

WORKING PAPERS

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INTERNAL PARTY FACTIONALISM

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Abstract

Elections have two aims: to control incumbents and to select governments. These two perspectives imply different assumptions, but they share others. Theories of electoral behavior assume that voters are alike. However this research questions whether all voters consider the same issues when they decide their vote. In this paper the author analyzes moderate voters and finds that those who place themselves in the middle of the ideological scale, are more sensitive to non-ideological issues. After studying the Spanish and British cases, he concludes that internal factionalism is more likely to have an impact on the party preference of moderate voters than any other section of the electorate.

INTRODUCTION*

Elections have been analyzed both from the viewpoint of accountability and distinction. These two perspectives imply different assumptions. In the former case, if we assume that voters assign responsibilities, citizens will evaluate an incumbent's performance and reward her when they approve of her policies or her outcomes. However, if voters vote on the basis of distinction, they will elect the candidate who satisfies specific criteria. These two perspectives are not incompatible or contradictory.

A second assumption underlies theories of electoral behaviour: that voters are alike. This is a big assumption. If we consider ideology to be the key to electorate's preferences, we can classify them for example as moderate or loyal voters. The latter have a marked ideological preference, whereas the moderate voters place themselves in the middle of the ideological spectrum. Therefore the question that arises is: How do moderate voters decide their favorite incumbent party?

Addressing this question is the main aim of this article. The literature on elections has sought to reconcile the two principal perspectives on the subject. However, most scholars have assumed that voters act in the same way in their electoral behavior. I argue on the other hand that how citizens decide their vote is a more complex process. Empirical evidence shows that there are different types of voters, and I expect that each 'type' takes into account different issues when they choose their favorite incumbent party.

The second gap that this article tries to fill is the role of party organization in the process of assigning responsibilities. Parties are significant actors in democracies, but their internal life is still a mystery. One of the main problems that citizens have with making incumbent's accountable is a lack of information. Parties are able to supply

voters with data, and moderate voters may use this information to decide their vote.

Spain and the United Kingdom constitute interesting cases through which to study these issues. On the one hand, in both countries we find parties that were perceived by citizens as internally divided, and this perception affected their electoral results. Previous literature has analyzed these facts, but I argue that their conclusions may be improved (Maravall 2008a; Sánchez-Cuenca 2008). On the other hand, I have collected new data to further analyze these theoretical arguments.

The article is divided into three parts. First, I will assess the theoretical arguments that explain electoral behavior and the importance of moderate voters. Moreover, I will stress the role of party organization in the process of assigning responsibilities. Second, I will present the Spanish and British cases. Finally, I will test the main hypothesis and discuss the empirical conclusions of the research.

ELECTORAL BEHAVIOR AND MODERATE VOTERS

If elections are important in the theory of democracy, it is because they have two goals: the control and selection of politicians (Przeworski, Stokes and Manin 1999). Control implies the possibility of sanction, whereas to select means to choose 'good types'. These two objectives summarize the two perspectives of elections in the academic literature.

When voters select politicians, they look to the future and they put their faith in a program. Politicians are supposed to implement this electoral manifesto. This view of elections is known as the 'prospective model of voting'. The main assumption is that politicians are distinct: that they have a feature that distinguishes them from the other candidates. It means that voters may differentiate between politicians, taking into account a criterion of selection. If this criterion is observed, the voter will support the candidate.

Scholars have established several criteria of distinction: policies (Downs 1957), preferences about policies (Harrington 1993) and competence or moral integrity (Fearon 1999). Most of these

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features can be boiled down to ideology. For that reason, Sánchez-Cuenca (2008) has referred to these criteria together as the logic of ideology. The main idea is that citizens support parties or candidates that are ideologically close.

The alternative view of elections is accountability. If we take into account the broad range of definitions and use principal-agent theory, an agent –politician or party- would be accountable when the principal –voters- may punish or reward her because of her performance. Thus, with complete information, a principal can observe the agent’s performance and then, either decide to support or reject the agent. Elections as mechanisms of accountability have been described as retrospective models of voting.

These two views of elections are not in conflict. The Founders of the American constitution, for example, pursued precisely these two goals: to select ‘good types’ and maintain responsibility. On the one hand, in Madison’s words, “the aim of every political constitution is, or ought to be, first to obtain for rulers men who possess most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of society” (Hamilton, Madison and Jay 1961: 350). On the other hand, elections ought to guarantee responsibility too: “the means relied on this form of government for preventing their degeneracy are numerous and various.... as will maintain a proper responsibility to people” (Hamilton, Madison and Jay 1961: 351).

Current literature has reconciled these two views of elections as well. Thus, Fearon (1999) argues that voters will use incumbent performance as a signal of distinguishing ‘good types’ from ‘bad types’. Thus, voters will support governments that achieve good performance –retrospective voting- and share electors’ interests –prospective voting-. If voters only consider performance, then the ‘bad type’ will have incentives for appearing ‘good’.

Sánchez-Cuenca (2008) brings together retrospective and prospective models too. He refers to these logics of voting as the logic of incumbent’s performance and the logic of ideology. He points out that voters consider both logics simultaneously. This

means that voters will support parties that are ideologically reliable. And a party is “reliable if it is both consistent and capable” (Sánchez-Cuenca 2008: 52). In Sánchez-Cuenca’s words: “Voters who are closer to a party and who think that a party is reliable, are going to vote for that party. Ideological distance will fully explain their behavior” (Sánchez-Cuenca 2008: 52).

This article in some ways provides a straightforward development of the above works. However, I would argue that these explanations can be enhanced. I start by sharing the view that elections are the results of retrospective and prospective voting. However, how voters consider performance, capacity or ideological closeness is more complex. Previous research has assumed that voters act similarly when they follow their ideology and evaluate incumbent’s performance. But this is a big assumption. For instance, we may ask ourselves whether loyal voters evaluate their preferred party’s performance in the same way as moderate voters? Are those faithful voters more or less critical? Or, as I wonder in the following lines, do reliable voters evaluate internal party factionalism in the same way as moderate voters?

Previous research has shown that retrospective voting is not a simple process, and that partisan preferences play a key role. But their arguments are not - unlike Fearon or Sánchez-Cuenca - that the logic of voting is a combination of retrospective and prospective voting. Maravall and Przeworski (1999), for example, interpret economic voting as a process of rationalization. After studying the Spanish case, they hold that a significant part of the electorate uses economic opinion as a process to rationalize their vote. These individuals decide their partisan preferences and then look for arguments –in their case they study economic arguments- that justify their vote. Their empirical evidence is strong. But, following the preceding questions, we may wonder: Is this process of rationalization the same for all voters?

The starting point of this research is that voters are not alike. This means that some individuals are more sensitive to politicians’ capacity, economic performance or party unity than others. In

other words, perhaps ideology is a key feature of distinction for loyal voters and, therefore, that they have more probability of rationalizing their votes than, for instance, moderate voters. Following this line of thinking, we may distinguish two different types of voters.

On the one hand, loyal voters will decide their vote following their ideology. Ideology will play a key role in their decision to vote; but this does not mean that they are irrational. They will expect their favorite party to be consistent and develop policies according to their preferences. Moreover, if they have doubts or incomplete information,¹ they will follow a process of rationalization that justifies their vote. In sum, this kind of voter focuses on ideology as the feature of distinction between parties.

On the other hand, there are moderate and non-ideological voters. How they decide their vote is intriguing. Several previous studies have dealt with the latter, non-ideological voters (see, for example, De la Calle, Martínez and Orriols 2010). Their main conclusion is that, in spite of an incumbent's economic performance or leadership evaluation, the majority of non-ideological voters support the government. However, not a lot is known about moderate voters; the main aim of this article therefore is to analyze how moderate voters take decisions.

I define moderates as the voters who place themselves in the middle of the ideological spectrum. For instance, Spanish surveys measure ideology on a ten-point scale in which 1 corresponds to the extreme left and 10 to the extreme right. Therefore, in this set of values, the respondents who placed themselves on point 5 of the scale may be assigned to the center.² These voters

are crucial. Classical literature has referred to them as median voters (Downs 1957) and one of their features is that they decide elections. Empirical evidence supports this statement. For instance, in Spain, the party that wins an election, has always obtained the support of the moderate electors (Sánchez Cuenca 2009).

Because moderate voters do not have marked ideological preferences between left and right, I hypothesize that they will look for other criteria that permit them to distinguish between parties and decide their vote. Thus, I expect that non-ideological issues, such as party unity, will be more relevant for these voters. These features will be signals of party capacities and political strength.

The question that arises is: Why do moderate voters take into account other issues rather than ideological closeness? There are two reasons, one is theoretical and the other is empirical. In most cases, median voters place themselves in the 'middle of parties', and ideological distances to them are therefore similar. Thus, this section of the electorate has difficulties in selecting only one of the parties to support. For that reason, they would consider further criteria, rather than just ideology. Moreover, if ideological closeness is the key factor, we will observe that the electoral winners will be the parties that are closer to the median voter. Empirical evidence confirms that this argument is not always true. Table 1 presents median voters' and party ideologies. In several cases, the winner is not the party that is the ideological closest to this electorate. For instance, Germany 1983 or Germany 1994 are examples of this; in both cases, the winning party was not the closest to the median voter.

¹ Individuals spend little time on politics and the political information they have is not high. For instance, in Spain, in 2004 only 31 per cent knew the number of European countries. Or in 2002 only around 14 per cent of Spaniards knew the name of the President of the European Commission (Fraile 2006).

² The median point of this scale is 5.5. But interviewees cannot give that value. Moreover, '6 respondents' behave in a different way to '5 respondents'. The former, in the majority, support parties of the right, whereas the

electoral majority of '5 respondents' change their vote depending on the election. Empirical evidence has shown that the party that wins the election always got the 5 respondents' support (Sánchez Cuenca 2009). For that reason I focus on these individuals and consider them to be the median voters.

TABLE 1. Median Voter and Party Ideology

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1992	1993	1994	1996	1997	1998	2000	2001	2002
France																			
Median voter		5								5									
PSF		3.61				4.57						3.84			4.34				4.19
Gaullist		5.77				7.03						4.76			5.16				4.55
UDF		5.55				5.55						5.55			5.16				5.36
Winner		PSF				PSF						Gaullist			PSF				Gaullist
Germany																			
Median voter		5								5					5				
SPD	3.98			4.64			4.31			3.44			4.09			5.04			4.77
CDU	6.06			6.5			5.49			4.51			6.34			6.4			6.13
Winner	CDU			CDU			CDU			CDU			CDU			SPD			SPD
Italy																			
Median voter		5								5									
PCI-PDS				4.66			3.86				5.54		5.35	5.84					4.62
PSI				4.66			5.21				5.4		5.4	6.76					4.62
PPI-DC				4.86			5.21				5.44		7.38	5.9					5.93
FI													6.9	7.96					5.93
Winner				DC			DC				DC		FI	PDS					FI
Spain																			
Median voter		5								5					5				
PSOE			4.45			4.42			3.88			3.84			4.79				3.98
PP			5.66			5.66			4.84			4.58			5.53				5.53
Winner			PSOE			PSOE			PSOE			PSOE			PP				PP
Denmark																			
Median voter		5								5									
Social Democrats (SD)		4.72			3.82		3.55	3.99		3.23			4.63			5.25			4.33
Conservatives (CON)		7.58			6.73		5.22	6.8		5.5			5.8			5.95			6.02
Liberals (LIB)		6.18			5.68		6.46	6.88		5.5			7.7			6.43			6.81
Winners		SD			SD		SD	SD		SD			SD			SD			LIB

Source: World Value Survey and Comparative Manifestos Project.

The second question that arises is: Why is party unity relevant? First, party unity is one of the possible features that may influence the electoral behavior of moderate voters. There are other issues that may be relevant for them such as, for instance, corruption or terrorism. The main theoretical idea is that moderate voters are more sensitive to questions that are difficult to place in the left-right framework. Because these voter's ideological distance from the main parties are similar, ideology is not always a feasible criterion of distinction. Thus, because ideology is not useful, party unity may be one of the features that moderate voters use to distinguish between parties.

Internal party division means something other than capacity. Party unity is a sign of electoral and political strengths. If parties are divided into factions, they will not focus on presenting a unified party manifesto and winning elections. Thus, divided parties will invest most of their effort in internal debates, and will neglect their main aim: to gain votes and to attain government. Moreover, as I will show below, one of the factions will have incentives to leak bad news about the other faction. Finally, internal party division is the result of other political problems such as, for instance, corruption or electoral defeats. Thus, factionalism is a reflection of other issues. For these reasons, party unity may be a useful political signal to moderate voters. But there are further reasons to consider party factionalism as a relevant issue in the theory of democracy.

Party Organization, Factionalism and Electoral Behavior

Political parties and their internal organization have not been deeply analyzed for a long time by democratic theorists. Social scientists and philosophers working in this field have concluded that democracy is not a question of how parties organize and, therefore, they have only focused on how elections work. For that reason, few studies have analyzed the relationship between party organization and elections. The scarce literature that has sought to respond to this question, has come to two key conclusions.

On the one hand, Maravall analyzes how different types of party organization may affect accountability. Or, in Maravall's words: "if the internal accountability of party leaders facilitates their external accountability as public office holders" (Maravall 2008a: 157). Thus, internal accountability is possible when parties permit internal debates that establish the party position. He concludes that internal processes of deliberation may be of benefit to parties. On the one hand, they will be a source of information. On the other, once party members are convinced, they will be more able to persuade voters. However, if these debates become a source of noise, they will weaken party capacities.

Maravall (2008a) studies all these arguments in depth and shows that institutional designs condition the effects of party organization. He uses candidate selection as a *proxy* of internal openness. He observes that it is only relevant under proportional electoral systems with closed lists: as more people may participate in candidate selection, the risk of losing power decreases. Thus, internal openness will be a source of information and will improve accountability, whereas closed lists will facilitate party discipline, while avoiding noise and governmental incapacity.

On the other hand, several researchers have concluded that voters punish parties that are internally divided. Using individual data, Maravall (2008a) and Sanchez-Cuenca (2008) come to the same conclusion: if voters perceive that politicians are immersed in internal political struggles, the probability of supporting them will decrease.

From these findings, several conundrums emerge. First, some researches have analyzed the connection between party organization and factionalism, but there is still a lack of empirical evidence. Thus, for instance, we do not know whether internal party openness produces more or less factions. Second, we do not know much about the public's opinion of party organization. Do voters prefer internal party openness? And, how do their preferences connect with the electoral punishment of internal political struggles? Finally, as we saw in the previous section, there are different types of voters, when their

ideological loyalty is taken into account. We may wonder: Do moderate voters evaluate party factionalism, as is the case with other electors? Using the Spanish and British cases, I shall try to shed some light on these intriguing findings.

Thank to the Spanish National Plan of Research, I have had access to a survey about the ‘quality of democracy’, that has been produced by the Spanish Center for Sociological Research (*Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, henceforth CIS).³ This survey contains questions about party organization that provides us with information about citizens’ opinions.

The majority of Spaniards prefer parties to be united and without divisions.⁴ In fact, they punish parties that are internally divided (Maravall 2008a). But, at the same time, Spaniards like citizens, grassroots

members and supporters to select the candidates.⁵ Therefore, Spanish voters reproduce the previous theoretical dilemma. The next question that arises is: How do they combine internal democracy and party unity? Perhaps, voters who are more tolerant with factionalism will prefer party openness, whereas individuals who punish party divisions will prefer centralized parties. Table 2 summarizes the results.

The Spanish empirical evidence shows that citizens who prefer that supporters and grassroots member select party candidates tolerate internal debates. But those who prefer centralized parties⁶ will desire party unity. Therefore, preferences about party organization affect preferences about party unity. Citizens who prefer internal openness will be more tolerant with internal debates and divisions.

TABLE 2. Party Unity and Candidate Selection

	Who would have to select party candidates				
	Supporters and grassroots members	Only grassroots members	Internal structure	Citizens	Don’t know / No answer
Party unity, without division of opinion	40.87	44.76	53.02	44.42	21.87
Internal debate, without unanimity	46.74	43.09	34.42	39.84	18.67
Don’t know / No answer	12.39	12.15	12.57	15.74	59.46
Total	100	100	100	100	100

³ CIS 2790.

⁴ Question 22 asked citizens whether they preferred united parties, without divisions, or internal debate, without unanimity. 42.01 per cent of interviewees preferred the first, whereas 37.94 per cent chose the second.

⁵ Question 24 asked interviewees who would have to select party candidates: 37.34 per cent preferred all Spaniards, 20.28 per cent answered “rank-and-file members”, 15.45 per cent would like “grassroots members and supporters” and, finally, 13.36 per cent preferred “internal party structure”.

⁶ Internal structure selects candidates.

THE CASES: SPAIN AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Spain

Spain constitutes an exceptional case through which to study this issue. Both the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the Popular Party (PP) have been forced to give up power due to deep internal divisions. At the beginning of the 90s, the incumbent, PSOE, was accused of several cases of corruption. A significant faction of the party, headed by Alfonso Guerra, decided to protect most of the accused, allowing them to avoid any acceptance of responsibility. Alfonso Guerra controlled party organization during the 80s, and created “an informal, closely-knit network that operated like a party within the party” (Maravall 2008a: 184). Once the cases of corruption emerged, the Socialist Party’s *nomenklatura*, controlled by Alfonso Guerra, persecuted those who demanded information and political accountability. These demands “were dismissed as threats against unity, discipline and solidarity; their proponents were accused of treason and disloyalty” (Maravall 2008a: 185-186). In sum, during a decade, the PSOE had sunk into a state of internal divisions and struggles. Only the emergence of a new leader, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, allowed them to finish with this period.

The case of the Popular Party is different. In 2004, the incumbent, PP, lost the elections unexpectedly. During its first period of opposition (2004-2008), Mariano Rajoy, the Conservative leader, followed a

strategy of political confrontation (Fundación Alternativas 2007, 2008, 2009; Maravall 2008b). The main features of that strategy were: negative messages and insults about the socialist government and the impossibility of them reaching agreements. That type of political strategy is not new and is well-documented in the academic literature (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1997; Geer 2006; Maravall 2008b).

In 2008, the Popular Party lost the elections again. Mariano Rajoy decided to change the strategy of opposition and opted for competing for moderate voters. This meant that he had to moderate his messages and to represent himself as a responsible politician. A significant faction of the PP did not accept these changes and a serious internal struggle began. Consequently, in the months following the elections, most of his team stopped supporting him. A new team now supports Rajoy, but the internal struggle continues.

These internal divisions pervaded public opinion. Table 3 summarizes how Spaniards evaluated party unity in 1993 and 2009. We observe that, in 1993, the PSOE was perceived as having a serious lack of unity within the party: 44.09 per cent of interviewees considered that the PSOE was ‘a little’ or ‘not at all’ united. This was the highest percentage recorded among the parties. However, in 2009, the PP obtained the highest perception of disunity, 47.65 per cent, whereas the Socialist Party got 17.04 per cent and Left United (IU) attained 36.17 per cent.

TABLE 3. Are the Following Parties “a Lot”, “Enough”, “Some”, “a Little” or “Not at All” United?

	1993			2009		
	PSOE	PP	IU	PSOE	PP	IU
“A lot”	7.95	8.43	4.6	7.89	3.59	2.65
“Enough”	32.73	42.41	31.29	38.11	13.94	14.44
“Some”				22.33	22.26	18.91
“A little”	30.42	20.82	24.98	14.84	33.11	22.6
“Not at all”	13.67	6.63	10.55	4.2	14.54	13.57
Don’t know / No answer	15.23	21.7	28.58	12.63	12.56	27.84
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CIS 2048 and CIS 2790.

Moreover, as I argued above, Spanish moderate voters have been a deciding group in elections. The Spanish party that won elections, always gained the majority of moderate supporters (Sánchez Cuenca 2009). But, how did these moderate voters evaluate party disunity? Did these internal struggles affect their voting decision?

United Kingdom

In November 1990, as the result of an internal conspiracy, Margaret Thatcher presented her resignation as Prime Minister. One of her previously loyal ministers, Geoffrey Howe, had triggered her political end when he presented his resignation two weeks before. It was a sign that internal divisions had reached cabinet level.

Party opinion formers concluded that Thatcher was an electoral handicap. Her cabinet had approved some local taxes that were rejected by citizens and, in particular, the elderly. Moreover, her economic performance became unpopular. Economic growth fell from 5.34 per cent (1988) to 1.87 per cent (1989). And in the year of her resignation economic growth fell again to 0.18 per cent. In two years, economic growth dropped by more than 5 points.⁷

Finally, the Conservative Party was divided over the European Union. Thatcher was extremely belligerent against European integration, whereas a significant faction of her party was more moderate.

All these internal disputes eroded Margaret Thatcher's support and the result was internal factionalism. Consequently, the British public clearly perceived that the Conservative Party was divided. Table 4 summarizes the opinion of citizens about the internal divisions of the Labour Party and the Conservative Party. The results show that Thatcher's party was perceived as more divided than the Labour Party. 75.63 per cent of total interviewees considered that the Conservative Party was divided, whereas only 48.04 per cent had the same perception in the case of the Labour Party.

John Major replaced Margaret Thatcher and he won the following elections in 1992. But we cannot conclude that the electoral victory was the result of the replacement of the Prime Minister. The Conservative Party lost 40 seats in Parliament and a survey after Thatcher's resignation revealed that 52 per cent of British approved of her performance (Kavanagh 1997: 134).

TABLE 4. Is this Party United or Divided?

	Conservative Party	Labour Party
United	21.77%	48.43%
Divided	75.63%	48.04%
Neither or both	2.6%	3.53%
Total	100%	100%

Source: 1990 British social attitudes.

⁷ World Development Indicators (WDI) from Alvarez, Cheibub, Limongi and Przeworski.

In sum, the political end of Margaret Thatcher is explained by an internal conspiracy. The political strength of the Conservative Party diminished in Parliament in the following elections. As in the Spanish case, the question that arises is: Did it affect the electoral behavior of moderate voters? Were they more sensitive to internal divisions?

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

In the Spanish case, the CIS provide us with surveys (1993 and 2009) where citizens were questioned about these issues. Using these data, I shall analyze how internal party factionalism affected the electoral behavior of moderate voters. Moreover, I have data about British case. The 1990 British social attitudes survey contains questions about internal divisions within the Conservative Party.

I use two different statistical models. In the case of Spain, I analyze surveys using a conditional logit model. However, the British case is studied using a logit model. As I show below, because the British social attitudes surveys do not provide a numerical variable about ideology, I do not need to use conditional logit model (Long & Freese 2001).

Conditional logit models allow us to introduce alternative-specific values. This means that we can use independent variables that assume different values for each value of the dependent variable. This is precisely what I need for my analyses. Ideology is a key factor in Spanish electoral behavior (Sánchez-Cuenca 2008). For that reason, I use ideological distance as an independent variable and each individual has a different distance to each of the parties. Thus, using conditional logit models, we may introduce this type of independent variable and get a single coefficient. Moreover, we can use individual-specific variables. Now, the values do not vary depending on the values of the dependent variable. This is called a mixed conditional logit model.⁸

⁸ If only individual-specific variables are introduced, a conditional logit produces the same results as a multinomial logit.

Let's start with the Spanish analyses. I have to use two different dependent variables. In the 1993 statistical analysis, the dependent variable is declared voting intention, whereas in 2009, it is recall of general elections.⁹ They assume three values: Popular Party (PP), Socialist Party (PSOE) and Left United (IU), and the category of reference is PSOE.

The independent variables are recollection of previous vote, ideological distance, capacity of parties, internal unity and two socio-demographic variables: sex and age. Moreover, I have created a dummy variable that takes value 1 when the respondent is located in category 5 of a ten-point ideological scale.¹⁰ This dummy variable will interact with capacity and party unity. The main aim is to analyze whether capacity and party unity affect moderate voters with higher strength.

Recollection of previous vote tries to measure party identification in 1993. It may be considered as a *proxy*. But I cannot use this independent variable in 2009. As I said before, because of legal constraints, I do not have declared voting intention for the second analysis, and recollection of previous vote will be the dependent variable. Therefore, I cannot measure party identification.

Ideological distance is defined in Euclidean terms (Hinich y Munger 2003: 103).¹¹ Thus, we expect that as ideological distance increases, the probability of supporting parties will decrease.

⁹ Because of legal constraints, the survey CIS 2790 does not include declared voting intention.

¹⁰ In the surveys I have analyzed, individuals were asked to place themselves on a ten-point ideological scale in which 1 corresponds to extreme left and 10 to the extreme right.

¹¹ Among the different alternatives of measuring ideological distance, I am using Euclidean distance. In math,

$$DE(y, z) = \sqrt{\sum_{j=1}^n (y_j - z_j)^2}$$

where y_j is party ideology and z_j is voter's ideology for each ideological scale j . In this work I am using one ideological scale: left versus right. In the surveys, respondents do not attribute any ideology to parties. Therefore, I calculate party ideology as the ideological mean of its voters.

Capacity and internal division has been measured in two different ways. In 1993, interviewees evaluated these two features in a four-point scale: “a lot”, “enough”, “a little” and “not at all”. However, in 2009, the questionnaire was defined in five-point scales. Thus, interviewees may choose a new option between “enough” and “a little”: “some”. The problem that arises is that the magnitude of coefficients will not be comparable and we shall therefore focus on their statistical significance. I expect that if these evaluations increase, the probability of supporting parties will increase. Finally, I introduce two socio-demographic variables –sex and age- because they are relevant in Spanish electoral behavior (González 1996).

In the appendix, Tables 5 and 6 summarize the empirical evidence. I have developed two models per case. Model 1 does not introduce the interaction between moderate voters and the party features – capacity and party unity- whereas in model 2 they do. The statistical analyses fit as well as I had hoped. If we do not consider the interaction term, vote recalled, ideological distance, capacity and internal unity are highly significant and have the expected signs. Thus, when capacity and internal unity increase, electoral support increases. However, if ideological distance increases, voting intention will decrease.

Once we introduce the interaction term, the results of model 1 change. Vote recalled, ideological distance and capacity maintain their statistical significance. And, as I expected, moderate voters are highly influenced by party unity. Both in 1993 and 2009, the interaction follows the expected sign and is significant.¹² They reward party unity with more probability than the other voters. Moreover, in 1993, the evaluation of party unity is only significant for moderate voters.

As King *et al.* (2000) argue, the main aim of social research is to present the results in the most understandable way possible. Graphs 1 and 2 show clearly the differences between moderate voters and the other interviewees. In the X-axis, value 1 means “a lot of division”, whereas the

maximum value (4 in 1993 and 5 in 2009) means “not at all”. Left graphs illustrate the effect of slopes when we only consider the interviewees’ opinion about internal unity. Right graphs include the other independent variables. We see that in all graphs the lines are positive. This means that if interviewees consider that parties are not internally divided, the probability of voting them will increase. Once we compare moderate voters with other voters, we observe that slopes are more pronounced. Therefore, Spanish moderate voters are more sensitive to this issue than other voters. It confirms the hypothesis that internal factionalism conditions their vote with more probability than the remainder of the electorate.

The statistical models for the United Kingdom are different. In this case we cannot use conditional logit models. British social attitudes surveys do not provide a numerical variable about ideology. Therefore, I use a logit model (Long and Freese 2001).

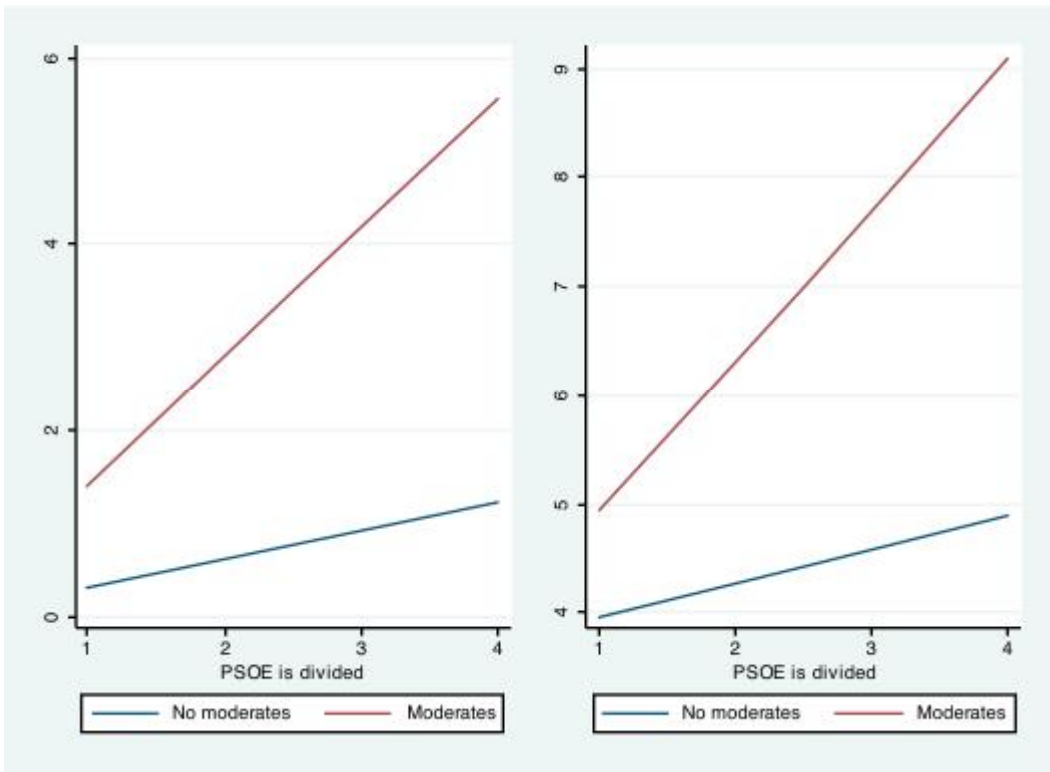
Now, the dependent variable is party identification. This survey does not have a question about declared voting intention. Therefore, I use this variable as a proxy of party support. It measures whether individuals are partisans, sympathisers or residual identifiers of a party.¹³ The dependent variable is a dummy that assumes value 1 when the respondent declares that she supports or identifies with the Conservative Party, and value 0 for the remaining values.

The independent variables are their opinions about the nation’s wealth distribution, internal unity and two sociological variables (education and age). As I have said above, the survey does not provide a numerical variable about ideology. Thus, I have decided to use respondents’ opinion about the nation’s

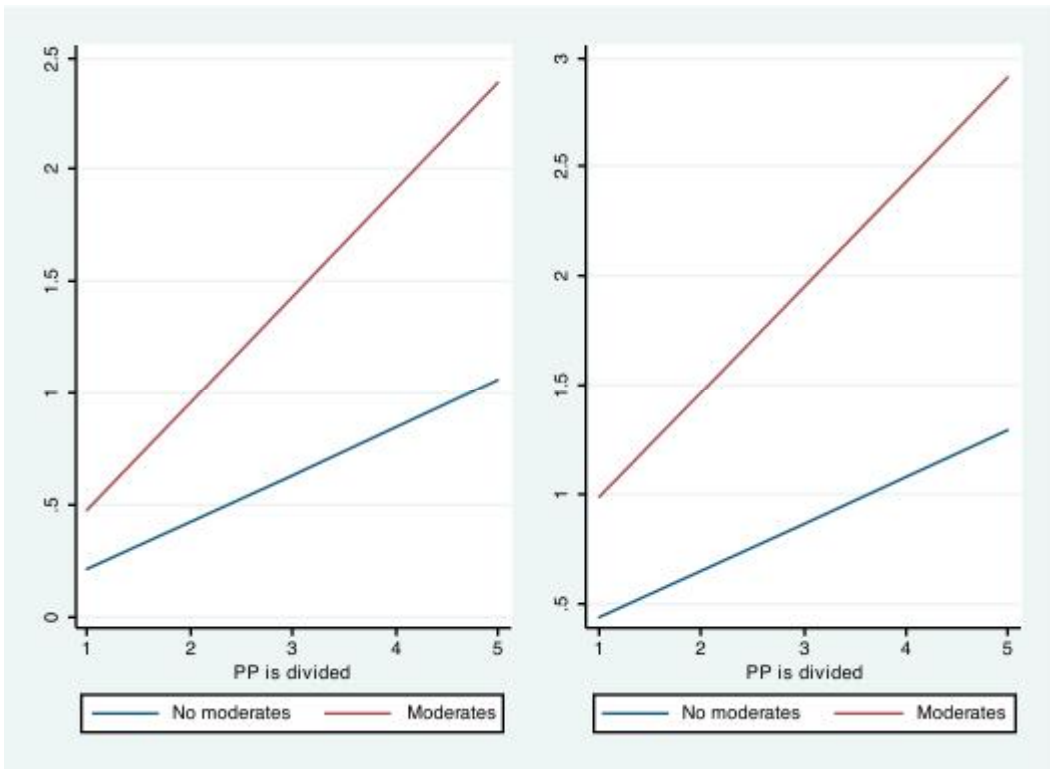
¹² In 2009, the interaction coefficient is close to statistical significance: Z is 1.53 and P is 0.127.

¹³ This variable combines two questions: “Do you think of yourself as a supporter of any one political party?” and “Do you think of yourself as a little closer to one political party than to others?”

GRAPH 1. Effects of Slopes: Interaction and Holding All Other Variables Constant (Spain 1993)



GRAPH 2. Effects of Slopes: Interaction and Holding All Other Variables Constant (Spain, 2009)



wealth distribution as a proxy of ideology.¹⁴ Moreover, I have incorporated respondents' age and their level of education¹⁵ as control variables as well.

Internal unity is a dummy variable that takes value 1 when the respondent considers that the Conservative Party is divided, and value 0 if she chooses: united, both or neither. I expect that its effect is negative. Thus, if interviewees consider that Thatcher's party is divided, their probability of voting will decrease.

To define moderate voters has been the most difficult task. As I have said, the British survey does not include any numerical variable about ideology. As a result I cannot define a median voter in numerical terms. For that reason, I have resorted to other questions. Moderate voters are those who hesitate to support the Labour Party or the Liberal Party and, therefore, they will be able to vote for the Conservative Party. Individuals were asked to place themselves on a five-point feeling scale in which 1 means to feel very strongly in favour of the Labour Party (and the Liberal Party) and 5 to feel very strongly against these parties. Thus, I assume that moderate voters are those who are not close to either of these parties and, at the same time, they do not feel against. In sum, they place themselves in the middle of the Labour Party and the Liberal Party.¹⁶

In the appendix, Table 7 presents the results. Coefficients have the expected sign and, moreover, are highly significant. Thus, if respondents consider that the nation's wealth is well distributed among working people, their probability of supporting the Conservative Party will increase. However, if they believe that the Conservative Party is divided, that likelihood will reduce.

¹⁴ The question is: "Ordinary working people do not get their fair share of the nation's wealth: agree strongly, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree."

¹⁵ Individuals were asked to place themselves on a seven-point education scale in which 1 corresponds to degree and 7 to no qualifications.

¹⁶ In fact, in the sample, 36.21 per cent of respondents who are considered moderate under my definition, votes for the Conservative Party, whereas 18.52 per cent and 5.35 per cent prefer the Labour and Liberal parties respectively.

The main hypothesis of this research is tested in model 2. We observe that the interaction between the moderate electorate and internal unity is statistically significant and has the expected sign. As in the Spanish case, Graph 3 clearly shows the effect of this interaction. Moderates' lines are more pronounced. This means that those voters are more affected by internal divisions than the rest of the voters. Therefore, we can conclude that the British 'moderate' electorate is more sensitive to that issue. If they believe that the parties are divided, they will punish them. And that punishment will be higher than that predicted for the other individuals.

CONCLUSION

Do moderate voters respond in the same way to issues as loyal voters? Does party unity equally affect all voters? One of the strong assumptions of the literature about electoral behavior is that voters are alike in their political behavior. However, in this research, we have seen that each voter may respond differently to different features. I have classified voters as being either 'reliable' or 'moderate' voters. The former group is not irrational; they expect their preferred party to be ideologically consistent. And, if they have doubts or incomplete information, ideology will be their short cut, following a process of rationalization.

However, moderate voters evaluate other factors such as, for instance, party unity. Because their ideological distance to the main parties is similar, they look for other issues in order to decide their vote. These features will be signals of party capacity and political strength. For these individuals, ideology is not as important as it is to loyal voters. Thus, their voting decision will be more affected by party and candidate characteristics, rather than that predicted for the rest of electorate.

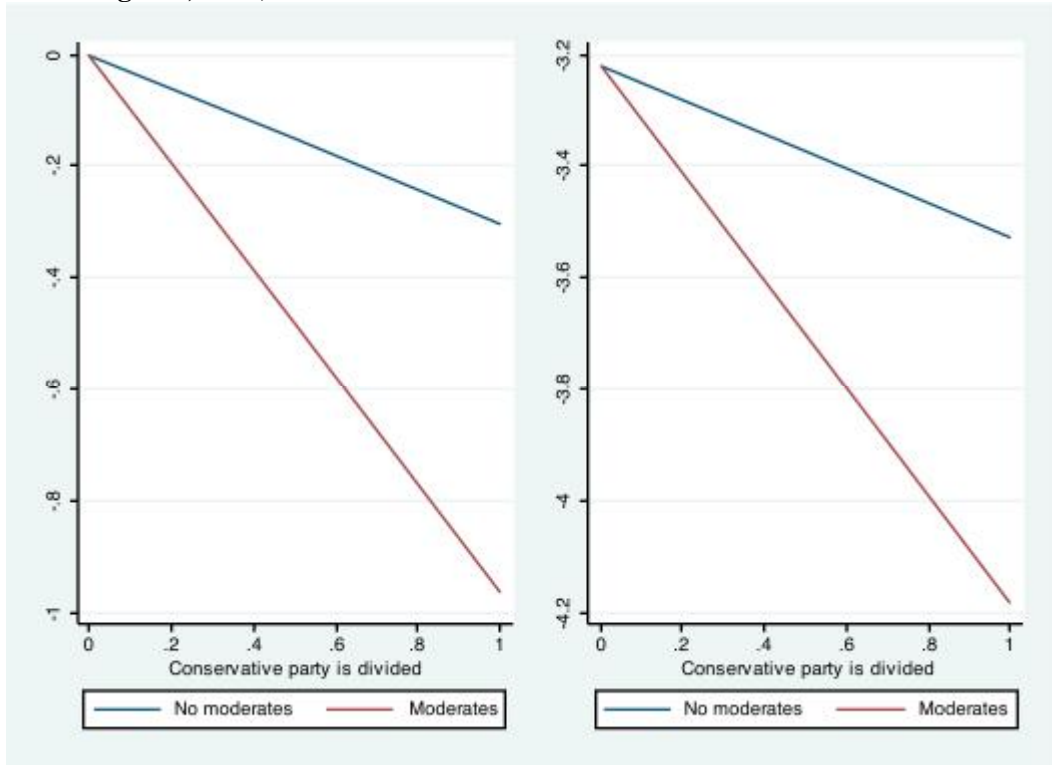
In this article I have studied internal factionalism as an example of a question that is difficult to frame on the left-right spectrum. The empirical evidence confirms the main hypothesis. The Spanish and British cases show that moderate voters are more sensitive to these issues. Thus, in

different countries and times, we observe the same conclusions.

These findings add more complexity to the literature about electoral behavior. We have seen that voters are not alike and their electoral decisions respond to different issues. In the future scholars may explore

this idea in other democracies. Moreover, they might analyze if other issues that are difficult to place on the ideological scale have a higher probability of affecting moderate voters as well.

GRAPH 3. Effects of Slopes: Interaction and Holding All Other Variables Constant (United Kingdom, 1990)



APPENDIX

TABLE 5. Internal Division of Socialist Party (Spain, 1993)

	Model 1		Model 2	
Vote recalled	2.296*** (0.247)		2.331*** (0.251)	
Ideological distance	-0.483*** (0.085)		-0.458*** (0.086)	
Capacity	2.088*** (0.245)		2.125*** (0.29)	
Capacity * Moderate voters			0.203 (0.534)	
Internal unity	0.465* (0.213)		0.306 (0.233)	
Internal unity * Moderate voters			1.086* (0.564)	
	PP/PSOE	IU/PSOE	PP/PSOE	IU/PSOE
Intercept	1.096 (0.69)	3.351*** (0.732)	0.922 (0.718)	3.659*** (0.759)
Moderate voters			-0.121 (0.513)	-1.574** (0.753)
Age	-0.011 (0.014)	-0.072*** (0.017)	-0.008 (0.014)	-0.074*** (0.018)
Sex	0.227 (0.431)	-0.083 (0.433)	0.184 (0.439)	-0.096 (0.441)
Pseudo R ²	0.798		0.804	
N	2064		2064	

Standard errors in parentheses.

* = P < 0.10; ** = P < 0.05; *** = P < 0.01

Dependent variable: Vote in general elections (base category: PSOE).

Source: CIS 2048.

TABLE 6. Internal Division of Popular Party (Spain, 2009)

	Model 1		Model 2	
Ideological distance	-1.09*** (0.066)		-1.082*** (0.068)	
Capacity	1.117*** (0.106)		1.086*** (0.123)	
Capacity * Moderate voters			0.128 (0.244)	
Internal unity	0.295*** (0.08)		0.212** (0.097)	
Internal unity * Moderate voters			0.267 ¹ (0.175)	
	PP/PSOE	IU/PSOE	PP/PSOE	IU/PSOE
Intercept	-0.386 (0.35)	-1.824*** (0.437)	0.232 (0.376)	-1.779*** (0.444)
Moderate voters			0.285 (0.253)	-0.61 (0.547)
Age	-0.012* (0.006)	-0.002 (0.008)	-0.011* (0.006)	0.231 (0.284)
Sex	-0.056 (0.218)	0.248 (0.282)	0.064 (0.218)	0.231 (0.284)
Pseudo R ²	0.663		0.665	
N	3802		3802	

Standard errors in parentheses.

* = P < 0.10; ** = P < 0.05; *** = P < 0.01

¹Z is 1.53 and P=0.127.

Dependent variable: Vote recalled in general elections (base category: PSOE).

Source: CIS 2790.

TABLE 7. Internal Division of Conservative Party (United Kingdom, 1990)

	Model 1	Model 2
Opinion about distribution of nation's wealth	0.942*** (0.055)	0.941*** (0.055)
Internal unity	-0.355*** (0.106)	-0.304*** (0.113)
Moderate voters		0.491 (0.312)
Internal unity * Moderate voters		-0.657* (0.393)
Education	-0.103*** (0.024)	-0.105** (0.024)
Age	0.019*** (0.003)	0.02*** (0.003)
Intercept	-3.192*** (0.223)	-3.222*** (0.225)
Pseudo R ²	0.156	0.157
N	2394	2394

Standard errors in parentheses.

* = P < 0.10; ** = P < 0.05; *** = P < 0.01

Dependent variable: Party identification (1 is close to Conservative Party, 0 otherwise).

Source: British social attitudes.

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