sui generis*. For the EU has become more important over time to individual citizens, certainly since the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties concluded in the 1990s. As European integration moves from economics to politics, citizens may increasingly rely on their preferences about integration, and their evaluations of the EU's performance, when they judge the representation process at the EU-level (Schmitt 2005; Rohrschneider 2002). We will use the term 1st-order hypothesis when referring to the mechanism whereby citizens judge the EU on the basis of EU-related factors.

This paper, then, contributes to the growing body of research analyzing the transfer and 1st order hypothesis by examining how voters perceive various mechanisms of representation. First, we will examine the extent to which citizens rely on national versus EU-based performance indicators in European elections. Second, while elections are clearly the most important mechanism to represent citizens, we will broaden the analysis by examining how citizens generally evaluate the process of representation at the national and EU-level, for reasons explained below.

The Individual-level Foundation of Second-Order Elections Models

Second order election models hinge on the motivation of voters. To the degree that voters actually perceive two separate institutional layers, these models assume that information from the national level informs voters' decisions at the EU level (Hix and Marsh 2007). The main evidence for this model consists of three components. First, compared to national elections,

voters typically defect from government parties in European elections. This is consistent with the observation that large parties, who are likely to be included in national governments, tend to lose votes in European elections when compared to the last national elections. Second, smaller parties tend to increase their vote share from the last national election to a subsequent EU elections. Finally, this defection from larger to smaller parties is *especially* pronounced during the middle of parliamentary cycles. This is consistent with the observation that the extent of parties' vote gains and losses is mediated by the national electoral cycle at the time an EU elections take place. Cumulatively, this evidence seems to indicate that voters transfer information from the performance of national party systems to the EU-level.

The 2nd order election model is not only supported empirically, it also makes a lot of sense from the perspective of party competition at the level of nation-states. Firstly, political parties in most European countries are ordered along a left-right division within nation-states. Given this programmatic commitment at the level of nation-states, they have few incentives to go against their programmatic tradition in EU-wide elections (Andeweg 1995; Gabel 2000). As parties fail to debate the EU on its own terms during EU elections, citizens never hear the necessary public discourse to consider the EU. This, in turn, severely restricts citizens' ability to evaluate the EU *sui generis* since parties are the key representatives at both levels. Thus, unless an EU-related issue cuts across the left-right dimension, which increases a party's capacity to develop stances that are not tied to its programmatic heritage, it is hard to see how parties can effectively deny that heritage in EU-elections. In short, they must connect their stances about integration to their domestic policies in order to maintain their credibility. For these reasons, students of party positions on European integration find that their left-right stance on domestic cleavages is a strong predictor of their integration stance (Dalton 2005; Marks et al. 2006; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2007). Thus, the institutionalized role of political parties as intermediaries between national

and EU-election reinforces the idea that citizens presumably transfer information from the national level to that of the EU. Finally, further reinforcing the transfer hypothesis is the fact that analyses about citizens' EU support show that the popularity of national governments is taken as a proxy of how well the EU performs and, subsequently, affects citizens' evaluations of the European Union (Anderson 1998). This too suggests that individuals transfer information from the level of nation-states to the level of the EU.

All in all, there exist plausible conceptual reasons and considerable empirical evidence in support of the transfer hypothesis. However, while the transfer hypothesis is not completely wrong, it is unlikely to be entirely right.

Problems of Second-Order Models

Despite the focus of 2nd-order models on voters' choice, we actually know surprisingly little about why voters choose different parties in national and EU elections. This results from the focus of most 2nd-order elections models on aggregate election outcomes. The dependent variable is typically a vote loss/gain variable when election outcomes in national and supra-national elections are compared. Given this approach, it remains unclear precisely why voters defect from governmental parties.

Specifically, many patterns found at the aggregate level are actually consistent with both the transfer *and* 1st-order hypotheses. For example, small party support in EU elections is often taken as a sign that voters defect from large government parties because of their national performance as a governing party. As Hix and Marsh put it, "the main story is that 'party size' matters, as the second-order model predicts. Small parties gain and large parties...lose" (p. 22). This is no doubt the case in the aggregate. But what does this imply for how voters arrive at their vote choice in EU elections? The 2nd-order model interprets this pattern as evidence that voters generalize from the national to the supra-national level. Equally plausible is an interpretation that

voters view both institutional layers separately, and apply different criteria in their decision-making at each level: in our example, smaller parties (such as the Greens) may be supported because they are perceived to do a better job in performing at the EU-level than larger parties (Carrubba and Timpone 2005). Thus, while EP elections are no doubt less relevant in power terms, they may not be second-order in terms of the mechanisms that underlie people's vote choice. In short, the aggregate approach is running the danger of committing the ecological fallacy.

Another problem is the empirical focus of most 2nd-order analyses on vote *switching* across the two levels. While the conceptual model itself speaks both to why voters defect from government parties (e.g., dissatisfaction with parties in government) or to why they stay with them (e.g. satisfaction), the aggregate approach entails analyses exclusively examining vote switching. Imagine a hypothetical scenario where all parties at the national and EU-level receive exactly the same aggregate vote share. In this case, there would be no variance across the two elections, and thus nothing could be explained with an aggregate model where parties' vote gains and losses constitute the dependent variable. Once net switching is greater than zero, aggregate models do have an opportunity to explain gains and losses. In other words, the results of aggregate analyses are *driven by (net) vote changes and ignore consistent vote choices across the two levels*.

These shortcomings are unfortunate, for at least two reasons. Conceptually, it is worth knowing why voters maintain support for government and opposition parties at both levels. The transfer hypothesis assumes that voters are happy with the performance of parties at the national level if voters consistently support government parties. It is equally plausible that voters are happy with parties' performance at the EU-level independently of their performance at the national-level. Second, most citizens vote consistently across the two levels. In short, consistency across levels is the norm; defectors constitutes a minority of voters. But the

aggregate approach focuses on the empirical minority, ignoring information from the majority of voters.

We do not suggest that the transfer hypothesis never be applied. We suspect (though we do not know for certain) that this is how voters arrived at decisions during early European elections when the powers of the European Parliament were more restricted than they are now (Reif and Schmitt 1980). We also expect, however, that voters are beginning to evaluate the EU on its own terms given the growing importance of EU institutions in the policy-making process at the national level (Schmitt 2005: 654). Neither do we argue that the transfer hypothesis is entirely obsolete. We do suggest that the determination of the extent to which the two mechanisms underlie voters' electoral choice in EU-elections is an empirical question. We therefore see a need to examine the individual-level assumption of the second-order model, in part because of the changing character of European integration, in part because the transfer hypothesis has hardly been directly tested.

Hypotheses

The logic of the 2nd-order model predicts:

Hypothesis 1: Voters' performance evaluations of the national government and the national economy influence the extent to which voters defect from governmental parties in EU elections.

And, the following prediction is implied but has not been tested by 2nd-order models:

Hypothesis 2: Voters' performance evaluations of the national government and the national economy influence the extent to which voters stay with the same party at the national and EU-level.

The 1st-order hypothesis, in turn, predicts that vote choices at the EU-level are made on the basis of EU-related factors. Specifically,

Hypothesis 3: The perceived performance of parties at the EU level influences the extent to which voters' defect from government parties.

Hypothesis 4: Voters' performance evaluations of parties at the EU level influence the extent to which voters stay with the same party at the national and EU-level.

Results

Our dependent variable in these analyses follows Carruba and Timbone (2005, p. 266). We created a new variable, based on parties' recalled vote in the last national and EU elections. This new variable contains four cells: voters (1) support government parties in both elections; (2) move from government parties in national election to the opposition in EU elections; (3) defect from the opposition in national elections to (national) government parties in EU elections; (4) support opposition parties in both elections.¹ As reported earlier in the text, consistency is the norm; defection in either direction the minority.

We use the 1999 European election study, which contains several performance indicators needed to test the hypotheses. We included two predictors located at the national level: perceptions of the economy; and evaluations of government performance. We also included two predictors located at the EU-level. One indicator measures voters' evaluations of the performance of parties at the EU-level. This variable, while focused on national parties, attempts to separately gauge perception of how well parties handle EU affairs.² Another variable measures citizens' support for European integration. (All measures are described in detail in the appendix).

Since the four levels of the dependent variable constitute a nominal variable, we conducted a multi-nominal logit analysis. Table 1 shows the coefficients with government supporters at both levels serving as the reference category. The first column shows the coefficients for respondents who switch

from governmental parties in national elections to opposition parties in the EU election. Note that the two EU-predictors are insignificant. Also note that the national economic performance variable is insignificant. In contrast, the governmental performance variable is significant. All of this is consistent with the transfer hypothesis — the perception of national governments' performance influences vote defection from governments to opposition parties in EU elections. We also note that when the governmental performance variable is dropped from the model, then the EU performance variable becomes significant. This suggests that the transfer mechanism is partly induced by the way that EU-wide elections are conducted through national party systems, and not by a genuine, EU-wide party system (Andeweg 1995).

Table 1: Predicting Support for Government Parties across National/EP Elections

Electoral Choices:	Vote Govt. (National) & Opposition (EU)	Vote Opposition (National) & Govt. (EU)	Vote Opposition (National) and Opposition (EU)
Parties' Government Performance	-.41** (.11)	-.36** (.07)	-.76** (.09)
Economic Perceptions	-.23 (.13)	-.07 (.11)	-.23* (.1)
EU Support	.04 (.09)	-.53** (.14)	-.28** (.05)
Parties' EU Performance	-.06 (.05)	-.15* (.06)	-.16** (.04)
Strength of Party Attachment	-.28 (.4)	-1.03** (.28)	-.18 (.19)
Far-Left Ideology	-.53* (.24)	.22 (.21)	-.38 (.39)
Left-Center Ideology	-.21 (.25)	.26 (.23)	-.44 (.34)
Right-Center Ideology	.28 (.26)	.35 (.18)	.53** (.16)
Right Ideology	-.23 (.35)	.06 (.18)	.61* (.26)
Far-Right Ideology	-.56 (.4)	-.13 (.27)	(.71) (.36)

Age	.01** (.003)	.01** (.003)	.01* (.005)
Education	.02** (.006)	.01* (.006)	.01 (.007)
Sex	-.05 (.11)	-.01 (.12)	-.26** (.04)

Note: Entries are coefficients from a multi-nominal logit analysis. Government supporters at both elections are the reference category.

* and ** denotes significance at the .05 and .01 level, respectively. European weight is used.

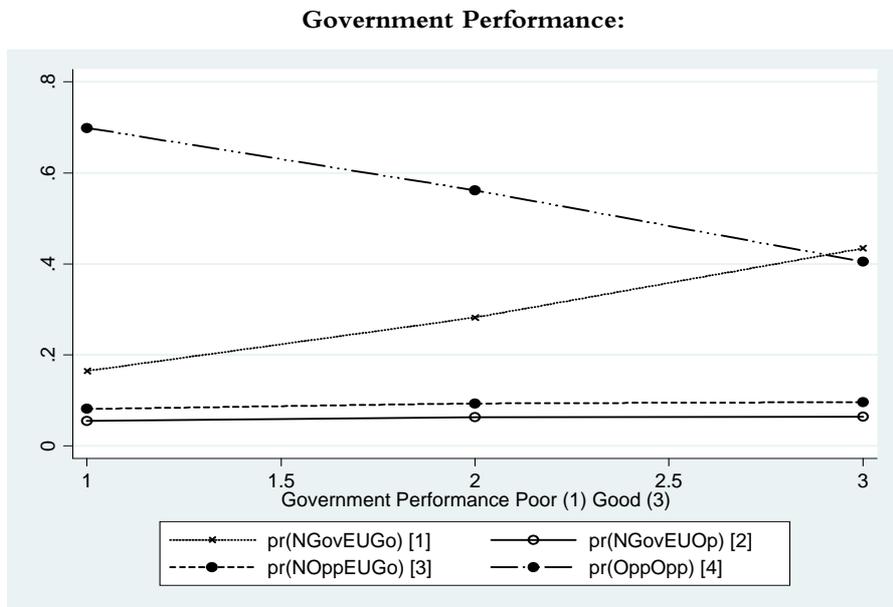
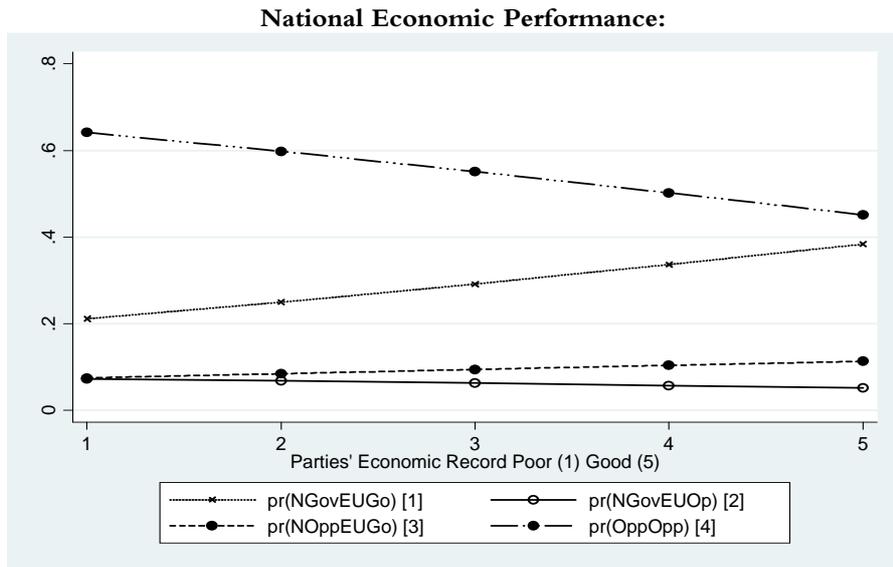
Source: 1999 European Election Survey.

Turning to the group of voters who switch their vote from an opposition party in national elections to a government party in an EU election, we now note that the two EU-predictors are statistically significant. When voters believe that parties do a good job at the EU-level they are more likely to move *towards* national government parties regardless of their evaluations of national performance. Supporters of integration are also more likely to switch towards governmental parties. This constitutes clear evidence in support of the 1st-order hypothesis. In turn, the transfer model is also supported insofar as positive governmental performance is connected to a reduced tendency to move away from governmental supporters at both levels.

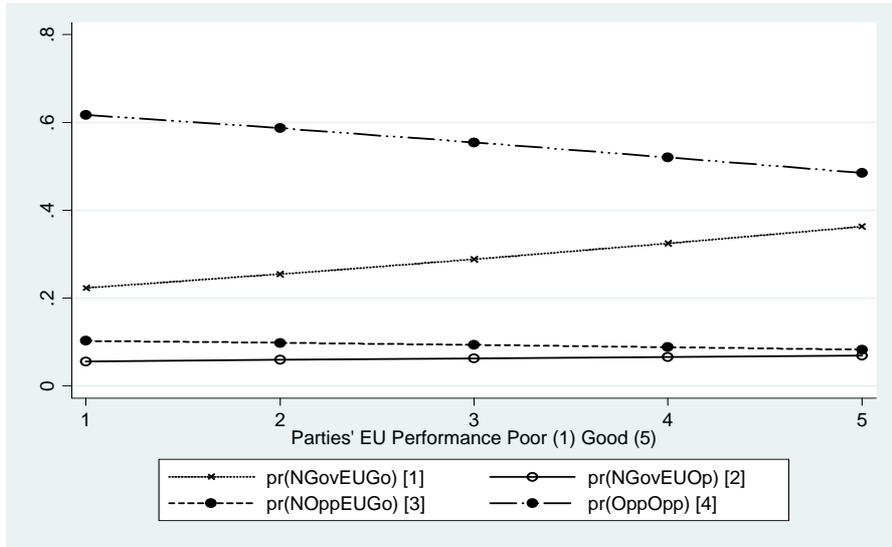
Finally, support for all four hypotheses emerges from the last group of voters. Here all performance predictors are statistically significant. Voters evidently transfer information from the national to the EU-level; and they evaluate the EU *sui generis*.

In order to convey a better sense of the predictive power of each variable, we plotted the predicted value of falling into one of the four categories against the theoretically relevant predictors (figure 1). The first two figures illustrate the impact of parties' economic record and perceived government performance on whether voters support governmental or opposition parties in both elections, or exhibit cross-level defections. These graphs provide considerable support for the transfer hypothesis.

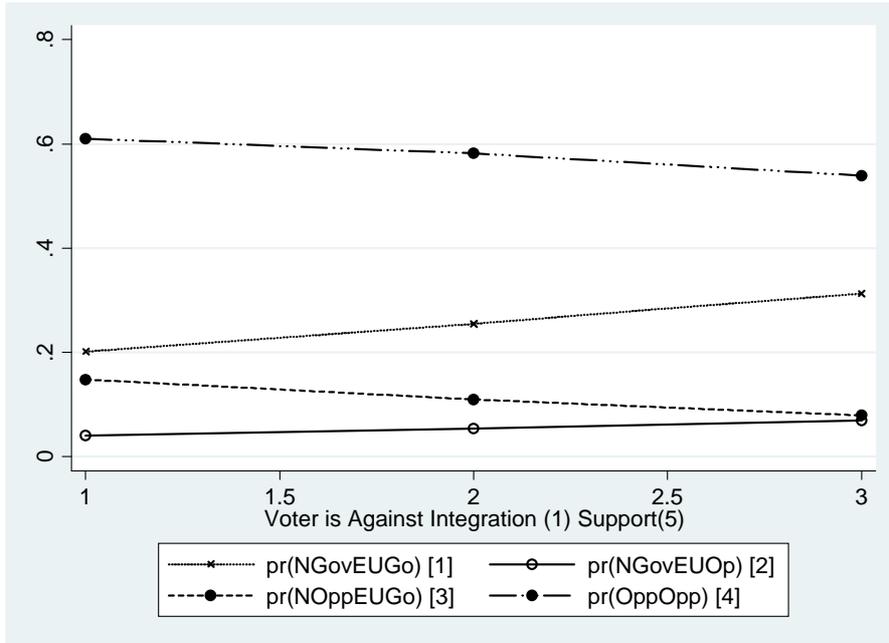
Figure 1 : The Influence of Performance Evaluations on Cross-level Voting Pattern



Parties' Performance at EU level:



Support European integration:



The next two figures show the impact of EU-related performance factors on vote choices. Visually, these are less strongly related to vote choices than, especially, evaluations of parties' government performance. At the same time, they do matter. In fact, EU-based performance factors are nearly as important as national economic performance. All in all, this evidence provides support for the 1st-order hypothesis as well.

East-West differences in 2nd order elections?

Recent analyses have suggested that the 2nd-order election model does not appear to be supported in new democracies in East-Central Europe (Schmitt 2005; Koepke and Ringe 2006; Hix and Marsh 2007). This conclusion is based on the observation that aggregate vote changes in the East from national to EU elections do not connect to the same kind of predictors as in the West. This non-finding is actually consistent with the finding that national elections in new East-Central European democracies evidence a much higher level of volatility between elections than in Western Europe (Tavits 2005; Caramani 2006). The reason appears to be that East-Central Europeans do not link their performance evaluations as clearly to government and opposition parties as voters in the West because the organizational and programmatic instability after the democratic transition makes it difficult for voters to identify those parties most likely to solve a problem—or to identify the culprits responsible for it. Consequently, the 2nd-order model may not be applicable in East-Central Europe.

As we argued in the previous section, however, we would suggest that it is premature to characterize the motives of individual voters on the basis of aggregate change scores alone. So in order to test whether the transfer and 1st-order hypothesis does not apply to new democracies, we conducted an initial analysis of vote changes across national and EU-elections using the 2004 European Election study. We first constructed the same dependent variable as

in the previous analyses. Second, we included one variable measuring voter's evaluations of the government. Another variable measures perceptions of the national economy (see the appendix). The EU-level performance variables are less than ideal, however, because they do not measure parties' performance at the EU-level. We therefore used one indicator of whether citizens have developed a European identity - a democracy deficit at the EU-level; another indicator measures whether citizens are for or against European integration. The model also includes several control variables, including left-right ideology, strength of partisanship, age, education, and gender.

Table 2 shows the results for the 4 predictors that measure the transfer hypothesis (governmental performance and evaluations of the economy) and 1st-order hypothesis (perceptions of a democracy deficit and European identity). The reference group is, as in the previous analyses, whether voters support the government parties at both levels. As a test of East-West differences, we also included an interaction term between a predictor listed in the left-most column and an East-West dummy variable. The interaction terms were added separately for each equation. For example, we first estimated a model that included an interaction term between governmental performance evaluations and the East-West dummy. On the basis of these results, we then computed the conditional coefficients listed in the table for the East and the West. We also indicate whether an interaction term is significant. Then, we estimated another model, this time including an interaction term between evaluations of the national economy and the East-West dummy. And so on.

Table 2: Predicting Support for Government Parties across National/EP Elections in Eastern and Western Europe

Electoral Choice:	Vote Govt. (National) & Opposition (EU)	Vote Opposition (National) & Govt. (EU)	Vote Opposition (National) and Opposition (EU)
	Interaction East West Significant:	Interaction East West Significant:	Interaction East West Significant:
Government Performance Evaluations	-.92** -1.9* No	-1.0** -2.0** Yes	-1.6** -3.2** No
Economic Perceptions	-.02 -.42** No	-.19** -.38** Yes	-.21 -.03 No
EU Represents Citizens	-.09 -.07* No	.07 .19** No	-.11 -.03 No
EU Identity	-.50** .10 Yes	-.78** -.31** Yes	-.46** -.03 Yes

Note: Entries are conditional coefficients from a multi-nominal logit analysis. Government supporters at national and EU elections are the reference category.

* and ** denotes significance at the .05 and .01 level, respectively. European weight is used.

Source: 2004 European Election Survey.

The results underscore much of the previous analyses. First, national performance perceptions are very important in the West—but also in the East. Second, there is some evidence, again, for the 1st order hypothesis: perceptions of the democracy deficit affect vote choice in the predictable direction. For instance, when citizens believe the EU represents them, they are more likely to fall into the national opposition/EU government parties in EU elections. In other words, perceived positive democratic performance by the EU helps national governmental parties, just as a performance model would predict.

As far as East-West differences are concerned, they are mostly *insignificant*, except for the European identity variable. For nearly all coefficients, however, the sign is in the same direction, and the differences are negligible. Note also that most coefficients have the same sign but tend to be larger in the West. These preliminary analyses do not suggest that national

and EU elections are fundamentally viewed differently across the former East-West divide. Instead, they suggest that relationships are generally in the same direction, but the magnitude tends to be larger in the West, presumably because voters had more time in mature democracies to connect performance evaluations to parties' status as a government or opposition party. *In short, we see differences of degree but not a fundamentally different electorate.*

Political representation and system satisfaction

All analyses presented hitherto are based on the premise that voters actually distinguish fairly clearly between the national and EU levels. That is, the transfer hypothesis assumes that voters generalize from the national to the supra-national level; the 1st-order hypothesis actually assumes that voters compare the two levels. Our indicators from the two election studies, however, are less-than-ideal to test whether voters actually perceive two different levels of representation, for two reasons. First, the indicators are less than ideal: they measure the performance of national conditions reasonably well but are quite imperfect for the EU-level. Second, the fact that parties are prominent at both levels means that voters inevitably pay considerable attention to the national level, even when they evaluate the EU. Is there evidence that allows us to examine how voters actually perceive the process of representation independently of political parties?

Fortunately, one Eurobarometer conducted in 1999 (52.0) contains several useful indicators that we use here to tease out whether citizens clearly discriminate between the two levels as the 1st-order hypothesis suggests a bit further. One set of indicators measures the representational performance of national regimes. A closely related set of indicators are found in the same question which asks about the EU's representational performance:

“Many important decisions are made by the European Union. They might be in the interest of people like yourself, or they might not.

To what extent do you feel you can rely on each of the following bodies to make sure that these decisions are in the interest of people like yourself?"

Respondents evaluated a series of institutions, including the national parliament, the national government, the EU commission and the EU parliament on a ten point scale. Another set of questions asks whether citizens are satisfied with the way democracy works (swd) at the national and EU-level, again asked in the same question.

The 1st-order hypothesis would predict that citizens clearly distinguish between the two levels and, therefore, national representation perceptions should predict satisfaction with national democracies; EU-representation perceptions should predict satisfaction with EU democracy. And representation perceptions from one level should *not* predict satisfaction with democracy at the other level. This would be the clearest sign that citizens attribute representational responsibilities separately to each level. In contrast, the transfer hypothesis would predict that national performance perceptions affect satisfaction with the national *and* EU democracy.

Table 3 shows the surprisingly clear results in support of the 1st-order hypothesis. Representational perceptions at each level predict satisfaction with democracies at each level. And representational perceptions at the national (EU) level do not influence evaluations of democracies at the EU (national) level. Note that these results emerge despite the fact that the question wording might easily have produced cross-level consistency because the representational indicators were asked in the same question as were the swd indicators. This provides strong support for the 1st order hypothesis because it shows, for West European voters at least, that they systematically distinguish between the representational mechanisms at the two levels. In other words, when voters view representation mechanisms independently of parties, they clearly distinguish between the two levels.

Table 3: Do Citizens Transfer Representational Responsibility from the National level to the EU?

Predictor	EU Democracy	National Democracy
National Inst's Represent Citizens	-.008 (.005)	-.099** (.009)
EU Inst's Represent Citizens	-.08** (.007)	.006 (.007)
Party Preference	.02 (.04)	-.12* (.04)
Nation Benefits	-.24** (.02)	-.14** (.01)
Knowledge about EU	.06** (.01)	.004 (.01)
National Economy positive	-.07** (.01)	-.12** (.01)
Personal Economy positive	-.02 (.01)	-.02 (.01)
Age cohort: Young	-.15** (.03)	-.05 (.04)
Age cohort: Middle	-.08* (.03)	-.003 (.04)
Education	.02** (.003)	.002 (.005)
Left Ideology	.05 (.05)	.07 (.04)
Centrist Ideology	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Income	-.01 (.009)	-.04** (.01)

Source: Eurobarometer 1999.

Conclusion

There is considerable evidence that voters generalize the national performance to the EU level. There is also quite a bit of support for the idea that citizens distinguish between the transfer and 1st-order mechanisms. The aggregate approach tends to be biased in favor of the transfer hypothesis to

the detriment of the 1st-order mechanism. Both perspectives, however, are needed to explain more fully the complex nature of vote choices in multi-level systems of governance.

Notes

¹ Unfortunately, Carrubba and Timbone do not use individual-level performance evaluations. Consequently, their analysis does not directly examine the motives of voters either.

² The correlation coefficient between governmental performance and parties' EU performance is substantial ($r=.36$) though far from perfect. This suggests that the two performance dimensions are partially independent.

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Appendix A: Measurement of Government Support – EES (1999)

Dependent Variables:

Government Support across National/EP elections: We coded respondents as (1) voted for a party in a governing coalition in the last EP election and the last general election, (2) voted for a party in a governing coalition in the last EP election and a party not in a governing coalition in the last general election, (3) voted for a party not in a governing coalition in the last EP election and a party in a governing coalition in the last general election and (4) voted for a party not in a governing coalition in the last EP election and the last general election.

Independent Variables:

Parties' EU Performance: "Thinking once again about European integration, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the current policy in <name of your country>? Are you (1) very satisfied, (2) somewhat satisfied, (4) somewhat dissatisfied or (5) very dissatisfied?" We included the small number of don't know responses as a (3) middle category.

Parties' Government Performance: "Let us now come back to <name of your country>. Do you (1) approve or (3) disapprove of the government's record to date?" We included the small number of don't know responses as a (3) middle category.

Economic Perceptions: "How about the state of the economy, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the current policy in <name of your country>: are you (1) very satisfied, (2) somewhat satisfied, (4) somewhat dissatisfied or (5) very dissatisfied?" We included the small number of don't know responses as a (3) middle category.

EU Support: "Generally speaking, do you think that <your country's > membership of the European Union is (1) a bad thing, (2) neither a good nor a bad thing or (3) a good thing?" We placed the small number of don't know responses in the (2) category.

Party Identification: We created a dichotomous variable: (1) if the respondent identified themselves as "very close to <their party of choice>, fairly close, or merely a sympathizer" and (0) if they did not identify with a party or gave did not know.

Far-Left Ideology: Taking the respondent's self-placement on a 10 point ideology scale (1-10), we classified them as (1) far-left if they answered 1-3 and (0) for any other answer.

Left-Center Ideology: Taking the respondent's self-placement on a 10 point ideology scale (1-10), we classified them as (1) left of center if they answered 4 and (0) for any other answer.

Right-Center Ideology: Taking the respondent's self-placement on a 10 point ideology scale (1-10), we classified them as (1) right of center if they answered 6 and (0) for any other answer.

Right Ideology: Taking the respondent's self-placement on a 10 point ideology scale (1-10), we classified them as (1) right if they answered 7 and (0) for any other answer.

Far-Right Ideology: Taking the respondent's self-placement on a 10 point ideology scale (1-10), we classified them as (1) far-right if they answered 8-10 and (0) for any other answer.

Age: "What year were you born?"

Education: "How old were you when you stopped full-time education?"

Sex: (0) male, (1) female

Appendix B: Measurement of Government Support – EES (2004)

Dependent Variables:

Government Support across National/EP elections: We coded respondents as (1) voted for a party in a governing coalition in the last EP election and the last general election, (2) voted for a party in a governing coalition in the last EP election and a party not in a governing coalition in the last general election, (3) voted for a party not in a governing coalition in the last EP election and a party in a governing coalition in the last general election and (4) voted for a party not in a governing coalition in the last EP election and the last general election.

Independent Variables:

EU Represents Citizens: An additive index of two questions about the government's economic performance. "How much confidence do you have that decisions made by the European Union will be in the interest of (1) [country] and (2) people like you?" The indicator ranges from (2) doesn't feel represented to (10) feels represented.

EU Identity: “Generally speaking, do you think that [country’s] membership of the European Union is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?”¹ 1 Bad thing 2 Neither, dk 3 Good thing.

Parties’ Government Performance: “Let us now come back to [country]. Do you approve or disapprove the government’s record to date?” Respondents could answer (0) disapprove or (2) approve. We included the small number of don’t know responses as a (1) middle category.

Economic Perceptions: An additive index of two questions about the government’s economic performance. “What do you think about the economy? Compared to 12 months ago, do you think that the general economic situation in this country is a lot worse, a little worse, stayed the same, a little better or a lot better?” and “Over the next 12 months, how do you think the general economic situation in this country will: get a lot worse, get a little worse, stay the same, get a little better or get a lot better?” The indicator ranges from (2) bad performance to (10) good performance.

Appendix C: Measurement of Representation Variables – Eurobarometer 52.0 (1999)

Dependent Variables:

Satisfaction with EU Democracy: “On the whole are you (1) very satisfied, (2) fairly satisfied, (4) not very satisfied or (5) not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union?” We included the small number of don’t know responses as a (4) middle category.

Satisfaction with National Democracy: “On the whole are you (1) very satisfied, (2) fairly satisfied, (4) not very satisfied or (5) not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (OUR COUNTRY)?” We included the small number of don’t know responses as a (4) middle category.

Independent Variables:

National Inst's and EU Inst's Represent Citizens: "Many important decisions are made by the European Union. They might be in the interest of people like yourself, or they might not. To what extent do you feel you can rely on each of the following bodies to make sure that these decisions are in the interest of people like yourself?" Respondents placed the national government, national parliament, European Commission and European Parliament on 10-point scale, ranging from (1) cannot rely on it at all to (10) can rely on it completely.

Party Preference: Respondent would support a party in government if there were an election next Sunday (coded 1) or an opposition party (coded 0).

Nation Benefits: "Taking everything into consideration, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?" We included the small number of don't know responses as a middle category.

Knowledge about EU: A 4 point indicator (0-4) based on the number of correct answers to 4 factual questions about the (i) President of the EU Commission; (ii) a European commissioner appointed by national government; (iii) (National) Minister of Finance; (iv) National Minister of Foreign Affairs.

National Economy positive: An additive index of two questions about the future economic situation. "What are your expectations for the year to come: will 2000 be better, worse, or the same, when it comes to: (1) the economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY); (2) "the employment situation in (OUR COUNTRY)?" The indicator ranges from 2 (worse) to 6.

Personal Economy positive: Same question lead as for National Economy, after which respondents evaluated: (1) the financial situation of your household; (2) your personal job situation. The indicator ranges from 2 (worse) to 6.

Age cohort: Young: Dichotomous variable: (1) respondents aged 15-29; (0) respondents all other ages

Age cohort: Middle: Dichotomous variable: (1) respondents aged 30-50; (0) respondents all other ages

Education: years of schooling. Respondents “still studying” were coded to the mean year of schooling for that nation.

Left Ideology: Taking the respondent’s self-placement on a 10 point ideology scale (1-10), we classified them as (1) left if they answered 1-3 and (0) for any other answer.

Centrist Ideology: Taking the respondent’s self-placement on a 10 point ideology scale (1-10), we classified them as (1) center if they answered 4-6 and (0) for any other answer.

Income: 4 point indicator ranging from Low to High, with missing data recoded to the mean income for that country.

Chapter 6

Studying and Comparing Second-Order Elections. Examples from Greece, Portugal and Spain.

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Abstract

Since the formulation of the second-order election model there have been many studies comparing first and second order contests, in particular national and European elections. However, few analyses have been conducted on the relationship between different types of SOEs. This paper uses the Index of Dissimilarity, a measure used to compare elections of different types, in order to shed light on the relationship between municipal (local level) and European (supra-national level) elections in three Southern European countries, Greece, Portugal and Spain. We use aggregate electoral results from the capitals of Greek prefectures (51), the capitals of Portuguese districts (18 district capitals of mainland Portugal plus the capitals of Azores and Madeira) and the capitals of Spanish provinces (50). We focus on the last three municipal elections in each country, which are compared with the closest European (and parliamentary) contests. We observe high dissimilarity, which makes us believe that local and European contests are quite independent from one another and that voting choice is affected by different criteria.

Introduction

In the study of different types of elections in Europe, there are some topics that have been examined more than others. One of the less favoured ones deals with the relationship between local and European contests. Interest in examining the relationship between the two different sorts of second order elections may be placed in a narrow framework about the application and the prospects of the second order model or in a broader one. In favour of the latter case, there are arguments about the importance of local administration, local politics and the respective elections.

The second-order elections model

In Europe, the first study of the electoral cycle and the popularity of the government was done by Reiner Dinkel and was formulated in terms of the 'minor elections' theory (Dinkel 1977). Dinkel observed that the performance of the federal government parties in the German Länder elections depended on the timing of the election within the federal cycle.

The characteristics of the mid-term and Länder elections led to the formulation of the theoretical model of 'national second-order elections'. Karlheinz Reif and Hermann Schmitt's model is a turning point in the study of elections that were overshadowed by general ones (Reif and Schmitt 1980, Reif 1985, Schmitt and Mannheimer 1991, C. van der Eijk and Franklin 1996, Reif 1997, Norris 1997, Marsh 1998 and 2005, Freire 2004, Schmitt 2005, W. van der Brug and C. van der Eijk 2005). These writers have made the distinction between first-order national elections and second-order national elections. In their 1980 article, Reif and Schmitt studied the first European Election which took place in June 1979 and represented a typical example of a second-order election.

The main hypothesis and novelty of Reif and Schmitt's theoretical model was that the European Election political arena combined nine different second-order political arenas. Each member-state of the European

Community (EEC) had a national (first-order) political arena (FOPA) and, therefore, the European Election result (second-order political arena/SOPA) was clearly affected by the current national policies and the national first-order political arena. Thus, at the time of the European Election, the FOPA played an important role in the SOPA (Reif and Schmitt 1980, Reif 1985).

Reif and Schmitt place the European Election within each national electoral cycle and claim that participation will be lower, and that new parties will fare better and null votes will increase. They also elaborate on the performance of larger and governing parties or coalitions, and claim that it is worse in second order than in general elections. All these trends derive from the fact that less is at stake, since the national government will not change. Most of the studies are focused on the first and most important dimension of the model (less at stake) and its effects. Moreover, there is emphasis on the way in which national politics constrains European elections and how electoral behaviour in European elections is shaped, depending on the timing of the contest within the first-order electoral cycle. Special focus has been on comparisons of turnout (Blondel et al 1996, 1997; Franklin 1996, 2001a, 2001b; Mattila 2003), voting choice (Marsh 1998, 2005), specific arena (Küchler 1991; Wüst 2006) and campaign dimensions (Banducci & Semetco 2003; De Vreese et al 2006) between national and European contests. The SOE model has been invaluable in shedding light on these matters.

Closely related to the formulation of the model is the study of local elections, either in comparison with national contests or as case studies. Depending on the political system of each country, the set of local elections may be comprised of several contests, such as Länder, Provincial, Regional, Prefecture, Municipal etc. The research focuses on the relationship between local and national elections in terms of turnout, small parties and national government popularity (suggestively Dinkel 1977, 1978, 1989; Morlan 1984; Abedi & Siaroff 1999, 2006; Jeffery & Hough 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2006, Pallarés & Keating 2003, 2006; Moschonas 2003, 2006).

Figure 1: Schematic Representation of different types of elections

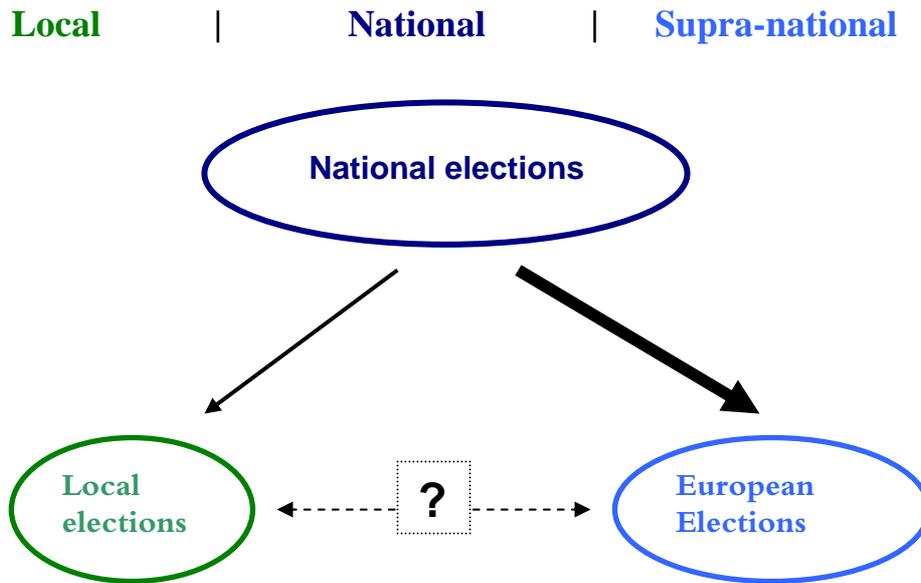


Figure 1 shows a schematic of the relationship between elections. The various types of elections have been studied, as well as the relationship between national and local, and national and European. What is the relationship between local elections (all or any kind of local elections) and elections for the European Parliament? How does electoral behaviour change from one type to another? These are questions that will define if and how the interplay of different level SOEs is formed.

Uncharted territory

Until now, only a few articles have been written, comparing British local government and European Parliament elections in 1994 and 2004. Their emphasis was mainly on the classification of different types of elections and they concluded that “*some SOEs are more SOEs than others*” (McLean 1996), “*...the elections to local councils as one and three quarters order*” (Heath *et al* 1999),

“local elections as less second order than pan-European ones” (Rallings & Thrasher 2005).

Moreover, André Freire (2004) has claimed that «*Empirical studies of second-order elections in the European context have usually compared legislative and European Parliament elections, and have usually lacked a longitudinal perspective*», and has tried to overcome some of these shortcomings by using only Portuguese electoral data (1975–2004), extending comparisons to more types of second-order elections and introducing a long-run perspective.

Studying and Comparing Second-Order Elections: Examples from Greece, Portugal and Spain

The main aim of this study is to shed light on this perspective by comparing second-order elections in Greece, Portugal and Spain. We attempt to look at some aspects of the relationship between local and European elections in a comparative perspective, and explore whether there are different patterns of voting behaviour in the same region in local, compared to European and national, elections and in European, compared to national, contests.

At the local level, we have decided to use municipal elections because this is the only common type of local contest in the three countries (see Table 1).

In particular, we use aggregate electoral results from the capitals of Greek prefectures (51), the capitals of Portuguese districts (18 district capitals of mainland Portugal plus the capitals of Azores and Madeira) and the capitals of Spanish provinces (50).¹ Furthermore, larger cities often have more official (party supported) candidacies and there are few independent candidates that would require a more in-depth approach in each case/municipality.

Table 1: Levels of elections

	<i>Local</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Supra-national</i>
Greece	Municipal and Prefecture	Parliamentary	European
Portugal	Municipal (<i>Parishes, Municipalities</i>)	Presidential and Parliamentary	European
Spain	Municipal, Provincial (<i>direct elections only in the Basque Country</i>) and Regional (<i>Autonomous Communities</i>)	Parliamentary (<i>Congress & Senate</i>)	European

We have chosen to study the last three municipal elections in each country and compared them with the closest European and parliamentary contests. We have examined the two larger parties² in each country and the rest of the parties in each country considered as a whole.

The analytical tool we use is the **index of dissimilarity** (Johnston 1980, Abedi & Siaroff 1999). We have chosen this index because it is used in comparisons of different types of elections (Abedi & Siaroff 1999 and 2006; Jeffery and Hough 2003). Until now it has been used in the comparison of national and regional elections. We attempt to introduce it in the study of European elections. Applying the index of dissimilarity in our study, we focus on the electoral results of municipal elections in 121 cities in the three countries and compare them with the closest contests, European and parliamentary (in Spain we have used the results for the Congress). We have chosen to use the closest instead of the most recent ones, because this has been common practice among the users of the index, and it may provide comparable results and conclusions.

The index of dissimilarity is calculated as follows:

$$I_D = \frac{1}{2} \times (\bullet v_{ia} - v_{ib} \bullet + \dots + \bullet v_{na} - v_{nb} \bullet),$$

where v_{ia} is the percentage of votes that Party i received in elections of type a , and v_{ib} is the percentage of votes that Party i received in the nearest elections of type b , for all the parties, from the i_{th} to the n_{th} .

The index expresses the proportion of the electorate who would have to change their vote in order for one type of election result to be converted into the other (Jeffery and Hough 2003). It ranges from 0.0, when all votes are cast in the same way, to a hypothetical 100, when all votes are cast differently. We consider 'low' or 'minor dissimilarity' ranges to be between 0.0 and 10, 'moderate' from 10.01 to 20, and 'high' to be any value above 20.01.

Compared “triplets” of elections for each country

As Table 4 shows, there are three triplets of elections that are compared for each country. Every triplet is comprised of the three types of contest for the respective level of government and represents three pairs of comparisons, namely Municipal-European (M-E), Municipal-Parliamentary (M-P) and European-Parliamentary (E-P). The first pair, M-E, will be in the core of our analysis. Therefore, for the M-E pair of comparisons, the Index of dissimilarity shows the percentage of the municipal vote that would have to change for it to become identical to the European vote (or vice versa). Similarly, for the -P pair, it shows how much of the municipal vote would have to change for it to equal the vote in parliamentary elections, and so on for the E-P pair.

Table 4: Table of Elections

Greece	M98 <i>18 Oct. 1998</i>	E99 <i>13 June 1999</i>	P96 <i>22 Sept. 1996</i>
	M02 <i>12 Oct. 2002</i>	E04 <i>13 June 2004</i>	P00 <i>9 April 2000</i>
	M06 <i>15 Oct. 2006</i>	E04 <i>13 June 2004</i>	P04 <i>7 March 2004</i>
Portugal	M97 <i>14 Dec. 1997</i>	E99 <i>13 June 1999</i>	P99 <i>10 Oct. 1999</i>
	M01 <i>16 Dec. 2001</i>	E99 <i>13 June 1999</i>	P02 <i>17 March 2002</i>
	M05 <i>9 Oct. 2005</i>	E04 <i>13 June 2004</i>	P05 <i>20 Feb. 2005</i>
Spain	M95 <i>28 May 1995</i>	E94 <i>12 June 1994</i>	P96 <i>3 March 1996</i>
	M99 <i>13 June 1999</i>	E99 <i>13 June 1999</i>	P00 <i>12 March 2000</i>
	M03 <i>25 May 2003</i>	E04 <i>13 June 2004</i>	P04 <i>14 March 2004</i>

M: Municipal elections -E: European Elections - : Parliamentary Elections

Before we proceed, some clarification of the difficulties and peculiarities of Greek local elections might be useful. To begin with, political parties are forbidden to compete in local elections (municipal and prefecture), but they are free to give official support to the candidates of their choice. The candidates may be members of the parties, ex-MPs etc., but the names of their lists must be original/different from the party names. Moreover, there is a large number of independent candidates. For these reasons it is not easy to correlate lists with parties.³

This correlation in municipal and prefecture elections is complicated further by the fact that the following alternatives are encountered:

- i) Candidates supported officially, by one or more parties

- ii) Independent candidates, supported unofficially by one or more parties, rendering correlation less straightforward and less clear, or purely independent
- iii) “Rebel” candidates, who belonged to a certain party in the past, compete without party support and may deprive official candidates of votes.

In this study we have taken into consideration only official candidacies. Where two or more parties supported a single candidate, we have added up their vote percentages in the other types of contests that are being compared. First round results are used in the analysis.

Hypothesis

As we have seen in the literature review, the relationship between parliamentary and local, and parliamentary and European elections has been discussed and studied quite elaborately during recent years. We want to find whether there is a direct link between local and European contests. Since this aspect has not yet been given detailed examination, our main question is whether there is a relation between the two types of second-order elections. We are not necessarily interested in finding a causal relationship, but rather in describing how things are. We expect to see the index take various values from one municipality to another, as well as from one pair of comparisons to another. Our main hypothesis is that low voting dissimilarity implies more interdependency between two levels of elections.

H₀: The less similar the results in close elections of different types, the more independent the political arenas of these types of elections.

To be more precise, applying this general hypothesis in the M-E comparison that we study, an insignificant or low dissimilarity between the votes for each party in the local and the supra-national level means that there is homogeneity in the voting choice in second-order elections.

H_1 : *The less similar the results between close Municipal and European contests, the more different the patterns of voting behaviour.*

Furthermore, a high degree of dissimilarity means on the one hand that the political arenas of these two SOEs are independent, and on the other, that it is quite possible that different criteria affect voting choice in each type of contest. Following this argument, several questions arise, such as: Is there a unique Second-Order Political Arena (SOPA)? Or is it comprised of a LoPA (Local Political Arena) and a European politics arena?

Applying the aforementioned general hypothesis for the M-P pairs, the small difference in the votes suggests that the local political arenas look like miniatures of the national one, and that strategic voting is less applicable. On the contrary, if the difference between vote percentages is high, then the local arenas are indeed local, they do not work in a way applicable and similar to the FOPA, voting '*à la carte*' is evident and the LoPA is more in effect. As for the E-P comparison, it does not lie in the centre of our study, given that it has already been elaborately discussed. We indicate that when results are broadly similar across these two types of election, then the vote in the European contests is affected by national criteria ('nationalized' character of EEs).

Observations – Remarks

In Greece there are moderate and high scores on the index of dissimilarity. The cases with minor scores on dissimilarity are limited.

Table 5: Index of dissimilarity–capitals of Greek prefectures

		M98- E99	M98- P96	E99- P96	M02- E04	M02- P00	E04- P00	M06- E04	M06- P04	E04- P04
Prefecture	Municipality (Capital city of prefecture)	I_n								
1. Attica	Athens	43.3	44.43	12.67	7.95	18.84	10.91	3.72	7.44	8.44
2. Euboea	Chalkis	2.01	10.22	12.23	11.73	6.82	10.05	13.66	11.03	8.19
3. Evrytania	Karpenissi	5.37	3.42	8.79	4.54	6.7	9.06	7.39	2.62	8.31
4. Phocis	Amfissa	13.69	7.87	5.82	9.06	17.47	11.61	10.31	5.26	7.73
5. Phthiotis	Lamia	15.04	10.36	12.46	15.69	4.81	11.52	10.82	5.7	9.16
6. Boeotia	Levadia	20.52	17.7	11.08	10.69	21.1	10.41	25.23	35.1	9.87
7. Chalcidice	Poligiros	16.37	7.17	9.2	12.33	10.97	8.9	4.99	6.48	6.51
8. Imathia	Veria	18.3	9.14	9.16	20.8	16.48	13.04	20.96	9.56	11.4
9. Kilkis	Kilkis	9.8	17.56	7.76	18.51	11.69	13.2	16.07	3.9	12.87
10. Pella	Edessa	20.7	11.34	9.36	19.45	12.29	12.24	-	-	-
11. Pieria	Katerini	20.33	31.9	11.57	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. Serres	Serres	12.54	13.01	9.89	31.4	41.22	9.82	40.1	49.89	9.79
13. Thessaloniki	Thessaloniki	7.19	6.52	11.37	11.25	20.4	14.01	7.77	19.12	11.35
14. Chania	Chania	16.9	3.19	13.71	9.28	13.13	15.63	8.31	9.39	8.28
15. Heraklion	Heraklion	14.14	24.97	10.83	12.28	16.23	8.57	41.13	39.47	5.84
16. Lasithi	Ag. Nikolaos	8.28	6.68	8.14	-	-	-	-	-	-
17. Rethymno	Rethimno	29.2	30.96	10.5	16.04	29.69	13.65	20.93	19.44	6.63
18. Drama	Drama	8.17	3.29	9.38	13.18	13.69	9.45	-	-	-
19. Evros	Alexandrou- poli	15.37	21.07	9.58	24.39	8.35	16.04	16.65	31.26	14.61
20. Kavala	Kavala	-	-	-	7.09	15.7	10.15	15.55	19.06	9.33
21. Rhodope	Komotini	40.49	30.52	13.97	30.11	5.39	24.72	15.2	11.61	13.31
22. Xanthi	Xanthi	39.6	39.71	14.97	26.09	33.8	13.27	11.86	18.06	12.88
23. Arta	Arta	13.82	23.36	12.86	11.02	5.2	6.64	18.37	24.33	7.7
24. Ioannina	Ioannina	5.75	18.15	12.4	10.29	21.37	11.32	12.58	14.83	10.33
25. Preveza	Preveza	16.85	26.64	9.79	12.63	21.92	9.29	10.07	19.9	9.83
26. Thesprotia	Egoumenitsa	19.5	6.86	12.64	2.3	8.65	6.55	14.88	6.76	8.12
27. Corfu	Corfu	9.4	11.01	13.83	10.26	21.33	11.07	14.05	25.23	11.18
28. Kefallinia	Argostoli	32.2	21.56	14.94	20.8	9.14	15.94	22.46	16.55	12.25
29. Lefkada	Lefkada	19.41	16.67	16.88	13.82	20.43	12.11	0.91	12.26	11.35
30. Zakynthos	Zakynthos	4.96	18.81	13.85	-	-	-	8.92	11.88	7.22
31. Chios	Chios	18.17	22.34	10.05	7.22	6.87	14.09	13.69	20.15	9.64

32. Lesbos	Mytilene	6.74	18.34	11.6	1.29	6.7	5.57	10.85	7.81	9.84
33. Samos	Vathi	18.88	14.55	12.25	17.17	7.15	10.02	24.01	23.63	7.88
34. Arcadia	Tripoli	19.86	32.63	12.77	9.6	5.83	10.51	16.34	14.88	9.88
35. Argolis	Nafplion	20.05	33.01	12.96	-	-	-	-	-	-
36. Corinthia	Korinthos	18.15	30.51	12.36	6.01	7.53	11.9	15.84	17.15	7.13
37. Laconia	Sparta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
38. Messinia	Kalamata	17.26	9.91	10.91	21.19	15.56	13.73	19.91	26.49	8.48
39. Cyclades	Hermoupoli	-	-	-	15.55	13.39	4.72	25.37	19.21	6.16
40. Dodecanese	Rhodes	15.94	23.99	8.05	13.67	2.19	15.62	4.21	12.34	8.13
41. Karditsa	Karditsa	10.39	12.59	15.3	11.24	2.95	8.85	-	-	-
42. Larissa	Larissa	5.34	7.7	9.28	5.64	15.36	10.1	9.83	2.58	9.93
43. Magnesia	Volos	13.75	20.99	9.66	7.39	17.56	10.17	10.56	5.7	9.26
44. Trikala	Trikala	10.31	5.78	8.33	13.5	19.06	12.76	13.76	13.83	11.27
45. Achaia	Patras	2.36	9.85	12.15	2.37	13.61	11.24	7.53	15.68	8.15
46. Aetol/Acarania	Mesologgi	17.89	8.66	15.65	2.91	9.26	10.95	39.84	47.54	7.7
47. Elis	Pyrgos	6.66	18.47	11.81	9.7	15.39	10.49	10.32	4.67	7.13
48. Florina	Florina	25.5	30.12	11.54	12.31	16.49	11.28	18.03	20.12	11.05
49. Grevena	Grevena	21.89	34.23	12.34	11.88	4.75	10.53	17.7	12.86	11.24
50. Kastoria	Kastoria	-	-	-	33.46	23.3	10.74	-	-	-
51. Kozani	Kozani	-	-	-	20.29	10.91	10.04	15.38	9.3	10.54
	<i>unweighted mean</i>	16.27	17.99	11.45	13.38	14.06	11.36	15.49	16.51	9.44

Note: Cells marked with ‘-’ signify the municipalities where at least one of the two bigger parties did not officially support a candidate. The whole triplet is obliterated.

Source: Data elaborated by the authors from official electoral results, available at www.ypes.gr and/or volumes from the ministry’s Archive.

Looking at the results of the index in the M-E pairs of elections, excluding those municipalities where there was no official support for at least one of the two major parties, the highest scores were in Athens (43.3), Komotini and Xanthi for M98-E99, Kastoria (33.46), Serres and Komotini in M02-E04, and Heraklion (41.13), Serres and Messologgi for M06-E04.

Portuguese results are mainly moderate and only a few cases score low or high on the index of dissimilarity.

	M97-E99	M97-P99	E99-P99	M01-E99	M01-P02	E99-P02	M05-E04	M05-P05	E04-P05
	ID								
1. Lisboa	1.03	1.64	2.55	21.74	6.63	15.11	29.61	28.89	3.26
2. Leiria	5.58	8.19	2.91	20.63	6.60	18.54	5.50	7.68	5.78
3. Santarém	0.57	2.03	1.94	9.93	8.96	18.89	24.56	21.75	4.11
4. Setúbal	7.74	8.50	1.74	31.81	35.71	17.34	29.55	24.73	4.82
5. Beja	7.37	11.13	3.76	4.90	13.73	9.67	13.34	15.75	6.89
6. Faro	1.69	0.89	2.73	23.43	7.34	16.09	18.75	15.23	3.52
7. Évora	16.66	20.07	3.41	9.93	18.58	8.65	8.50	13.48	4.98
8. Portalegre	7.52	13.92	1.82	23.25	8.02	15.23	69.14	69.17	2.83
9. Castelo Branco	12.30	14.80	2.97	36.89	41.23	4.34	19.65	17.44	3.25
10. Guarda	9.16	9.68	3.00	12.30	7.87	20.17	6.62	4.95	1.97
11. Coimbra	5.88	5.37	2.28	33.86	23.22	10.64	35.71	22.92	12.79
12. Aveiro	5.17	19.84	16.04	19.84	35.91	16.07	5.56	2.38	5.96
13. Viseu	12.56	15.19	2.73	33.14	17.63	15.51	26.49	20.35	6.14
14. Bragança	8.72	8.47	2.81	33.49	14.78	18.71	41.60	40.58	3.54
15. Vila Real	13.60	16.79	2.29	24.50	8.08	16.42	n.a.	n.a.	4.36
16. Porto	13.55	26.96	2.16	7.07	6.24	7.64	19.50	18.46	1.92
17. Braga	5.93	10.05	0.49	9.09	20.34	11.25	8.72	3.84	4.88
18. Viana do Castelo	7.64	6.53	1.45	16.72	26.08	9.36	6.77	6.34	5.53
19. Madeira [Funchal]	8.74	23.16	8.35	30.39	23.73	6.66	24.75	25.90	6.51
20. Açores [P.Delgada]	14.81	35.10	9.14	25.41	5.23	20.61	57.30	59.56	2.26
unweighted mean	8.31	12.92	3.73	21.42	16.80	13.84	23.77	22.07	4.77

Source: Data elaborated by the authors from official electoral results available at www.eleicoes-1975-2001.stape.pt, www.stape.pt, www.cne.pt

The highest dissimilarity for 97- 99 was in Evora (16.66), Ponta Delgada and Vila Real. For the 01- 99 pair of elections, it was Castelo Branco (36.89), Coimbra and Viseu, while for the 05- 04 elections it was the cities of Portalegre (69.14), Ponta Delgada and Bragança.

In Spanish municipalities there is moderate dissimilarity, although there are cases of minor and high scores on the index.

Table 7: Index of dissimilarity - capitals of Spanish provinces

		M95- E94	M95- P96	E94- P96	M99- E99	M99- P00	E99- P00	M03- E04	M03- P04	E04- P04
Provincia	Capital	ID								
Álava	Vitoria	17.79	23.09	6.04	8.06	17.75	9.69	13.75	11.89	6.14
Albacete	Albacete	2.25	8.37	10.62	5.2	23.28	18.08	18.72	13.55	5.17
Alicante	Alicante	11.78	0.26	11.92	2.02	10.47	8.45	7.89	4.76	4.49
Almería	Almería	3.77	12.16	13.61	2.54	7	9.54	22.95	19.82	4.91
Asturias	Oviedo	13.05	25.14	12.09	2.39	7.81	6.08	13.68	16.1	3.46
Ávila	Ávila	0.71	6.63	6.02	5.47	10.54	6.15	11.28	7.71	4.67
Badajoz	Badajoz	0.43	8.63	9.06	1.16	2.97	2.93	4.64	5.94	7.24
Islas Balears	Palma de Mallorca	4.54	12.7	15.16	5.12	12.96	7.84	14.11	15.65	1.54
Barcelona	Barcelona	22.05	10.09	11.96	16.04	25.45	9.41	12.22	6.48	5.74
Burgos	Burgos	7.68	13.96	7.46	15.72	24.46	12.82	15	11.98	4.24
Cáceres	Cáceres	3.68	7.21	9.35	2.15	8.2	6.05	8.23	5.1	5.33
Cádiz	Cádiz	5.28	9.37	6.73	10.43	15.52	5.09	28.04	33.45	7.01
Cantabria	Santander	19.39	23.65	4.26	10.29	12.28	8.25	16.86	14.17	2.69
Castellón	Castellón de la Plana	3.68	15.63	11.95	2.29	3.23	3.52	8.34	14.26	5.96
Ciudad Real	Ciudad Real	4.5	3.39	7.49	4.72	14.63	9.91	22.94	13.11	9.83
Córdoba	Córdoba	7.86	14.79	6.93	7.49	14.23	7.44	36.07	30.19	5.88
La Coruña	La Coruña	39.66	27.99	11.67	35.47	47.27	11.8	20.31	13.51	8.08
Cuenca	Cuenca	16.62	7.34	9.28	8.92	19.75	10.83	21.08	13.98	7.1
Gerona	Gerona	26.9	12.7	14.2	18.24	23.8	5.56	4.73	5.01	4.22
Granada	Granada	2.25	6.71	7.88	3.34	13.1	9.76	9.14	7.74	6.2
Guadalajar a	Guadalajara	4.08	8.68	10.1	4.93	12.59	7.66	12.13	4.32	7.81
Guipúzcoa	San Sebastián	7.11	1.21	5.9	12.45	18.68	9.63	9.32	8.5	5.44
Huelva	Huelva	4.69	5.54	8.43	16.63	21.16	4.53	31.29	34.86	4.65
Huesca	Huesca	21.24	30.31	9.07	12.87	19.1	6.23	14.04	11.61	3.37
Jaén	Jaén	3.94	10.44	6.5	1.83	5.41	4.5	8.48	9.86	5.84
León	León	13.47	15.69	7.56	10.2	4.41	5.79	22.22	18.43	4.17
Lérida	Lérida	24.16	12.46	11.7	19.43	28.97	9.54	14.31	5.55	8.86
Lugo	Lugo	12.69	15.11	14.76	7.36	11.9	4.54	22.99	17.23	5.76
Madrid	Madrid	6.64	1.47	8.01	4.72	11.02	6.3	4.54	8.79	6.65

Málaga	Málaga	11.34	14.75	7.95	10.93	12.48	1.55	18.79	21.85	5
Murcia	Murcia	1.42	9.18	8.68	0.48	7.34	6.86	4.44	1.02	3.42
Navarra	Pamplona	16.04	16.85	10.35	7.78	17.69	9.91	18.14	17.31	9.93
Orense	Orense	5.11	12.62	11.43	6.21	6.9	2.09	20.42	21.32	2.7
Palencia	Palencia	13.15	2.89	12.52	10.24	19.03	8.79	12.35	6.78	5.57
Las Palmas	Las Palmas de Gr. Canaria	8.08	7.14	15.22	5.31	5.12	2.13	14.83	10.26	6.53
Pontevedra	Pontevedra	14.27	16.82	13.17	9.39	17.46	8.07	27.31	28.65	1.66
La Rioja	Logroño	11.11	0.73	11.84	3.03	1.69	2.38	9.56	8.03	3.13
Salamanca	Salamanca	11.81	5.24	6.57	1.94	4.62	2.68	8.65	6.31	6.62
Sta Cruz de Tenerife	Santa Cruz de Tenerife	16.77	15.98	9.75	17.78	31.19	13.41	43.56	31.03	12.53
Segovia	Segovia	0.96	9.44	8.48	14.93	17.2	3.43	17.04	14.25	4.67
Sevilla	Sevilla	16.5	22.26	5.76	9.83	13.64	3.81	16.39	14.54	7.33
Soria	Soria	15.01	19.6	12.21	15.57	18.51	2.94	18.65	11.7	7.41
Tarragona	Tarragona	12.81	20.98	12.61	10.83	19.06	8.23	20.36	14.32	6.04
Teruel	Teruel	15.59	9.78	8.73	13.01	15.57	5.04	18.98	13.07	5.91
Toledo	Toledo	21.25	10.15	11.1	5.91	17.09	11.18	15.21	4.53	10.68
Valencia	Valencia	2.49	7.76	7.69	1.22	1.57	2.79	8.91	10.79	6.44
Valladolid	Valladolid	13.18	1.22	12.88	3.03	8.09	6.34	8.83	6.24	5.99
Vizcaya	Bilbao	6.49	11.17	4.68	4.58	13.35	8.77	9.31	10.2	3.17
Zamora	Zamora	8.52	2.48	6.04	5.81	7.5	4.63	19.97	15.54	5.09
Zaragoza	Zaragoza	3.37	11.39	8.02	2.52	8.92	7.82	17.59	7.59	10
	unweighted mean	10.7432	11.583	9.6278	8.3562	14.2392	7.0154	15.9718	13.1776	5.8454

Source: Data elaborated by the authors from official electoral results available at <http://www.elecciones.mir.es/MIR/jsp/resultados/index.htm>

La Coruña (39.66), Lleida (Lérida) and Barcelona had the highest dissimilarity for 95- 94, while for the concurrent 99- 99, La Coruña (35), Lleida and Gerona. On both comparisons the top 3 cases of highest dissimilarity have been observed in a city in Galicia and two cities in Catalonia. For the 03- 04 pair of elections, the highest dissimilarity was in the results of Santa Cruz de Tenerife (43), Córdoba and Cádiz.

The values of the index for Spanish municipalities show another aspect, which deals with the territorial dimension of voting across different levels of elections. We observe that in certain areas with increased regionalist feeling,

e.g. cities in the historical communities of Spain, the dissimilarity is higher. Our data show that dissimilarity indices vary considerably between regions with and without a strongly defined sense of regional/territorial identity. It is interesting that, excluding the 3 municipalities in the Basque Country, in the rest of the ACs where there is a strongly defined sense of regional identity and quite large regionalist parties, one may observe higher dissimilarity scores between local and European/national elections. This observation is in accordance with Jeffery & Hough's (2003) use of the index between regional and general elections in Galicia and Catalonia.

Table 8: Index of dissimilarity - capitals of Spanish provinces. Means per AC (comunidad autónoma)

	M95- E94	M95- P96	E94- P96	M99- E99	M99- P00	E99- P00	M03- E04	M03- P04	E04- P04
Comunidad autónoma	ID								
Andalucía	6.95	12.00	7.97	7.88	12.82	5.78	21.39	21.54	5.85
Aragón	13.40	17.16	8.61	9.47	14.53	6.36	16.87	10.76	6.43
Canarias	12.43	11.56	12.49	11.55	18.16	7.77	29.20	20.65	9.53
Cantabria	19.39	23.65	4.26	10.29	12.28	8.25	16.86	14.17	2.69
Castilla y León	9.39	8.57	8.86	9.21	12.71	5.95	14.89	10.99	5.38
Castilla-La Mancha	9.74	7.59	9.72	5.94	17.47	11.53	18.02	9.90	8.12
Cataluña	21.48	14.06	12.62	16.14	24.32	8.19	12.91	7.84	6.22
Comunidad de Madrid	6.64	1.47	8.01	4.72	11.02	6.30	4.54	8.79	6.65
Comunidad Foral de Navarra	16.04	16.85	10.35	7.78	17.69	9.91	18.14	17.31	9.93
Comunidad Valenciana	5.98	7.88	10.52	1.84	5.09	4.92	8.38	9.94	5.63
Extremadura	2.06	7.92	9.21	1.66	5.59	4.49	6.44	5.52	6.29
Galicia	17.93	18.14	12.76	14.61	20.88	6.63	22.76	20.18	4.55
Islas Baleares	4.54	12.70	15.16	5.12	12.96	7.84	14.11	15.65	1.54
La Rioja	11.11	0.73	11.84	3.03	1.69	2.38	9.56	8.03	3.13
País Vasco	11.19	10.52	13.25	7.59	11.84	5.62	15.48	14.62	3.07
Principado de Asturias	13.05	25.14	12.09	2.39	7.81	6.08	13.68	16.10	3.46
Región de Murcia	1.42	9.18	8.68	0.48	7.34	6.86	4.44	1.02	3.42
<i>unweighted mean</i>	10.74	11.58	9.63	8.36	14.24	7.02	15.97	13.18	5.85

Source: Data elaborated by the authors

Equally interesting observations may be seen in Table 9, where the unweighted means in each comparison are presented.

Table 9: Indices of Dissimilarity (unweighted means) Greek capitals of prefectures - Portuguese capitals of districts - Spanish capitals of provinces 1995-2006

		<i>M-E</i>	<i>M-P</i>	<i>E-P</i>
Greece	M98-E99-P96	16.27	17.99	11.45
	M02-E04-P00	13.38	14.06	11.36
	M06-E04-P04	15.49	16.51	9.44
	<i>mean</i>	15.04	16.18	10.75
Portugal	M97-E99-P99	8.31	12.92	3.73
	M01-E99-P02	21.42	16.80	13.84
	M05-E04-P05	23.77	22.07	4.77
	<i>mean</i>	17.83	17.26	7.45
Spain	M95-E94-P96	10.74	11.58	9.63
	M99-E99-P00	8.36	14.24	7.02
	M03-E04-P04	15.97	13.18	5.85
	<i>mean</i>	11.69	13.00	7.50

Comparing the means of the indices in each country for the municipal – European pairs, all three are moderate. The highest ones are found in Portugal (17.83), Greece is next (15.04) and Spain has the lowest average of vote dissimilarity (11.69). In Greece, the means do not differ much from one pair of M-E to the other, while in the cities of the other two countries there is more variation. In Portugal, there has been a high rise, and because the first pair is quite low, the average index still seems to be moderate. In Spain, the means of the index range between 10 and 15. The concurrent municipal and European contests in June 1999 led to a minor decrease in the index.

Turning to the other two pairs (M-P, E-P), we observe that the M-P indices are quite stable for Greece and Spain, while in Portugal there has been a steady rise from one pair of comparisons to another. Looking at the E-P

column, one observes that in all three countries the scores of the index are much lower than the indices of the M-E and M-P pairs of comparisons. Hence, municipal election results seem to be independent of the European and parliamentary contests.

In other words, at least for the countries and the time span we have covered, it appears that there is a LoPA, more or less independent from the national political arena, which is apparent in elections for the national and European parliaments. Therefore, the answer to our original question as to whether there is a relationship between municipal and European elections is that there is probably none.

Discussion

Comparing different types of second-order elections with each other is like wandering on uncharted territory. It is an approach that has to be dealt with more elaborately, and that has to have its axes, perspectives and limitations defined. Our study does not attempt to remedy the lack of studies entirely but rather to lay out a few ideas that will help define the dimensions for future discussion and research. Overall, we can only draw conclusions based on indications and trends. It might be useful if this study were applied to more elections and/or more countries.

One of the main conclusions arising from the use of the index of dissimilarity in municipal, parliamentary and European elections in provincial capital cities is that voting for local authorities is affected by both party and non-party criteria. Therefore, municipal elections appear to be two-faced by nature, since they are affected by two opposite powers. The first tends to give them features of first order contests, while the second tends to deprive them of these features. This dual dynamics is manifested by the fact that M-P means are higher than those for E-P, as well as by the fact that in certain cases the “tendency towards assimilation” – low dissimilarity – is present and in

other cases it is not. This variation may be attributed to various criteria such as the profiles of candidates, specificities in the local political arena and so forth.

We consider that high dissimilarity, especially when comparing M-E elections, suggests a lack of relationship between the two SOEs in question. Consequently, according to the results of our study, we are facing a dual reality: on the one hand SOEs sometimes adopt trends from national contests, and on the other, high dissimilarity suggests the perpetuation of their specificities (especially on the local level).

The divergence between the indices of dissimilarity in the M-P and the E-P pairs implies that some voters often choose one of the larger parties, instead of switching to a smaller one, as they would do in European elections. The question that arises is whether the criterion of each candidate's personality is strong enough to justify vote shifting from one big party to the other, rather than from a big party to a smaller one. As we already know, party identification as an explanatory parameter is reduced in the European polls (i.e. protest vote). Moreover, the significant divergence in M-E elections indicates that voters treat each SOE contest differently.

Notes

¹ Greece is comprised of 13 administrative regions, called *peripheries*, which are subdivided into 51 prefectures (nomoi, Fig. 2 and Table 2). In Portugal, the district, although in the process of being phased out because of the decentralization process, remains the most relevant subdivision of the country, serving as a base for a series of administrative divisions like the electoral circles. There are 18 districts in mainland Portugal. Every district is named after its capital municipality (Fig. 3). There are also the regions of Madeira and the Azores. Spain is divided into 17 autonomous communities (*comunidades autónomas*) and 2 autonomous cities (*ciudades autónomas*) – Ceuta and Melilla. These autonomous communities are subdivided into 50 provinces (*provincias*, Fig. 4 and Table 3).

² Greece: ND (Nea Dimokratia/ New Democracy) and PASOK (Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima/ Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement), Portugal: PS (Partido Socialista) and PSD (Partido Social Democrita, Spain: PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español) and PP (Partido Popular). The branches of PSOE in certain ACs, namely Andalucía, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia (PSOE-A, PSC, PSE-EE, and PSdeG respectively) are considered integral parts of the party and are treated as if PSOE participated in the local elections. The same applies for PP and the UPN in Navarra.

³ An additional particularity is the unification of very small municipalities into larger ones. This reform (known as the Kapodistrias Plan 1998–1999) has not affected the municipalities that we examine.

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Chapter 7

What Are (Semi-)Presidential Elections About? The 2006 Presidential Elections in Portugal¹

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Abstract

Drawing on an increasingly large body of knowledge on “less important elections”, and particularly on their interconnections with elections used to select the executive, this article focuses on what remains a mostly neglected aspect of semi-presidential regimes: the dynamics and patterns of voting behaviour in presidential elections. Using data derived from a panel survey conducted in two-waves, following the 2005 legislative and 2006 presidential elections in Portugal, it provides an empirical evaluation of four alternative theoretical approaches to voters’ choices and shifts from legislative to presidential elections. It shows that, although “candidate effects” are predictably important, this is not enough to undercut the crucial role played by the party and ideological cues that result from the process of candidate selection and endorsement, and suggests that the dynamics of voter defection from government parties share important similarities with those found in other “less important elections”. It concludes by suggesting how institutional and political differences may affect the extent to which similar findings are likely to be obtained in other semi-presidential regimes.

Semi-presidentialism, a political regime type where “a popularly-elected, fixed-term president exists alongside a prime minister and cabinet who are responsible to parliament” (Elgie, 1999: 13), has become an increasingly popular institutional choice in the last few decades. It has been adopted in many of the new “third wave” democracies, most notably in former Eastern Bloc (Baylis, 1996; Elgie, 2005), and has become, in fact, “the most prevalent system of government in Europe” (Amorim Neto and Strøm, 2006: 623). Today we know much more about semi-presidentialism than we did when Maurice Duverger first introduced the concept to an English-speaking audience in his seminal article (Duverger, 1980). Several scholars have debated and refined the exact definition of this regime type (Shugart and Carey, 1992; Elgie, 1998; Roper, 2002; Siaroff, 2003), while others have discussed its implications for democratic stability and performance, particularly insofar as it concerns the likelihood of high-level institutional conflict over power and policy between presidents and prime ministers or its consequences for the partisan composition of cabinets (Shugart and Carey, 1992; Linz, 1992; Protsyk, 2005; Skach, 2005; Schleiter and Morgan-Jones, 2005; Neto and Strøm, 2006).

Interestingly, however, one particular issue about semi-presidentialism has seldom been explored, and it concerns the very nature of one of its defining elements: the popular election of the head of state. The relative silence in the literature about the nature of elections employed to choose presidents in semi-presidential democracies is unfortunate. On the one hand, it has left those elections at the margins of an increasingly large body of knowledge about the interconnections between elections that serve to determine the composition of the executive and those used for other bodies or levels of government, such as legislative elections in presidential regimes (Shugart, 1995), European Parliament elections (see, among many, Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Marsh, 1998; and Ferrara and Weishaupt, 2004) or even local or state elections (Anderson and Ward, 1996; McLean, et al., 1996; Jeffery and

Hough, 2001; Freire, 2004). On the other hand, it has meant that the whole debate about the very nature and consequences of semi-presidentialism has been insufficiently informed by the study of presidential elections in this type of regime. More specifically, the question of whether the concept of “semi-presidentialism” designates an internally homogeneous or heterogeneous set of political systems could certainly benefit from an examination of the patterns of voter behaviour in presidential elections in different countries, while the study of trends and causes of government’s parties losses and gains in those elections would obviously illuminate discussions about the political consequences of semi-presidentialism, particularly in what concerns the likelihood of partisan compatibility or cohabitation between presidents and prime-ministers and the effects of this particular regime type on the horizontal and vertical accountability of governments (Shugart and Carey, 1992; Elgie, 2001)

This article concentrates on a case study of a particular presidential election in a particular semi-presidential regime, the Portuguese 2006 elections. Thus, its ability to answer broad questions about presidential elections in semi-presidentialism must certainly not be overstated. However, one particular feature makes it potentially interesting in terms of both hypothesis-testing and hypothesis-generating in this respect: the fact that it is based on a unique two-wave panel survey conducted following the 2005 legislative and 2006 presidential elections in Portugal.¹ This allows us not only to test general hypotheses about individual voting behaviour in the election of the Portuguese head of state, but also to properly test more specific hypotheses about changes and interconnections between elections that serve to determine the partisan composition of the executive (legislative elections) and presidential elections.

In the next section of this article, we will start by presenting four theoretical approaches that have been often advanced in the study of “less important elections” (Marsh, 2003) and have, in some cases, been empirically

tested or at least speculatively applied to the study of presidential elections in semi-presidential regimes: the “popularity contest” hypothesis; the “surge and decline” hypothesis; the “second-order” theory; and the “policy-balancing” hypothesis. In the third section, we will provide some basic information about the political and institutional context under which the 2006 presidential election took place. Finally, in the fourth and fifth sections, we will test hypotheses about both the factors that generally shaped vote choices in the 2006 election and the causes of defection to opposition candidates on the part of previous voters in the government party. We will conclude by discussing the nature of presidential elections in Portugal and the conditions under which we can expect similar or different patterns to emerge in other semi-presidential regimes.

Approaches to (semi)presidential elections

The popularity contest

The simplest way to think about what drives voters in presidential elections in semi-presidential regimes is to conceive of them as being a *popularity contest*, where voting choices are primarily determined by voters’ evaluations of the qualities and attributes of candidates. There are several reasons why this is, *prima facie*, a promising way of thinking not only about presidential elections in Portugal but also about presidential elections of semi-presidential regimes, or at least a particularly representative set of them.

First, the impact of “leader” or “candidate” evaluations is stronger in presidential than in legislative elections (McAllister, 1996) and, even more generally, in all elections using majoritarian rules (Norris, 2004). Furthermore, research on electoral behaviour in Portugal has revealed that, even in legislative elections – and contingent upon particular political contexts and parties – affect towards party leaders has had a comparatively high impact on vote choices (Gunther and Montero, 2001; Lobo, 2004;

Lobo, 2006). The phenomenon has been explained on the basis of the relatively shallow socio-structural anchorage of the vote, caused by the historically late creation of the Portuguese democratic party system, the parties' orientation towards building electoral support within the state apparatus (rather than through the extra-parliamentary institutionalization of true mass-based parties) and by the particular legacies of the 1974-1976 revolutionary period, which super-imposed on the traditional left-right cleavage a more fundamental one around the option for liberal democracy (Biezen, 1998; Gunther and Montero, 2001; Jalali, 2003).

However, one of the most important reasons why we could expect presidential elections in Portugal and other semi-presidential regimes to be a "popularity contest" in the sense we have described is related to the particular sub-type of executive-legislative institutions that exist in the country. The particular brand of Portuguese semi-presidentialism is a "premier-presidential" one (Shugart and Carey, 1992), i.e., a system where the cabinet is accountable *exclusively* before parliament. Although prime ministers are appointed by presidents, the fact that the former are responsible only to parliament "is a feature that restricts the president's real choice of prime-ministerial candidate to someone he expects to be able to command parliamentary support" (Shugart, 2005). This means, therefore, that *presidential elections lack direct consequences for the control of the executive*. This stands in stark contrast to two other situations. The first is the one in which, although cabinets may be institutionally unaccountable before presidents, the latter are the *de facto* heads of the parliamentary majority, a circumstance that has turned the "premier-presidential" French case, on several occasions, into one that is rather more "presidential" in political practice (Shugart, 2005). Another is, of course, the "president-parliamentary" mode of semi-presidential government, where the direct accountability of the executive to both parliament *and* the president brings this form much closer to presidentialism in political practice, as it happened, in fact, in the Portuguese

case before the 1982 constitutional amendments that put an end to the direct accountability of the cabinet to the president (Shugart and Carey, 1992).

A plausible implication of the fact that presidential elections in Portugal lack direct consequences for the composition of the executive is that, unlike what occurs in legislative elections, cues such as party identification, ideology or perceived economic or government performance may tend to become inconsequential. Instead, since executive power is not at stake, the outcome of presidential elections is likely to be determined by voters to whom the concerns that are typically present in general elections are rendered irrelevant by the very irrelevance of the presidential office, and whose voting decisions are made simply on the basis of their evaluation of the personal qualities of candidates. This is, in fact, what the existing research has already found for presidential elections in a semi-presidential system such as Ireland (Brug, et al., 2000), where, as in Portugal, the election of the president has no direct bearing on executive authority.

Second-order elections

The assumption that elections other than those that serve to determine the composition of the executive are less important and salient for voters is shared by other potentially applicable theoretical approaches. However, they end up reaching very different conclusions about what drives voters' choices, the interconnections between elections for different bodies and levels of government, and their substantive electoral consequences. One of those approaches is the "*second-order elections*" theory. Contrary to the "popularity contest" account, it suggests that elections where less substantive power is at stake – second-order elections – might lead precisely to a situation where voters can rely on little else but the conventional cues and concerns typical of first-order elections.

Developed in order to explain patterns of government parties' losses in European Parliament elections, the second-order approach focuses on

ideology and evaluations of government performance as the crucial cues used by voters, and makes specific predictions about how voters should behave in first- and second-order elections. On the one hand, because second-order elections do not affect who governs, some voters are likely to use them in order to send a costless signal about their level of (dis)satisfaction with government performance, by voting for the opposition (or by simply abstaining – Marsh, 1998). On the other hand, again because less actual power is at stake, voters who had voted strategically for one of the larger parties in first-order elections become, in second-order ones, more likely to opt for parties or candidates that are closer to their preferences. As a consequence of these two mechanisms – expressive and sincere voting – losses for larger parties are likely to ensue, particularly for government parties and when second-order elections take place at points in the electoral cycle unfavourable for the government (Reif and Schmitt, 1980).

There are good reasons why we should examine whether voting behaviour in presidential elections in at least some semi-presidential systems conforms to the expectations of the second-order model. It is true that France, again, emerges as an exception in this respect among premier-presidential systems: in the French case, presidential elections should perhaps be best conceived of as being first- rather than second-order elections, considering that, under circumstances of partisan compatibility of president and parliamentary majority, the President becomes the *de facto* head of the executive (Reif, 1985). However, the same cannot be said about many other premier-presidential systems, where “elections to choose a non-executive head of state” should probably be conceived of as being second-order elections (Eijk, et al., 1996; Marsh, 2000). It is also true that others have argued that, in spite of this, the “personalization” of presidential elections in semi-presidential systems and the fact that they are fought under a run-off majority system (forcing parties to coalesce and preserving incentives for

strategic voting) suggests that they be excluded from the “second-order” category (Freire, 2004). However, is that “personalization” so high as to render ideological or other cues irrelevant? Do the pressures towards strategic voting induced by the electoral system neutralize the incentives towards sincere voting inherent to the lower importance of presidential elections? This is, clearly, a matter for empirical investigation.

Surge and decline

An additional approach that might be potentially relevant for the study of presidential elections in Portugal and other semi-presidential systems is directly derived from the study of elections in the United States. The “*surge and decline*” theory, which has emerged in the context of the study of American congressional midterm elections (Campbell, 1960), shares some commonalities with the second-order approach. It too is based on the notions that some elections are less important and less salient than others, that the cues and predispositions of voters relevant for important elections are also relevant for less important ones, and that incumbents are likely to experience losses in less important elections. However, unlike the second-order theory, it focuses on party identification as crucial predisposition/cue for vote choices.

From a “surge and decline” point of view, “low stimulus” elections represent a return to “normalcy” in terms of how different groups of voters, defined in terms of their party identification, tend to behave, a “normalcy” that inevitably leads to losses for executive incumbents. These losses ensue because, in high stimulus elections – such as those that contribute to determine the partisan control of the executive – low interest voters, independents, and partisans of the “losing” side tend to be mobilized to vote by the importance of what is at stake and to be swayed by the short-term contexts that favour the winners. However, in subsequent low stimulus elections, the “surge” that led the incumbent to power is likely to be

followed by a “decline”, as voters who have lower levels of political engagement return to abstention and opposition partisans return “home” to their parties and candidates.

There are also good reasons to take this approach seriously as a depiction of the interconnections between legislative and presidential elections in some semi-presidential systems. As several studies testing the “surge and decline” hypotheses in the European context seem to suggest (Anderson and Ward, 1996; Marsh, 2003), the “surge and decline” theory may travel much better from the United States to Europe than one might at first be inclined to think. Although party identification has been commonly seen as a mere proxy for actual voting behaviour in the European context (Butler and Stokes, 1969; Budge, Crewe, and Farlie, 1976), the decline of party identification in Western democracies in the last decades and the factors found to influence it, together with the fact that the impact of party identification on the vote seems to vary across countries according to predictable institutional factors (Dalton, 2000; Norris, 2004), is scarcely compatible with the notion that party identification, as measured in surveys, is a mere proxy for the vote. Thus, the notion that party identification can “be usefully applied in most democratic systems” (Dalton, 2000: 20), particularly those where party systems that are not clearly anchored in social structures – such as Ireland (Marsh, 2006) but also, as we have seen, Portugal – has regained credibility in comparative electoral research.

Besides, there are few reasons to believe this to be less true when we consider elections not run on a strictly partisan basis. In referendums, for example, regardless of attitudes towards the issue at hand or the incentives to use the vote to signal a particular judgment about government performance, the endorsement of a particular stance by parties might very well be the most visible cue at hand for voters, allowing parties to have a decisive impact on the vote of those who identify with them (Bowler and Donovan, 2000;

Hobolt, 2006). On the other hand, not all presidential elections in semi-presidential systems are necessarily similar to the Irish case in that which concerns the lack of informational shortcuts allowing voters to connect presidential races with party politics (Brug, et al., 2000). In Portugal, for example, parties have explicitly endorsed presidential candidates, who have very often been major political figures, such as former prime ministers (Mário Soares in 1986, 1991 and 2006 and Cavaco Silva in 1996 and 2006) or party leaders (Freitas do Amaral in 1986, Jorge Sampaio in 1996 and 2001, and both Jerónimo de Sousa and Francisco Louçã in 2006). Thus, the notion that party identification may matter in both legislative and presidential elections, which underlies any application of the surge and decline theory to the study of the interconnections between them in semi-presidential systems, is certainly deserving of attention.

Policy balancing

The fourth and last theoretical approach that is potentially applicable to our case is one in which different types of elections are also conceived of as being inextricably linked, as in the second-order and surge and decline approaches. However, from this point of view, what connects those elections is not only the reliance of voters on similar cues, but also the fact that, because (at least some) voters are ideologically moderate and see presidential elections as not entirely irrelevant for policy outcomes, they tend to act purposefully to promote certain combinations of partisan control of the executive and other branches of government. “Policy balancing” theory has been applied to explain midterm losses (or split-ticket voting) in American midterm elections (Alesina and Rosenthal, 1989; Fiorina, 1992; Carsey and Leyman, 2004) or vote shifts from government to opposition parties in European Parliament elections (Carruba and Timpone, 2005). The main hypothesis that derives from this theory is that ideologically moderate voters are likely to be

interested in placing veto-points before the executive in order to promote moderate policies, even if they themselves contributed to the formation of the executive majority in the first place.

For a Portuguese audience, the “policy balancing” approach will sound quite familiar: it corresponds, after all, to one of the “folk theories” about presidential elections that has often circulated in the Portuguese media and political discourse, i.e., the notion that “the Portuguese don’t like to put all their eggs in the same basket” when legislative and presidential elections are concerned. This theory is especially plausible because although presidential elections in premier-presidential systems have no direct bearing on executive authority, this does not mean that voters should see them as entirely devoid of policy and political consequences. Portuguese presidents for example, enjoy the ability to veto legislation emanating from parliament and government decrees, as well as to refer legislation for both *a priori* and *a posteriori* review by the constitutional court. Although the direct impact of these powers on policy outcomes may be relatively limited – considering the possibility of veto override by parliamentary majorities and the uncertainty attached to judicial rulings (Magalhães, 2003) – they can nevertheless impose important political costs on cabinets. Such costs include, for example, the increased public visibility brought to bear on a law that has been vetoed or referred for judicial review, or the need to ensure that no defections or absences occur in parliament in order to obtain the absolute majority of all elected MP’s that is necessary to override vetoes (Shugart, 2005). Extant research suggests that Portuguese presidents have used the political leverage that derives from this in order either to obtain concessions from governments in policy-making or to engage in “wars of attrition” with parliamentary majorities (Frain, 1995; Araújo, 2003), conditioning, in any case, the ability of majorities to pass their preferred policies at will. Furthermore, Portuguese presidents enjoy the power to dissolve parliament, constrained only by time

limits, and have used it no less than four times since 1982, leading in all cases to new elections that significantly changed the political status-quo.² Regardless of whether or not such power is regularly used, its mere existence forces parliamentary majorities, again, to take the preferences of the president and his constituency into consideration. Voters are likely to be aware, therefore, that the existence of situations of compatibility or cohabitation in terms of the partisan compositions of the executive and the presidency are not irrelevant for policy outcomes in Portugal.

Table 1 summarizes the main features of these four different approaches and the predictions that derive from them when applied to the context of presidential elections in semi-presidential systems. Both the second-order and the surge and decline theories suggest that, in elections other than those that serve to determine the composition of the executive, voters remain likely to rely on the sort of cues they typically resort to in elections that determine who governs. However, while the former stresses the role of ideological positions and perceptions of government performance, the latter focuses on party endorsements and attachments. In contrast, the popularity contest approach suggests that evaluations of the attributes and personal qualities of candidates will be paramount in determining vote choices.

Table 1. Approaches to voting behaviour in (semi-)presidential elections

Theories	Role of conventional cues	Performance of government endorsed candidates	Voters who defect from government to abstention	Voters who defect from government to opposition
<i>Popularity contest</i>	Low or none	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
<i>Second-order election</i>	Ideology; government performance	Loss	Dissatisfied voters	Dissatisfied voters and previous strategic voters
<i>Surge and decline</i>	Party identification	Loss	Low interest voters	Opposition partisans and apertisans
<i>Policy balancing</i>	Not specified	Loss	Not specified	Moderate voters

When applied to presidential elections in semi-presidential regimes such as the Portuguese, three of the four approaches suggest a similar particular pattern of change from legislative to presidential elections – losses for the government, i.e. for the government-endorsed candidates – but also three rather different mechanisms through which such losses might take place. “Second-order theory” suggests that defections within government ranks are likely to take place both among government supporters who are temporarily dissatisfied (who are more likely to vote for opposition candidates or simply not to vote) and among voters who had strategically voted for the government party (who are more likely to vote, this time around, for candidates closer to their sincere preferences). “Surge and decline” explains losses in a different way: while low interest voters who had previously supported the current incumbent are more likely to abstain, only partisans of the current incumbent will tend to remain faithful to government-endorsed candidates. Finally, “policy balancing” sees government losses as the result of purposeful defection on the part of previous government voters to opposition candidates in order to promote moderate policies, and predicts those defectors will be found among those who are more ideologically moderate.

The 2006 elections and their political context

The 2006 elections were fought by five candidates. Cavaco Silva, former prime minister, was supported by two opposition parties, the centre-right Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the rightist Social Democratic Centre-Popular Party (CDS-PP). Although he delayed the official announcement of his bid for the presidency until October 2005, a mere two months before the election, his candidacy had for long been seen as almost a certainty. Having been defeated in a previous presidential bid in 1996, he initiated a return to the public sphere in 2003, with the publication of a memoir of his days as PSD’s party leader and prime minister between 1985 and 1995, followed by a

series of carefully managed public pronouncements and newspaper articles that were the object of increasing public attention. In the meantime, in spite of some speculation and name-suggestions, both the PSD and the CDS-PP largely neglected the search for an alternative candidate, and Cavaco Silva's bid for the presidency became increasingly seen as inevitable, particularly as several opinion polls conducted after 2003 revealed that he was the best positioned potential candidate to end the previous dominance of the office by candidates endorsed by leftist parties (namely, Mário Soares and Jorge Sampaio, both former leaders of the Socialist Party - PS).

In the meantime, for the PS, the presidential elections might be an opportunity to rebound from recent electoral mishaps. The Socialists had triumphed in the March 2005 legislative elections, obtaining 46.4 percent of the valid votes and forming, for the first time in the history of this centre-left party, a single-party cabinet supported by an absolute majority in parliament. However, the local elections held in late October 2005 suggested signs of trouble very early in the electoral cycle, as the party failed to achieve the mayor's office in any of the five major cities in the country and obtained a national result no different from that of 2001, which had already been so low that it had prompted the resignation of the Socialist Prime Minister António Guterres. However, no credible candidates seemed to emerge. The first candidate the PS seemed to flirt with was the same Guterres, but his public image had been severely tarnished by his last years in office, with a perception that he was responsible for the large budget deficit at the end of 2002 which violated the European stability and growth pact and remains, at the time of writing, at the forefront of the Portuguese political agenda. The Socialists then seemed to consider other possibilities, including Manuel Alegre, who had not only been one of the party founders but had also been the main challenger to prime minister José Sócrates' bid for the party's leadership in 2004, and was generally perceived as representing the more leftist and laicist factions of the PS. However, as the endorsement of Alegre by the PS

appeared increasingly plausible, the party's leadership decided, in an unexpected turn of events, to endorse former president and prime minister Mário Soares, who announced his candidacy in August 2005. After some hesitation, Alegre refused to step down, and confirmed in late September that he would also present himself as an independent candidate. Finally, three other candidates emerged: Jerónimo de Sousa and Francisco Louçã, leaders, respectively, of the Communist Party (PCP) and the Leftist Bloc (BE), two leftist parties which have been partially competing for the same electorate in legislative elections; and Garcia Pereira, a well-known lawyer and eternal presidential candidate of the PCTP-MRPP, a fringe party on the extreme-left.

The campaign was marked by two revelations about mass opinions early on during the months of September and October. The first was that, in every opinion poll conducted since all candidacies were confirmed, Cavaco Silva emerged with a very comfortable advantage over all remaining candidates and with a clear possibility that he would win at the first round. The second and more shocking revelation was that ever since Alegre and Soares had both been included in the menu provided to respondents in opinion polls, the former had obtained more voting intentions than the latter, indicating a severe split within the potential electorate of the official candidate endorsed by the PS. These revelations changed the dynamics of the campaign and represented a shock from which Soares's campaign never fully recovered. His candidacy, in an effort to capitalize on his previous presidency between 1986 and 1996, had been initially presented as "national" and "supra-partisan". However, this unexpected third place in the polls forced Soares to ponder a more aggressive strategy vis-à-vis Cavaco Silva than had previously been anticipated, as well as to reconsider the notion that all remaining candidates to the left of Cavaco could be generally ignored throughout the campaign. In the end, it was only in the December polls that Mário Soares's voting intentions surpassed those in Manuel Alegre, but early January

witnessed a new inversion of that trend. As the date of the election — January 22nd — approached, polls revealed a last minute trend, i.e, the decisive rise of Alegre and the decline of both Soares and Cavaco Silva, with the latter moving to increasingly uncomfortable terrain insofar as his ability to obtain more than 50 percent of the valid vote in the first round was concerned.

Table 2. Electoral results, 2005 legislative & 2006 presidential elections (%)

Parties	2005 legislative elections		2006 presidential elections		
	Electorate	Valid votes	Candidates	Electorate	Valid votes
PS	28.9	46.4	Soares	8.6	14.3
			Alegre	12.6	20.8
PSD+CDS	23.1	37.1	Cavaco	30.5	50.5
Other parties	10.3	16.5	Other candidates	8.7	14.4
Null/Blank	1.9		Null/Blank	1.1	
Abstention	35.7		Abstention	38.5	

In the end, with a score, on average, two percentage points below that found in the very last voting intention polls, Cavaco Silva ultimately won the presidential elections in the first round. Table 2 provides the full results, comparing them with those of the 2005 legislative elections. First, while abstention increased by three percentage points, the results for the candidate endorsed by the Socialist Party were catastrophic: losses represented more than 20 percentage points among the electorate as a whole and more than thirty percentage points in terms of the valid vote. Even the combined vote for the two candidates emanating from the Socialist area (21.2 of the electorate, 35.1 of valid votes) still fell substantially short of the score obtained by the Socialist Party in 2005 (28.9 of the electorate, 46.4 of the valid votes). Conversely, while the smaller parties managed to convert their previous electoral support in legislative elections into support for their candidates with only minor losses, Cavaco clearly surpassed the electoral support enjoyed less than a year earlier by the two parties that now endorsed his candidacy.

A popularity contest?

The first step in appraising the plausibility of the different approaches to (semi-) presidential elections we have advanced so far is to test their different conceptions of what kind of factors are likely to determine vote choices: the evaluation of the personal qualities of candidates; ideology; evaluations of government performance; and partisanship. In February 2006, a post-electoral survey was conducted following the presidential elections, using a nationally representative sub-sample of a larger sample of voters who had been surveyed following the 2005 legislative elections. In order to test our generic hypotheses about what drove voting behaviour in presidential elections, we use a multinomial logistic regression of presidential vote choices in the 2006 elections as expressed in the vote recall question, with vote for Soares – the government-endorsed candidate – used as the reference category (1), vote for Alegre coded as 2, Cavaco Silva as 3, Francisco Louçã, Jerónimo de Sousa and Garcia Pereira aggregated in a single category (Others, 4), and abstention as 5.

Independent variables include Gender (Male, 1; Female, 2), Age (absolute value) and Education (12-point scale, from “None” to “Post-Graduate education”), employed as basic control variables. Social-structural variables, which aim at taking into account the extent to which the vote is anchored in relevant and historical social and political cleavages, include Subjective social class (5-point scale, from “Working class” to “Upper”), Union membership (No, 0; Yes, 1) and Religiosity (4-point scale, from “Not at all” to “Very”). An additional group of variables concerns the long-term attitudinal predispositions towards particular vote choices, including left-right ideology and party identification (Miller and Niemi, 2002). Thus, we used Attachment to PS, a folded 7-point scale, ranging from “Very close” to one of the opposition parties (-3) to “Very close” to PS (3), with 0 for

independents and missing values, as well as Left-right self-placement, ranging from 0 (Left) to 10 (Right) in response to the standard item.

Finally, “short-term” factors, including leader/candidate effects and issues (Miller and Niemi, 2002), are also considered. Evaluations of *Government performance* are measured in a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (“Very bad”) to 5 (Very good”) and DK/NA answers recoded as an intermediate category (3). Finally, *Soares’s personal qualities* are seen in an index with values ranging from 0 to 1. The survey asked respondents to choose which presidential candidate they perceived to be the most “honest”, “able to defend responsible policies”, “strong”, “able to make decisions”, “able to strengthen the economy”, “able to fight unemployment”, “the most charismatic” and “most able to communicate with people”. We recoded all individual answers as 1 when Soares was selected and 0 when he was not, and simply calculated an average index, with 0 meaning that Soares was not chosen as the best candidate in any dimension and 1 that he was chosen as the best candidate in all dimensions.³ Finally, we introduce *Interest in politics*, a four-point scale ranging from 1 (“Not interested/DK/NA”) to 4 (“Very interested”), as an explanation of abstention. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3. Parameter estimates for multinomial logit regression of presidential vote choice in Portugal, 2006 (reference category: vote for Soares; standard errors in parenthesis)

Predictor variables	Soares vs. Alegre	Soares vs. Cavaco Silva	Soares vs. Others	Soares vs. Abstention
Intercept	7.209** (2.136)	4.852* (2.208)	8.149** (2.380)	9.973*** (2.246)
Gender	-.878 (.513)	-1.483** (.527)	-1.185* (.579)	-1.038 (.543)
Age	-.025 (.017)	-.018 (.017)	-.023 (.019)	-.053** (.018)
Education	.094 (.125)	-.045 (.129)	.077 (.142)	.059 (0.135)
Subjective social class	.483 (.258)	.808** (.272)	.245 (.296)	.275 (0.281)
Union membership	1.522* (.670)	.598 (.722)	.893 (.749)	-.121 (0.787)

Religiosity	-.475 (.289)	.522 (.305)	-.396 (.322)	-.066 (0.308)
Left-right self- placement	-.206 (.112)	.209 (.113)	-.435** (0.130)	-.005 (.117)
Attachment to PS	-.234 (.228)	-1.246*** (.243)	-.897** (.259)	-.553* (.249)
Government performance	-.157 (0.250)	-.364 (.254)	-.502 (.272)	-.486 (.259)
Interest in politics	-.308 (.312)	-.414 (.318)	.201 (.351)	-.974** (.324)
Soares's personal qualities	-6.076*** (.997)	-8.019*** (1.167)	-7.435*** (1.309)	-6.033*** (1.110)
N			529	
Nagelkerke r2			.66	

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

One of the most consistent results of this analysis is that those who voted for Soares differ from voters for all other candidates (and also from abstainers) in that their evaluation of the qualities of the Socialist-endorsed candidate was higher than that made by other members of the electorate, a phenomenon that resists the introduction of all other relevant controls. However, this is not enough to conclude that the 2006 Portuguese presidential elections were a mere “popularity contest”, or that partisan endorsements or candidates’ ideological statements were inconsequential as voting cues. First, ideology also seems to matter somewhat, at least in helping to distinguish voters for Soares from those that decided to vote for any of the candidates endorsed by the smaller leftist parties (voters who, predictably, were considerably more leftist than Soares’s). Second, although voters for the two candidates emanating from the Socialist area (Soares and Alegre) are indeed indistinguishable in terms of their level of partisan attachment to the Socialist Party, the same clearly does not occur in partisanship for the other candidates who were endorsed by other parties.

Since logit coefficients are not easily interpretable, we can ascertain the substantive impact of the some of the main variables by calculating the predicted probabilities of voting for Soares across changing values of those

independent variables, while the remaining ones are kept constant at their mean values.⁴ Table 4 shows how the probability of voting for Soares, expressed in percent terms, changes as the values of evaluations of *Soares's personal qualities* also changes from a low to a high level, with “low” and “high” conceived as, respectively, one standard deviation below and above the mean sample values.⁵ As we can see, the probability of voting for Soares increased nine-fold for individuals with a high evaluation of Soares in comparison with those who made a low evaluation. Conversely, the table reveals that the majority of voters with low evaluations of Soares ended up voting for Cavaco Silva, far above his share of the electorate (31 percent in the electorate, 45.4 percent in the sample, due to underreporting of abstention in the survey).

Table 4. Effects of evaluation of Soares's qualities on the probability of voting for different candidates

Vote for	Sample distribution	Low	High	Change in probability
Soares	8.3%	0.9%	8.1%	+7.2%
Alegre	18.7%	18.0%	23.5%	+5.5%
Cavaco	45.4%	56.8%	40.2%	-16.6%
Others	10.4%	8.6%	7.3%	-1.3%
Abstention	17.1%	15.7%	20.8%	5.1%

Table 5 does the same kind of analysis for the impact of *attachment to the Socialist Party*. As we can see, its impact on the probability of voting for Soares is only slightly lower than that detected for the evaluation of his personal qualities, showing a seven-fold increase from low to high levels of attachment to the PS. Predictably, these effects are also strong and positive as far as the probability of voting for Alegre is concerned. Conversely, individuals with a low level of attachment to the Socialist Party were overwhelmingly more likely to vote for Cavaco Silva than to vote for any other candidate or to abstain.

Table 5. Effects of attachment to PS in the probability of voting for different candidates

Vote for	Sample distribution	Low	High	Change in probability
Soares	8.3%	0.7%	5.1%	+4.7%
Alegre	18.7%	8.5%	37.5%	+29.0%
Cavaco	45.4%	72.2%	28.1%	-44.1%
Others	10.4%	7.7%	6.9%	-.8%
Abstention	17.1%	10.9%	22.4%	+11.5%

Another way of highlighting how parties' endorsements and voters' party identification also had an important role to play in voting choices in the 2006 elections above and beyond "candidate effects" is through a visual representation. Figure 1 plots the predicted probability of voting for Soares against the evaluation of his personal qualities, while attachment to the Socialist Party variable is set at "low" and "high" levels respectively, and the remaining variables are kept at their mean values.

Figure 1. The impact of partisanship and evaluations of Soares on the probability of voting for the Socialist candidate

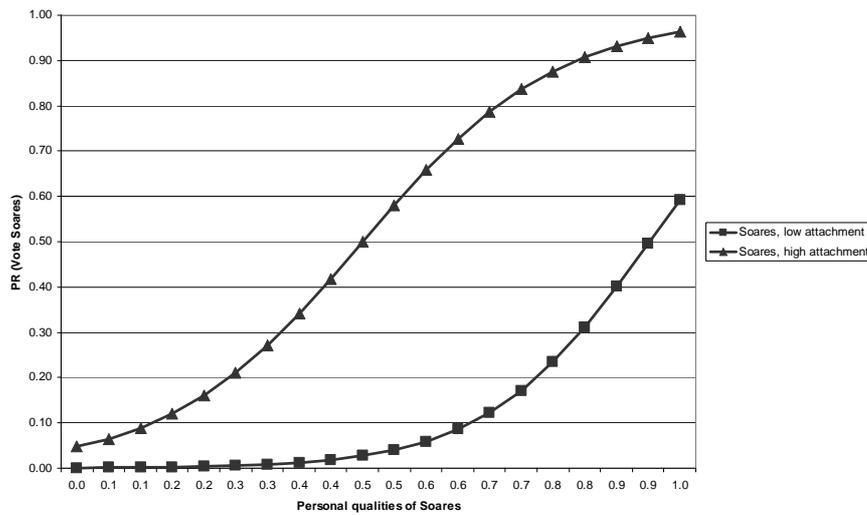


Figure 1 supports the notion that presidential elections were, to some extent, about the personal qualities of candidates as perceived by voters, in that it shows how the probability of voting for Soares sharply increased as individuals' evaluations of his personal qualities improves. However, it also shows that low levels of attachment to the Socialist party preserved the probability of voting for Soares at extremely low levels, even as the evaluation of his personal qualities is already way above the actual mean value of that index in the sample (.12). In other words, in the 2006 presidential elections, although voters for Soares were certainly different from others in terms of their negative or positive evaluations of the candidate, and although the official endorsement of Soares by the PS was not enough to significantly deflect Socialist partisans from a vote in Alegre, party identification was certainly important when it came to deciding between voting either for the two Socialist-area candidates or for any of the remaining candidates. There was, in sum, much more to the 2006 elections than a mere popularity contest.

Defectors and government losses

One thing that clearly stands out from the available data is that defection from within the ranks of previous voters for the Socialist Party to those presidential candidates not endorsed by the PS was the single most significant electoral shift that took place between the 2005 and 2006 elections. On the basis of our two-wave panel post-electoral survey, it is possible to estimate that about 17 percent of the entire Portuguese electorate (excluding the small contingent of new voters that registered between the 2005 and the 2006 elections) shifted from voting for the PS to voting for a candidate other than Soares, with abstention on the part of previous Socialist voters adding 6 percent more to the tally. From a different point of view, this means that less than one of out three of the previous PS voters ended up voting for Soares in 2006.

These are mostly net losses, since the ability of Soares to attract previous abstainers or non-PS voters was almost non-existent.

Nor can it be said that all of the government's losses were absorbed by the other candidate from the Socialist area, Manuel Alegre. In fact, nearly half of PS voters in 2005 ended up shifting either to Cavaco Silva, to one of the candidates endorsed by the smaller left-wing parties, or to abstention in 2006. Nothing as dramatic took place among the electorates of the remaining parties or even among previous abstainers. For example, about four out of five previous abstainers or voters for either the PSD or the CDS in 2005 ended up, respectively, abstaining again or voting for Cavaco Silva in 2006. And although those who voted for the PCP and the BE electorates in 2005 were indeed more divided when it came to the 2006 elections — one out of four voted for Alegre — those defections were, both in absolute and in relative terms, almost insignificant when compared with those experienced by the Socialists.

How did this happen? Once the notion that the 2006 elections were exclusively a popularity contest has been discarded, and once we realize how considerations and cues typically relevant in legislative elections were also relevant in presidential elections, three additional accounts of those elections remain credible. The first, the “second-order elections” account, suggests that defection from the ranks of the PS arose mostly among both previous “strategic” voters who wished to signal their sincere preferences in less important elections and supporters of the incumbent party who were now willing to express their displeasure with the executive, either by abstaining or by voting in the opposition-endorsed candidates. The second account — “surge and decline” — suggests that the losses incurred by the Socialist Party resulted mainly from defections on the part of voters with lower levels of attachment from the PS (independents and opposition partisans) to opposition candidates, as well as from low interest voters to abstention. The third

account – policy balancing – suggests that the losses experienced by the Socialist Party resulted mostly from the defection of moderate voters, interested in preventing the control of both the presidency and the executive by a single party and in the lack of policy moderation likely to result from unified government.

Following the strategy adopted by Marsh (2003) in his study of European Parliament elections, we test these different hypotheses by focusing our analysis on those respondents who, in the first wave of the panel survey, recalled having voted for the winning party, the PS. The model of voting behaviour tested here is similar to that used in the previous section, including the role of party identification, interest in politics and evaluations of government performance. We want to determine, first, the applicability of a “surge and decline” type of explanation: whether there was a systematic tendency towards defection from the PS to candidates other than Soares among those whose partisan attachments are further away from the PS, as well as a tendency towards defection or abstention among low interest voters. Secondly, regardless of the null result obtained when the full sample was used, the “second-order” account still raises the hypothesis that, among previous voters for the government party, the worse government performance was evaluated as being, the more likely were voters to defect. However, we include two additional independent variables in this “defection” model. The first is the perceived importance of presidential elections for the country, a four-point scale ranging from 1 (“Not at all important”) to 4 (“Very important”). If the “sincere voting” hypothesis advanced by the “second-order elections” account holds, we should observe that the less important the former PS voters perceived these presidential elections to be, the more likely they were to defect to candidates endorsed by other parties, particularly those candidates endorsed by the smaller parties in the left. Finally, we also include the distance between each respondent’s left-

right self-placement along an 11-point left-right scale and her perception of the ideological mid-point between the PS and the PSD, the two larger centrist parties along the same 11-point scale. In other words, we expect that the closest former PS voters are to that perceived mid-point (i.e., the more ideologically moderate they are), the more likely they were to switch from a vote for the Socialist Party to a vote for the centre-right candidate (Cavaco Silva) in order to promote control of the executive and the presidency by different parties.

Table 6 presents the results of a multinomial logistic regression analysis where the option to vote for Soares – the reference category – to “defect” to any other candidate or to abstain is regressed on the independent variables described above. By focusing on this sub-sample, we sharply reduced the number of observations, making it therefore less likely to find statistically significant relationships, which led us to relax the threshold of statistical significance to $p < .10$. However, as we can see, this has not prevented the detection of several coefficients whose level of statistical significance goes well beyond that.

Table 6. Parameter estimates for multinomial logit regression of presidential vote choice in Portugal among previous Socialist voters, 2006 (reference category: vote for Soares; standard errors in parenthesis)

Predictor variables	Alegre	Cavaco	Others	Abstention
Intercept	11.228** (4.284)	2.820 (5.082)	17.078** (5.964)	10.617* (5.072)
Gender	-.765 (.767)	-1.875* (-.946)	-.125 (1.109)	.759 (1.108)
Age	-.012 (.026)	.019 (.033)	-.094* (.043)	-.009 (.035)
Education	.118 (.216)	.085 (.260)	-.197 (.314)	.111 (.262)
Subjective social class	.975* (.431)	1.148* (.546)	1.266† (.684)	1.356* (.579)
Union membership	1.549 (1.003)	.804 (1.190)	.592 (1.277)	.907 (1.210)
Religiosity	-.136 (.527)	1.236† (.687)	.556 (.720)	.480 (.712)

Left-right self- placement	-.318 (.239)	-.176 (.264)	-.857** (.323)	-.438 (.712)
Attachment to PS	.213 (.407)	-1.289* (.524)	-1.897** (.631)	.275 (.609)
Government performance	-.464 (.394)	-.397 (.477)	-.993† (.511)	-.735 (.525)
Interest in politics	-.224 (.537)	.320 (.611)	.286 (.674)	-1.166† (.655)
Soares' personal qualities	-9.017*** (2.102)	-13.221*** (3.288)	-5.889** (2.677)	-6.922** (2.590)
Importance of election	-1.252† (.641)	-.440 (.713)	-1.981** (.755)	-2.040** (.756)
Distance from PS/PSD mid-point	-.246 (.202)	-.369 (.263)	-.225 (.278)	-.327 (.285)
N			141	
Full model			.75	
Nagelkerke r²				

†p<.10; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

It is clear that the evaluation of Soares' personal qualities continues to play a major role not only in the choices of the electorate as a whole – as we saw in the previous section – but also in the choices made by former PS voters. As we can see in table 7, if the evaluation of Soares' qualities among former PS voters had been generally positive, he would have been able to retain the majority of the Socialist voters in his camp. However, we know that was not the case. The average evaluation of Soares on a scale of 0 to 1 within the group of former Socialist voters was .19, and almost half of them (46 percent) thought that Soares was not the best candidate in any of the eight different dimensions, a phenomenon that, as we can see, seems to have provided a major contribution to increasing the ranks of voters for both Cavaco Silva and Manuel Alegre in the 2006 elections.

Table 7. Effects of evaluation of Soares in the probability of defecting from the Socialist candidate

Defection	Sample distribution	Low	High	Change in probability
No	23.3%	1.4%	52.8%	51.4%
To Alegre	35.6%	66.4%	34.7%	-31.7%
To Cavaco	24.3%	25.8%	1.8%	-24.0%
To others	8.9%	1.8%	4.2%	2.4%
To abstention	7.9%	4.5%	6.4%	1.9%

A second part of the story is told by the “second-order” account. As table 6 also shows, previous Socialist voters who defected to candidates endorsed by the smaller leftist parties are different from those who remained in the Socialist camp in three respects: their ideological self-placement (obviously, more leftist), the importance they awarded to the presidential elections, and their evaluation of government performance. The less important they felt presidential elections to be and the less satisfied with government performance they were, the more likely they were to abandon the Socialist ranks and vote for Jerónimo de Sousa, Francisco Louçã, or Garcia Pereira. In other words, another factor that contributed to Socialist losses in 2006 besides the (low) popularity of Soares was the fact that his candidacy suffered from defections among previous PS voters who used these elections to express their discontent with the government and to vote according to their sincere preferences. Such voters ended up choosing candidates supported by the smaller parties to the left of the PS, suggesting that a second-order pattern was also behind the losses experienced by the Socialists in 2006.

The third part of the story – and the one that has taken more voters away from the Socialist camp as a whole – is provided by the “surge and decline” approach. On the one hand, although partisanship did not help to distinguish those Socialist voters who chose to remain with Soares from those who defected to Alegre, previous Socialist voters with low levels of

attachment to the Socialist Party were much more likely to vote both for Cavaco Silva and for the candidates endorsed by the smaller leftist parties, i.e., all candidates supported by parties other than the PS. When we consider that nearly half of previous voters for the PS said that they were either “independents” or close to parties other than the Socialists, we can have a better grasp both of the “surge” that had benefited the Socialists in 2005 and of the “decline” that followed. On the other hand, there is also a tendency for low interest voters within the previous PS voters to simply demobilize rather than choose any other option, as the “surge and decline” approach suggested might be the case.

Table 8. Effects of attachment to PS in the probability of defecting from the Socialist candidate

	Sample distribution	Low	High	Change in probability
No defection	23.3%	6.7%	8.7%	2.0%
Defection to Alegre	35.6%	39.1%	79.3%	+40.2%
Defection to Cavaco	24.3%	30.8%	2.6%	-28.2%
Defection to others	8.9%	19.4%	0.5%	-18.9%
Defection to abstention	7.9%	3.9%	9.0%	5.1%

Finally, two null findings should also be mentioned. On the one hand, it seems that dissatisfaction with government performance only played a very limited role. While some dissatisfied voters were led to defect to candidates endorsed by the small leftist parties, government performance was had no consequences as far as shifts towards Alegre, Cavaco Silva or even to abstention among previous Socialist voters was concerned. This, together with the general lack of impact of evaluations of government performance on voting decisions among the electorate in general that we previously detected, suggests that the 2006 presidential elections in Portugal did not work as a “referendum” (Tufte, 1975) or “barometer” elections (Anderson and Ward, 1996). On the other hand, the ideological closeness of former PS voters’ to

the mid-point between their perceptions of the ideological positions of the PS and the PSD — their “ideological moderation” — is also not helpful, keeping other things equal, in distinguishing those who voted Soares from those who defected. Thus, we find no evidence for the notion that greater ideological moderation among voters in the Socialist camp prompted choices motivated by an interest in balancing the control of the executive branch on the part of the Socialists with control of the presidency by the PSD-endorsed candidate.

Conclusion

Any observer of the Portuguese case could be forgiven for guessing that presidential elections were mostly about the personalities, the personal allure or the perceived qualities of candidates. After all, in Portugal — as in most premier-presidential systems — presidential elections are not about who governs, and even legislative elections, as most studies have shown, seem to be pervaded by highly personalized politics and by a shallow socio-structural and ideological anchoring of the electorate. Closer examination, however, suggests a much more nuanced story. In spite of the importance that evaluations of candidates’ qualities had in the choices made by voters, the latter were certainly not oblivious to party endorsements of candidates and to all the other elements of information that allowed them to place each candidate in a particular partisan camp. Thus, even in an election not run on a partisan basis and where candidates often presented themselves as “supra-partisan”, “national” or “independent”, party identification still played a crucial role in voting behaviour, contributing to the explanation of choices between candidates endorsed by or emanating from different parties along rather predictable lines.

Presidential elections in semi-presidential systems remain, doubtless, a territory worthy of much further exploration. However, this study suggests a

few potentially promising avenues of research in this regard. Political systems commonly defined as “semi-presidential” are, in fact, very heterogeneous, both in terms of the powers available to the president under the constitution and in actual practice and, as we have begun to realize, in terms of the main patterns of voter behaviour that characterize the election of the head of state. Thus, in “president-parliamentary” regimes or in cases such as France – which, as Duverger noted long ago, stands as a special case where the president “exercises in practice much stronger powers than his counterparts” (Duverger, 1980: 180) – their political and institutional closeness to the presidential logic is likely to result in elections similar to those in presidential systems. There, the vote is shaped by the usual combination of “short-“ (candidates), “medium-“ (issues) and “long-term” forces (partisanship or ideology), and elections also become mechanisms of accountability for executive performance (Lewis-Beck, 1997; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000; Lewis-Beck and Nadeau, 2000). At the other extreme, in cases such as Ireland (Brug, et al., 2000), figurehead presidents with mostly symbolic and representational roles, candidates recruited from among minor party figures, and the credible de-emphasis of candidates’ partisan ties seem to have resulted in presidential elections where ideological and partisan cues are rendered useless as guides to voting choices. Other semi-presidential regimes such as Austria and Iceland, where candidates are also typically “elder statesmen” or “political outsiders” who de-emphasise party ties (Müller, 1999; Kristinsson, 1999), are likely to display similar patterns.

However, proper “premier-presidential” regimes such as Portugal may constitute a third type in this regard. On the one hand, while evaluations of government performance played – except in the narrower sense of expressive voting on the part of previous PS supporters – an overall negligible role in voters’ decisions, patterns of defection from the government on the part of particular segments of the electorate fitted the basic predictions of theories of

“less important elections”, namely, the “surge and decline” and “second-order” theories. Thus, in such systems, presidential elections are clearly not about who governs, and Portuguese voters seem to have been made aware of that at some level, not least by candidates themselves. Cavaco Silva, for example, was particularly reluctant during the campaign to express any concrete judgment about the performance of the Socialist government, a strategy that deprived dissatisfied voters of cues suggesting that a vote for him would be a vote “against” the incumbent.

On the other hand, however, presidential elections in premier-presidential regimes are not about choosing a pleasant or in any way appropriate personality as head of state either. In “premier-presidentialism”, presidents preserve non-irrelevant powers, and parties are likely to care deeply about who holds such powers. In Portugal, parties actively endorse and run well-known and high-level party figures as candidates, and the phenomenon is far from a Portuguese exclusive among “premier-presidential” systems, as the examples of candidates such as Purvanov in Bulgaria, Kwasniewski or Walesa in Poland, Iliescu, Constantinescu, and Basescu in Romania or Paksas in Lithuania clearly illustrate. This allows voters to connect their long-term predispositions with the vote in presidential elections, rendering party identification and, to a lesser extent, ideology, into reliable predictors of vote choices in presidential elections.

Notes

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² The first, in 1985, followed a crisis in the Socialist Party (PS)/Social Democratic Party (PSD) coalition government, and ultimately resulted in elections from which a fractionalized parliament emerged, leading to a PSD minority government. The second, in 1987, followed the approval of a motion of censure against the aforementioned PSD minority cabinet, and resulted in elections that led the PSD to government again, albeit this time with the support of an absolute majority in parliament. The third, in 2001, followed the resignation of the prime minister of a minority Socialist cabinet, with the following elections resulting in a new cabinet supported by a center-right coalition. Finally, in 2004, following an internal crisis in a centre-right coalition government, parliament was again dissolved, and the new elections resulted in a PS cabinet supported by an absolute majority.

³ See descriptive statistics for all variables in the appendix.

⁴ All calculations made with XPost: Post-Estimation Interpretation Using Excel, by Simon Cheng and Scott Long, available in <http://www.indiana.edu/~jslsoc/xpost.htm>.

⁵ In cases where these values are outside the range of the scales, we use the appropriate endpoints.

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Appendix – descriptive statistics

	Full sample			2005 PS voters		
	Mean	Standard deviation	N	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Gender (Male: 1; Female: 2)	1.49	.50	793	1.54	.50	230
Age	45.82	16.65	800	48.85	15.63	234
Education (No formal education:1; Post-graduate:12)	6.00	2.39	798	5.91	2.49	233
Subjective social class (Working class: 1; Upper class:5)	2.16	.95	787	2.17	.94	231
Union membership (No: 0; Yes:1)	.16	.36	790	.24	.43	228
Religiosity (Not at all religious:1; Very 4)	2.75	.89	805	2.71	.83	236
Left-right self-placement (Left:0; Right 10)	5.46	2.53	666	4.83	2.15	200
Attachment to PS (Very close to opp. party: -3; very close to PS:3)	-.22	1.48	812	.55	1.04	236
Evaluation of government performance (Very bad:1; Very good:5)	3.05	1.12	812	3.38	1.02	236
Interest in politics (Not interested: 1; Very interested: 4)	2.57	.95	812	2.62	.94	236
Soares's personal qualities (Not selected as best in any: 0 Selected as best in all:1)	.11	.19	812	.19	.26	236
Importance of elections (Not at all important:0; Very important:4)	3.42	.86	812	3.41	.85	236
Distance to mid-point PS- PSD (Absolute difference LRSP and mid-point of perceived positions of PS and PSD in 11-point scale)	2.17	1.80	650	2.14	1.64	202

Chapter 8

Studying Contamination Effects in Multi-Level Systems of Governance: First Thoughts about Hypotheses and Research Design

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Introduction

In many political reforms around the globe we observe a common trend that might be characterized as ‘decentralization’ or ‘devolution’. Through recasting constitutions, creating sub-national legislatures or simply through devolving more and more administrative responsibilities to already existing sub-national authorities those political reforms try to bring the government home ‘to the people’. The coming-home of the government is seen by many as a way to improve responsiveness and heighten the democratic quality and the (out-put oriented) legitimacy of the political system by trying to match policy output more closely to citizen’s preferences. It is also seen as injecting new lifeblood into the political process because multi-level systems offer political actors potential new arenas in which to compete, as the enthusiastic proponents suggest.

Most European democracies employ a multi-level system of governance. They provide several challenges and important opportunities for electoral accountability and for our understanding of representative democracy. Nevertheless multi-level systems of governance also raise serious concerns about their democratic deficit. Not only citizens but also elected MPs find it hard to attribute responsibility to certain actors correctly when actual policy-making processes are obfuscated by the number of state and non-state actors, lobbyists, specialists and the like who participate in it. This, of course, has important consequences for the legitimacy of the policy-making process.

It remains an open question as to how effective the various mechanisms of democratic control over such policy-making processes can be and under what conditions multi-level systems will ever be able to fulfill their promises in overcoming the democratic deficit and bringing government home to the people. Under what conditions and in what ways can citizens hold which political actors accountable and what are the political consequences of this situation? My argument will be that we cannot reliably answer these questions if we do not understand how citizens make decisions in the context of a multi-level system and particularly how they judge the performance of governments on various levels in their decision-making process.

All too often outcomes of elections are interpreted as if these elections had been held in isolation – without referring to their status in a multi-level system of governance. We speak of “contamination effects” or “interaction effects” between two electoral arenas if the null hypothesis of independence between both arenas cannot be sustained, i.e., when one electoral arena “contaminates” the result in another electoral arena. For instance, the national electoral stage might have implications for a sub-national electoral stage, or presidential elections might have an impact on parliamentary elections (or vice versa). Nevertheless, political scientists have yet to build a body of knowledge about why or when one electoral arena plays a larger or

smaller role in shaping other electoral arenas – an important first step in understanding the complex nature of preference aggregation in representative democracies through popular elections and accountability in systems of multi-level governance. In what follows I will briefly summarize my first attempts to structure the literature and the hypotheses therein as well as those I have developed myself. Finally, I will present some ideas on how to draft a research design for a grant proposal to test those hypotheses in a comparative setting.

Individual Decision-making Process in Multi-level Systems

Under what conditions do voters distinguish between national and sub-national policy responsibilities and employ them systematically in their decision-making calculus? In a multi-level system of governance, in which national and sub-national elections need not necessarily be concurrent, voters may cast their votes to bring about a level-specific executive. Citizens might base their decision-making process on different determinants in different elections even for the (more or less) same set of parties. Do voters differentiate between national and sub-national elections? Do their decisions have the same dynamics or are they systematically different? Under what conditions are these processes linked and what political implication does this have for election outcomes, party strategies and so forth?

In what follows I will distinguish previous research into two strands: unitarists and federalists. The unitarists make assumptions which draw heavily on the referendum voting model (Key 1964, Kramer 1971, Tufte 1978) which suggests that electoral outcome at all levels of governance depend on the performance of the national government. The more popular the national government is the more likely voters are to cast their vote for the incumbents. Thus even co-partisans of the national government are expected

to do well in state elections when times are good. Following this line of thought, strong hierarchical contamination effects are expected. The national arena contaminates the sub-national arena (although there is some evidence of 'reverse-coattail' effects in which sub-national performance assessments influence the individual decision-making process in national elections; see e.g. Gélinau and Remmer 2005). Without spelling out the micro foundations very clearly the literature on political cycles and second-order elections (van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; Kousser 2004; Reif and Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005) also employs the same assumptions regarding the impact of the national arena on sub-national elections. Voters use sub-national elections to punish or reward the national government, employing their current evaluation of the national government as a heuristic. They can punish their governments either by not going to vote for them the next time around or, particularly if there are identifiable alternatives, by registering a vote for a viable alternative. Moreover, McDonald and Budge (2005) find that, independently of their performance in office, incumbents lose on average about 2.3 percent. Thus, some of the negative effects in the literature that are typically attributed to bad performance by the incumbent at the national level, might capture the long run dynamics of electoral cycles (Anderson 2007). Apart from some evidence on the macro-level, we have not really identified on the individual-level the mechanisms that generate these dynamics.

The second strand of the literature comprises the federalists. Their mantra is that for state-specific questions voters require state-specific answers. Voters want to have things done differently at the state level and therefore employ different criteria or respond to cues that differ from the well-studied national-level ones (e.g. Abedi und Siaroff 1999; Jeffrey und Hough 2001; Pallares und Keating 2003; Selb 2006). Following this line of research the national arena is not expected to contaminate the sub-national arena. State elections should be determined by state-level factors. If the federalists are

correct then we should find that political parties at the state-level have a tendency to deviate from the national party line in order to formulate specific policy proposals for the sub-national level. Parties might also employ different campaign strategies in order to compete effectively at different levels of governance, which has implications for potential coalition formation processes as well.

Both literatures agree that what we know from electoral behavior research in single-level elections is that individual vote-choice decisions depend not only on national performance evaluations, as the unitarists suggest, or on sub-national factors, as the federalists recommend, but on preferences for parties, candidates and issues.

I am interested not only in individual-level determinants but in the conditions under which the national arena has an impact on the sub-national arena. The size of a contamination effect should depend on how difficult it is to correctly attribute policy responsibility to particular political actors in the policy-making process. The assignment of responsibility is a necessary condition for accountability. But more often than not voters misattribute responsibilities for governmental actions and thus hold an actor accountable for something he or she is not responsible for. In multi-level systems of government, policy-making responsibility is often shared across or even within levels of governance through mechanisms such as coalition governments and split executives (cohabitation or divided government).

Powell and Whitten (1993) show that a country's formal institutional structure moderates the extent to which citizens can hold their incumbents responsible. Further studies, all operating on the macro-level, support the notion (Anderson 1995; Chappell and Veiga 2000; Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000; Nadeau, Niemi, and Yoshinaka 2002; Whitten and Palmer 1999) that the nature of clarity of responsibility within the national government moderates the extent to which citizens hold national governments

responsible. This literature mostly employs measures of national economic conditions but one could simply use popularity data.

Multi-level systems of governance undermine the potential for citizens to hold policy makers accountable (retrospectively) or provide (pre-electoral) coalitions with a clear mandate (prospectively) to govern. The actual division of power is potentially spread out vertically (lower vs. upper house) and horizontally (national vs. sub-national). Thus multi-level systems of governance impose high informational demands because the clarity of responsibility is diffused. Moreover, in order to form prospective or retrospective evaluations, citizens need to somehow distinguish the track record of the executive at different levels. Moreover, multi-level systems imply multiple elections. In particular, if these elections are not held at the same time, the likelihood of voter fatigue among satisfied voters as well as increased turnout rates among protest voters is high, yielding hard-to-predict election outcomes at the sub-national level.

As well as having an impact on the voter side multi-level systems of governance provide incentives for policy makers to engage in systematic credit-taking or blame-shifting across levels of governance (Anderson 2006). These actions make it even more difficult for citizens to correctly attribute blame and credit for the past or expected future performance of particular policy makers. Without a particular supportive electoral context, elections become clumsy instruments with which to hold policy makers accountable within a multi-level system of governance.

While in terms of legitimacy voters are free to misattribute credit and blame and to decide to reward or punish the incumbent on whatever basis (Manin 1997), institutions that blur responsibilities are more problematic because voters are stuck with them. Thus, I expect to find strong contamination effects when the clarity of responsibility is high. Under such conditions non-sophisticated voters are not expected to distinguish between

national and sub-national policy responsibilities while sophisticated voters might have the capability and motivation to do it.

A basic assumption is that the limited capacity and motivation to absorb complex information about politics (such as how federalism actually works) into the decision-making process necessarily implies that we could reasonably expect that heuristic performance or popularity judgments about the government are all that should have an impact on an individual's decision-making process and all we could reasonably expect. Reward or punishment attributions as an electoral mechanism for holding governments accountable would be most likely to be detectable in general performance evaluations of the government. By doing this even politically innocent citizens have a legitimate way to hold the government accountable retrospectively, or to provide them with a mandate prospectively.

At the individual-level the clarity of responsibility argument should therefore focus on heuristics. For instance in concurrent elections the national agenda is likely to dominate the media and voters might therefore find it easier to make evaluations of the national government or other national-level determinants than to access sub-national factors.

Another heuristic is provided by the political composition of the national and the sub-national levels of government. If both governments are held by the same parties then the attribution of responsibility is potentially easier. In this case voters really do not need to know much about the structure and rules of the political process in a multi-level system. The same parties are responsible for the policy output and are likely to be punished or rewarded depending on citizens' performance evaluations of the government. Using data from eight Berlin state elections between 1976 and 2001 I can provide the first evidence for these heuristics (Gschwend 2007).

Envisioned Research Design

So far there is not much comparative research out there. Instead, most of the studies focus on the aggregate level in a particular country. The lack of data availability hinders individual-level studies, let alone comparative approaches on this level. State-level elections are so far not well studied but they are necessary for our understanding of accountability in multi-level systems. If there is individual-level data at all than there are single-shot pre-election studies. These studies can provide us with evidence about micro-level determinants and micro-foundations of the aggregate-level studies. Nevertheless, the establishment of causality is not straightforward in cross-sectional data. Thus the observed relationships remain pretty silent in terms of one's ability to interpret them causally. Even if we find that partisanship and regional or national performance evaluations do determine vote choice, to what degree are they independent of one another? It is certainly conceivable that performance evaluations are biased by partisanship in the same way that evaluations of the state of the economy are biased (see Anderson et al. 2004; Wlezien et al. 1997) or, on the other hand, performance indicators may systematically bias a voter's answer to party preference evaluations (which would provide an incentive for politicians to make good policy and govern effectively). If the sub-national track record does not have an impact on vote-choice decisions then why should regional governments bother to work hard? (Should questions of this sort be systematically asked of members of state parliaments?)

There is a real need to separate these factors out, and hence I make a plea for gathering panel data within an election cycle between two national (and sub-national) elections. It is also not clear what the benchmark election is for those citizens' evaluations. So far most of the literature simply assumes that Presidential elections have an impact on Congressional elections, national on sub-national elections and so forth. If voters find the local situation more

easily accessible than the national one then this assumption is questionable. There is also research arguing that coattail effects might actually be reversed (Ames 1994; Gélinau and Remmer 2005; Samuels 2000) Therefore sub-national performance evaluations should be included in the survey (on or off-line, depending on funding).

Since parties do typically make the first move in dealing with various incentives in multi-level systems, a systematic analysis of party policy at the national, compared to the sub-national level, and possibly a separate study of the attitudes of members of parliament might supplement the individual-level data.

Case Selection

Again I find a conflict here. On the one hand I am interested in individual-level mechanism. It would be nice to pin down some form of generalizable attribution processes and decision-making determinants that are comparable across countries. This would suggest implementing such panel studies using a very different design, showing that, no matter how different these countries are, we might be able to pin down a basic repertoire of how voters hold their politicians accountable in a system of multi-level governance. Potential countries for examination would be Spain and Germany. On the other hand, it would be naïve to assume that these individual-level mechanisms occur in an institutional vacuum. Moreover, there are always potential perils when analyzing election outcomes in isolation. In trying to get a handle on institutional variations that might have an impact (time-line of elections, electoral system, party system, constitutional design) I would rather opt for a most-similar design, focusing on some aspects while holding other features constant through the selection of cases. Potential countries for this study would be Germany and Austria.

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