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A 'Southern Model' of Electoral Mobilisation?:

Clientelism and Electoral Politics in Post-Franco Spain*

Jonathan Hopkin

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A 'Southern Model' of Electoral Mobilisation?:

Clientelism and Electoral Politics in Post-Franco Spain

It is often argued that clientelism is a key feature of electoral mobilisation in Southern European democracies. This article examines the evidence for clientelism in the Spanish case, assessing the recruitment, redistributive strategies and electoral performance of governing parties in the 1977-96 period. It finds little evidence of extensive clientelistic mobilisation, finding instead that parties' use of state resources is largely consistent with their programmatic and ideological positions. 'Old' clientelism from the pre-democratic era mostly did not survive the change of regime, whilst 'new' clientelism based on the expansion of state employment contributed to the Socialist Party's organisational consolidation, but was not a significant feature of its strategy of electoral mobilisation.

Recent studies of party politics in Western European democracies have emphasised how parties are increasingly using the resources of the state to compensate for their declining social presence[1]. Southern Europe is no exception to this trend; indeed it is often asserted that Southern European parties have been particularly adept at exploiting state resources for the purposes of electoral mobilisation, picking up from Southern Europe's tradition of clientelism[2]. The clientelistic distribution of state resources in Italy[3], and to a lesser extent in Greece[4], is well documented, but the Spanish case has received less attention. Spain's historical tradition of clientelism (*caciquismo*) and

the organisational weakness of its political parties provide *prima facie* grounds for expecting them to resort to clientelism in order to consolidate their electorates. This article assesses the extent to which governing parties in post-Franco Spain have followed clientelistic strategies of electoral mobilisation.

THE 'SOUTHERN MODEL' AND SPAIN

There is little agreement on the importance of clientelism in Southern European politics. Authors such as Kurth and Sapelli[5] emphasise Southern Europe's distinctiveness, seeing its authoritarian past and late industrialisation as causes of widespread clientelism. The emerging literature on a 'Southern model' of welfare state recognises clientelistic distribution of benefits as a characteristic of Southern European systems of social protection[6]. In contrast studies of the process of democratic consolidation in Southern Europe have paid little or no attention to clientelism[7], and work on the notion of a 'Mediterranean model' of democracy has ignored clientelism and downplayed Southern Europe's distinctiveness[8].

Studies of democratic Spain are characterised by a similar lack of consensus. The literature on Spanish electoral behaviour more or less disregards clientelism as a possible explanatory variable[9], as does much of the work on Spanish party organisations[10]. A small number of studies have analysed cases of party clientelism in contemporary Spain[11], and some general works have identified clientelism (and the related phenomenon of corruption) as an emerging problem in Spanish politics[12]. However no systematic attempt has been made to gauge the specific impact of

clientelism on party and electoral behaviour in Spain. In order to do this, the next section discusses the nature of clientelism and ways of identifying its presence.

STUDYING CLIENTELISM: CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES

The literature on clientelism[13] has tended to distinguish between two broad types. The classic definition envisages an unequal, hierarchical, personalised and reciprocal exchange of favours between two individuals, a patron and a client. This form of 'old' clientelism ('clientelism of the notables') is characteristic of traditional rural societies, and consists of landowners offering peasants general protection in exchange for material goods and social deference, and in democratic contexts, votes. A 'new' clientelism has also been identified, in which the role of the notable is taken up by the organised political party, which rather than mediating between the client and the state, uses state resources to win the client's electoral support[14]. This 'mass party clientelism' involves parties distributing state resources to groups, areas or individuals in exchange for their votes, and is a less unequal, less personalised and more explicitly materialistic relationship than the 'old' clientelism. Various 'subtypes' of clientelism have also been identified, the most interesting of which is Lyrintzis' concept of 'bureaucratic clientelism': the 'organised expansion of existing posts and departments in the public sector and the addition of new ones in an attempt to secure power and maintain a party's electoral base'[15]. It should also be clarified that clientelism is not the same as corruption. Although both are instrumental forms of exchange, corruption almost inevitably involves money, whereas clientelism, at least in democratic contexts, involves administrative decisions being exchanged for votes[16]. Corruption lies outside the scope of this analysis.

Clientelism is generally set against an ideal type of 'responsible party government' in which parties offer packages of policies justified in terms of a principled defence of the 'public interest'. Clientelism is an expression of particularism (characterised by egotism and distrust) rather than universalism (a broad sense of solidarity and trust in others)[17]. Parties' strategies of electoral mobilisation can rarely be categorised in terms of this dichotomy. Although parties may claim to act in terms of the interests of society as a whole, it is also common for them to couch their appeals quite openly in terms of particular electoral constituencies, such as social classes or ethnic and territorial groups. Although it is easy to distinguish this kind of politics from the 'old' clientelism, based on personalistic, dyadic relationships, it is more difficult to distinguish class or territorial politics from mass party clientelism, in which resources are often channelled to neighbourhoods and professional or cultural associations, rather than individuals. As a working distinction, clientelism is taken here to mean a selective distribution of benefits which is not justified in universalistic terms, that is in terms of some recognisable ideology. Clients 'pay' for these benefits with what Parisi and Pasquino call a 'vote of exchange'[18]. Non-clientelistic politics is characterised by benefits being distributed to less selective groups, and to the extent that particular groups are favoured, this selectiveness is coherent with a stated ideology or universalistic discourse. In Parisi and Pasquino's terms, it is sustained by a 'vote of belonging' (a vote motivated by party or class identification) or a 'vote of opinion' (a vote cast for the preferred party programme).

The most compelling empirical accounts of party clientelism have taken the form of in-depth case studies which reconstruct clientelistic networks on the basis of interviews and observation[19]. Given the lack of such studies for the Spanish case, the analysis will focus on three types of evidence. First, political recruitment in democratic Spain will be studied in order to see to

what extent longstanding clientelistic networks were able to survive the transition from dictatorship to democracy. Second, the distributional strategies of the governing parties in democratic Spain will be examined for evidence of selective provision of state resources consistent with patterns of clientelistic mobilisation. Third, the electoral bases of the governing parties in democratic Spain will be analysed in order to estimate the role of clientelism in accounting for continuities and changes in Spanish electoral behaviour. The period of analysis is 1977-1996, and the governments of the Union of the Democratic Centre (UCD) (1977-82), and of the Socialists (PSOE) (1982-96) will be studied in turn. Although relevant to this enquiry, for reasons of space the strategies followed by the present governing party, the Popular Party, are not analysed here.

CLIENTELISM IN THE SPANISH TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY (1977-82)

Elite Recruitment in the New Democracy: the Union of Democratic Centre

Although there were no meaningful elections during the Franco dictatorship (1939-75), clientelism was an important element of the regime's distribution of state resources[20]. The peculiar circumstances in which democratic party politics emerged after Franco's death made the persistence of the clientelistic networks established during the dictatorship perfectly feasible. The transition to democracy took the form of an ambiguous synthesis of apparent continuity and genuine democratic reform: a democratically elected assembly drew up a new constitution without any open break with the existing institutions. This absence of a formal break with the Franco regime favoured the continuity of most of the dictatorship's administrative personnel. At the same time, the emphasis on elite negotiations in the transition process had the effect of further demobilising a society which 40

years of authoritarianism had rendered politically apathetic and inactive[21]. Such a context appeared favourable to the survival of Francoist networks of clientelistic exchange.

In fact the new democracy brought a substantial renewal of Spain's political elite. In the first democratic elections in 1977 56.6 per cent of the votes and 168 of the 350 parliamentary seats were won by the parties which had opposed the Franco regime. The most openly Francoist party, Popular Alliance (AP), won only 16 seats, despite its enthusiastic use of clientelist networks to mobilise the votes of regime supporters[22]. This in itself is evidence of the weakness of the existing clientelist networks in electoral terms. To the extent that the *caciques* of the Franco regime survived, it was inside the Union of the Democratic Centre (UCD), which won 34.6 per cent of the vote and formed the first democratic government of post-Franco Spain. This broad-based party created by the reformist Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez was ideally placed to absorb the clientelist structures left in place by the Franco regime. Formed initially as a coalition, its leadership consisted of a group of ministers and senior functionaries associated with Suárez's transition project, and the leaders of a number of tiny parties of the moderate opposition to Franco whose presence outside Madrid was negligible. The party's ability to generate a statewide presence in little more than a few weeks led to accusations that it had simply coopted provincial notables able to shape the voting decisions of their local clienteles. One observer claimed that 'mayors and district councillors (...) worked for UCD with the same enthusiasm and commitment as they would have done for the Franco dictatorship'[23].

The role of the Francoist state machinery, and particularly of the Civil Governors (state 'prefects'), in the formation of the UCD is well documented[24]. The process of candidate selection for the 1977 elections brought many local and provincial notables into the UCD. A large number of UCD candidates and elected deputies had been mayors, local councillors, members of provincial

delegations and *diputaciones*, members of Chambers of Agriculture or Commerce, or held other prominent positions[25]. In the 1977-79 parliament, 61 per cent of UCD deputies and 75 per cent of UCD senators had been involved, in either a political or an administrative capacity, in the Franco dictatorship[26]. Such a profile appears consistent with a large scale absorption of preexisting clientelistic networks, and in some cases qualitative evidence confirms this. In Galicia, a region well known for the strength of *caciquismo*[27], UCD signed up important notables who controlled important clientelistic networks[28]. This brought the UCD 20 out of the 27 seats in the Congress representing Galicia. Other areas where clientelistic structures appear to have been absorbed by UCD were the Canary Islands[29] and a number of provinces in Castile[30]. However this pattern was not typical of UCD's recruitment across the country. A very large number of UCD parliamentarians retired or were deselected in the 1979 elections: only 163 out of 275 survived into the new parliament, whilst 112 failed to retain their seats for one reason or another. It is unlikely the party would have jettisoned parliamentarians with significant clientelistic resources.

One way of assessing the extent to which UCD coopted clientelistic networks is to examine its organisation at municipal level. Here UCD employed a mixed strategy of coopting existing local elites in some areas and recruiting new blood in others. For instance, a large number of UCD candidates in the Canary Islands were already installed in the town halls, whereas in the province of Madrid most of UCD's candidates had not formed part of the existing municipal elite[31]. Studies of the origins of the new local elite in Andalusia and Galicia[32] have revealed surprisingly high levels of renewal, indicating that recruitment of newcomers was the dominant pattern. Tables 1 and 2 show that only 6.5 per cent of local councillors elected in Andalusia in 1979, and 12 per cent of those elected in Galicia, had served under the previous regime. Amongst UCD councillors elected

the numbers were higher (11.4 per cent in Andalusia and 16.1 per cent in Galicia), but not strikingly so. In Andalusia, 37.4 per cent of UCD mayors had held the post under the dictatorship (see Table 1), suggesting that the party did recruit some high profile incumbents. However the broad picture in these two regions (with a quarter of the Spanish population in 1979) is one of extensive renewal of the local elite, indicating that UCD's absorption of existing clientelist networks was far more limited than has generally been assumed.

(Tables 1 & 2 about here)

The UCD's electoral collapse and disappearance in 1982 left its municipal elite in an unsustainable position. The high levels of elite turnover in the 1983 municipal elections, which took place after the UCD had formally dissolved, show that few UCD councillors had sufficient clientelistic resources to survive without the party label. Table 3 shows that in Andalusia, 87.2 per cent of the UCD councillors elected in 1979 either failed to stand or failed to be reelected in 1983. Although AP clearly benefited from UCD's collapse in terms of personnel, only 6.5 per cent of UCD's councillors in Andalusia managed to rebuild their political careers in that party. Table 3 does show that UCD mayors were more likely to be reelected in 1983, but Table 4 confirms that by 1983, virtually none of the Francoist local elite remained in place in Andalusia: 95.7 per cent of elected councillors and 91.2 per cent of mayors had had no involvement in the municipal politics of the dictatorship. Although caution should be exercised in extrapolating these findings to the rest of Spain, they do suggest that few Francoist notables survived the transition, and even fewer survived the collapse of the UCD.

(Tables 3 & 4 about here)

Of course, where established networks collapse, new forms of clientelism, with new networks, can emerge. The new autonomous communities (regional governments) established by the 1978 Constitution provided a further arena for clientelism to develop, as important administrative and political functions were transferred from central to regional level. The UCD was unable to penetrate the new regional institutions to any significant degree. By the time the autonomy process was under way, UCD's electoral decline had already begun, and the party failed to take control of any of the regional governments established before 1982. In sum, the UCD was not a very effective safety net for Francoist notables.

State Spending Under the UCD

The potential for UCD to mobilise voters by clientelistic means was undermined by the Spanish state's meagre resources in the aftermath of the Franco dictatorship. Table 5 shows that government spending accounted for only 24.6 per cent of GDP in 1975, well below the European Community average (44.3 per cent). However, the period following Franco's death saw major increases in the role of the public sector in Spain, and by 1996 government spending accounted for 45.2 per cent of GDP, a figure much closer to the EC average (50.6 per cent). The UCD governments of 1977-82 were responsible for a significant part of this growth in spending. As can be seen in Table 5, government spending grew from 27.3 per cent to 37.2 per cent of GDP in the 1977-82 period (a

bigger rise than under the 14 years of Socialist government). Although a part of this expansion was financed by deficit spending, UCD governments significantly increased the proportion of GDP taken by the state as tax (see Table 5).

(Table 5 about here)

This economic strategy did not distribute state resources towards party clienteles. On the contrary, the data on income distribution in this period shows that the increase in state spending benefited opposition voters more than UCD voters. UCD was not a classic party of the right, and its essentially catch-all electoral strategy won it support across social classes, but it was not a working class party. In 1977 only 16 per cent of workers in urban areas gave the party their vote, a proportion which fell to 13 per cent two years later[33]; instead UCD performed far better amongst the middle and upper middle classes[34], and in rural areas[35]. In spite of this, much of the new state spending in this period was directed at the least prosperous sectors of society, and often specifically at the industrial working class. In response to rising unemployment after 1974, the last governments of the pre-democratic period and successive UCD governments increased spending on social protection: transfers to households rose from 10.3 per cent to 13.9 per cent of GDP in the period 1977-82 (Table 5). Much of this was accounted for by unemployment subsidies paid to industrial and other workers. UCD governments also significantly expanded state financing of public enterprise in order to protect the jobs of industrial workers in unprofitable companies[36].

This was not a rational strategy for the mobilisation and retention of a middle class electoral base. In fact, UCD' economic policy was to a significant degree derived from pacts with other

political forces, such as the Moncloa pacts of 1977. UCD leader Suárez was committed to consensus as a means of consolidating the new democratic regime, and he was prepared to sacrifice the interests of his party's supporters in order to ensure political stability. By increasing social spending and subsidising ailing industries, labour conflict, which had the potential to provoke an authoritarian backlash, could be contained. The political costs of this strategy for UCD were unsustainable and contributed to the party's organisational and electoral collapse in 1981-2[37]. Table 6 shows that far from engaging in particularistic distribution of resources to client groups, UCD presided over a general redistribution of wealth *away from* its core supporters: between 1974 and 1980, the share of national income taken by the richest fifth of Spanish families fell by more than a quarter, and the share taken by the poorest fifth rose by around a half. The expansion of public sector employment, a standard means for governing parties to generate clienteles, was modest in comparison to the increases in other forms of government spending in the transition period: spending on public sector remuneration rose from 7.2 per cent of GDP in 1975 to 10.2 per cent in 1982[38]. UCD's use of state resources was largely dictated by the pressing needs of the transition period, rather than the demands of its electoral supporters; there was little time for the party to establish a substantial clientelistic network founded on state largesse.

The UCD's Electoral Decline: The Vulnerability of the Vote of Opinion

The evolution of UCD's electoral support, and in particular the nature of its electoral collapse in 1981-2, appear to confirm this finding. Although it has been argued that clientelism accelerated this

collapse[39], close analysis suggests that its role in the realignment of the Spanish party system in 1982 was quite a different one.

The UCD's defeats in the Galician and Andalusian regional elections in 1981 and 1982 provide important insights. Although all four Galician provinces are less prosperous and more rural than most of the rest of Spain, differences inside the region have electoral consequences. In the 1981 regional election, UCD lost 25 per cent of its 1979 vote in the two poorest provinces, Lugo and Ourense, and 40 per cent of its 1979 vote in A Coruña and Pontevedra, where industry and services are more developed[40]. Clientelism was much more likely to provide notables with control over 'packages of votes' in the less economically advanced rural areas, and in these areas UCD's vote held up best, suggesting that clientelism contributed to stabilising the UCD vote. The distribution of UCD's losses in the regional elections in Andalusia in 1982 follows a similar pattern: the party lost 17 per cent of the vote in the more rural areas inland, and 22 per cent of the vote in urban areas and on the coast[41].

Similar conclusions can be drawn from the 1982 legislative elections, in which the UCD's national vote share dropped from 35 per cent to under 7 per cent, leaving the party with only 11 deputies. All but one of these deputies were elected in precisely the areas where UCD's coopting of clientelist structures has been most documented. Five of them were elected in Galicia, including two in Ourense where the party obtained 29 per cent of the vote (four times the national average). Two further seats were won in the Canary Islands and the remaining three in rural provinces of Northern Castile. Although less socio-economically advanced rural areas are more likely to vote for continuity, it is striking that the UCD performed far better than average in those areas where there is some evidence of it absorbing clientelist networks. However the party's crushing defeat suggests

clientelism - the 'vote of exchange' - was restricted to a relatively small proportion of the electorate, concentrated in a handful of provinces.

This is consistent with the findings of research on the electoral behaviour of the transition period. This research shows that voters' ideological self-placement, and the popularity of party leaders, explain voter choices better than social structural variables[42]. Class voting and party identification were limited, and religiosity was weakly related to voting choice. The importance of national party leaders contrasts with the apparent irrelevance of local candidates: in the 1982 elections, fewer than one in five voters outside Madrid, Catalonia and the Basque Country could correctly name the number one candidate on the list they had voted for[43]. Such personalisation of electoral politics that existed was largely confined to the national level, pointing to a predominance of the 'vote of opinion'. The kind of 'old clientelism' in which the local notable generated support on the basis of personal loyalties had a limited impact on elections during the Spanish transition.

This is not surprising. 'Old' clientelism is a function of low levels of social and economic development, and feeds on poverty, social isolation and illiteracy. By the mid-1970s few Spaniards were exposed to these problems. Spain was a 'modern' society with similar social and economic characteristics to its democratic European neighbours. Rapid economic growth in the 1960s had brought a massive shift in population from rural to urban areas, a decline in religious practice, the creation of a large middle class employed in service industries, and access to consumer goods and mass media for the vast majority of the population. Newspaper readership, and particularly access to radio and television, were at similar levels to established democracies which in the same period had begun to show signs of dealignment and the emergence of 'consumerist' patterns of voting.

Few Spanish voters were in such a position of dependency on local notables as to be constrained in their voting choices.

UCD failed to establish reliable clientelistic networks outside the handful of provinces in which it elected deputies in 1982, and for the most part failed to use its five year tenure in government to articulate networks for the particularistic distribution of state resources. The party's defeat and dissolution in 1982 reflected its failure to use either clientelism or any other coherent distributive strategy to consolidate its core electorate.

THE SOCIALISTS IN POWER (1982-96): PARTY CLIENTELISM OF THE LEFT?

Political Recruitment in the PSOE

Given its opposition to Francoism, the PSOE was not a likely vehicle for the continuity of Francoist notables, and the party could initially claim to be free of clientelistic activity. The PSOE parliamentary elite contained few prestigious provincial notables, and included a large number of young people of indifferent professional status: for example the two PSOE deputies for Albacete were a draughtsman and a typographer, both under the age of thirty, and the three deputies elected for Badajoz included two schoolteachers aged 29 and 34 respectively[44]. Recruitment at municipal level tells a similar story: Tables 1 and 2 show that only 1.7 per cent of PSOE councillors in Andalusia, and 2.3 per cent in Galicia, had served under the Franco regime. That the PSOE was able to pick up almost 30 per cent of the vote in the 1977 elections without any help from local 'opinion leaders' confirms the limited impact of clientelism.

This organisational fragility posed a problem for the party leadership: with only 51,000 members in 1977, the party had a tenuous hold on its 5.4 million voters. Although the membership grew to around 107,000 by 1981[45], in the 1982 elections the party won over 10 million votes, a ratio of roughly one member for every 100 voters. There was an obvious need to reinforce the party's presence on the ground, and access to government power provided an opportunity to do so.

The Growth of State Employment: Politics or Patronage?

The Socialists used their control of the state machinery after 1982 to place party members and sympathisers in secure jobs in the public administration[46]. The expansion of state employment in Spain in this period is striking: between 1982 and 1994, more than half a million new state jobs were established[47]. The 1984 Law on Measures for the Reform of the Public Administration permitted the 'free designation' of functionaries, allowing public competitions to be bypassed and creating a 'spoils system amongst functionaries'[48]. Although after 1988 free designation was limited to senior posts, the PSOE government was able to appoint directly around 25,000 administrative posts between 1984-87[49]. The regional administrations created around 200,000 of the new posts created in this period[50]. The regional distribution of this growth in public employment indicates that the Socialists were if anything less guilty of patronage-driven expansion than other parties. In 1980-90 growth was fastest in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, Valencia, Castile-Leon, Asturias and Galicia; of these only Valencia and Asturias were governed by the PSOE for long periods[51]. Nevertheless the broad pattern of expansion suggests that the PSOE was responsible for a degree of 'infiltration of the state machine by party devotees', a key feature of

Lyrintzis' definition of bureaucratic clientelism[52]. By 1990, 67 per cent of party congress delegates were functionaries or public office-holders[53] and it is estimated around 70 per cent of the total of party members were employed by the state[54].

This expansion of public offices, whilst fundamental to the PSOE's organisational consolidation, should be placed in the context of the broad political and economic strategy followed by the party during its period in government. Extending state intervention in society required a growth in the human resources available to the public administration. The model of transition to democracy followed in Spain left the Francoist bureaucracy largely intact, and it is therefore not surprising that a Socialist government should have injected new blood in order to facilitate the implementation of its policies. However the development of clientelistic networks conducive to the organisational consolidation of the Socialist party and its leadership were at the very least an important byproduct of this process, and by 1987 a senior party figure was sufficiently concerned at the strength of these networks within the party to warn González in an internal document[55].

State Spending Under the PSOE

Clientelism may have played an important role in the PSOE's organisational development, but it was not a significant feature of its strategy for electoral mobilisation. An examination of the significant increases in state spending under PSOE governments, from 37.2 per cent of GDP in 1982 to 45.2 per cent in 1996 (see Table 5), suggests that spending followed social democratic patterns rather than clientelistic ones.

(Table 5 about here)

The changes in spending priorities introduced by the PSOE reflect this: state capital investments increased from 3.2 per cent of GDP in 1982 to a peak of 5.1 per cent in 1990, and social transfers to households increased from 13.9 per cent in 1982 to a peak of 16.9 per cent of GDP in 1993 (see Table 5). Investment in infraestructure and education formed part of the PSOE's long term strategy of increasing Spain's economic competitiveness[56]. One way in which this strategy produced selective benefits is in its territorial bias. Public investment projects were allocated unequally, favouring the poorest regions, such as Andalusia and Extremadura, which were also the areas where the PSOE had its strongest electoral support[57]. The most emblematic example of this was the establishment of Spain's first high speed rail link (the *AVE*) between Madrid and the Socialist bastion Seville, rather than the more obvious link between the capital and Barcelona. One would expect a social democratic government to channel public fixed investment towards less prosperous regions, and indeed Boix has shown that regional per capita income was strongly negatively correlated with public capital investment under the PSOE. However the same study has also shown that variables such as the Socialist vote in the 1982-86 period and the level of Socialist membership are even more important in explaining the territorial distribution of this investment, suggesting that economic policy and the strategy for electoral mobilisation happily coincided[58].

Favouring the regions which strongly support the governing party happens in all political systems and does not strictly constitute clientelism. The wave of public works projects resulting from this strategy did provide substantial opportunities for political corruption, leading to a number of scandals involving key Socialist figures[59]. But as far as electoral clientelism is concerned, the

only well documented example is that of the *Plan de Empleo Rural* (PER - Plan for Rural Employment), a subsidy paid to unemployed agricultural workers in Andalusia and Extremadura. Unlike the other policies discussed here, the PER does have strong potential for clientelistic distribution of resources, since the local administrations are responsible for assessing individuals' eligibility to benefit from the programme. Many local politicians in the Socialist heartlands have exploited the subsidy to mobilise votes of exchange[60]. In 1995, the PER benefited around 300,000 agricultural labourers, at a cost of around 350,000 million pesetas per year[61].

Broadly speaking the PSOE's increased spending on social protection was part of the project of modernisation aimed at bringing Spain into line with the economic and social standards of its European neighbours. To this extent the PSOE simply took over where the UCD governments had left off; indeed the growth of spending on social protection was far slower under the PSOE than under the UCD (see Table 5). The PSOE's initial concern was economic modernisation, and although the development of an increasingly progressive tax system and increased education and health spending favoured the less prosperous social groups, there was no major redistributive effort until the serious political setback of the 1988 general strike. In response to this protest from the party's working class base non-contributive pensions were established, and minimum pensions and unemployment benefits were increased. These benefits targeted the groups which have formed the bedrock of Socialist support in the 1990s. The PSOE also used its control of regional budgets to extend the redistributive policies followed by central government. Socialist-run regions spent much more on social benefits and transfers than those run by the opposition: on average 27 per cent of their budgets, compared to 19 per cent spent by conservative administrations[62]. As its electoral

support began to decline, the PSOE responded by defending more openly the interests of a social democratic constituency consisting of blue collar workers and the economically inactive.

Another area in which spending had the potential to bolster the Socialist vote is in the support of ailing industries. The PSOE governments subsidised loss-making companies (often state-run) such as coal mines in Asturias, the SEAT-Volkswagen car factory in Barcelona and Santana in Andalusia, where concentrations of industrial workers are important to the PSOE's electoral support. But the broad picture in this area of spending is one of retrenchment: expenditure on subsidies and capital transfers declined as a proportion of GDP from 5.5 per cent in 1982 to 3.6 per cent in 1991[63]. The PSOE governments embarked on a programme of industrial restructuring which in fact led to various closures, and also privatised some state holdings as part of its strategy of improving the quality of productive factors in Spain. This strategy is an important cause of the PSOE's deteriorating relations with the union movement culminating in the 1988 general strike, and suggests that in the initial phase at least, the Socialists followed some policies which damaged the interests of its core social democratic constituency.

With the exception of the PER, there is little evidence of widespread use of state resources to underpin a 'vote of exchange'; indeed until 1988 the PSOE paid relatively little attention to its natural electoral base. Tables 5 and 6 show that the PSOE's impact on state spending and social inequalities was more limited than that of the ostensibly conservative transition governments: the Gini index of inequality fell dramatically between 1974 and 1980, but subsequent progress has been much slower. After 1988 the Socialists' increased electoral vulnerability led them to direct substantial state resources towards their natural constituency. However to define spending on pensions, unemployment benefit and health care, which favour broad statewide social groups, as

'clientelistic' would be to stretch the concept unreasonably. Instead, the evidence suggests that much of the distribution of resources to Socialist party supporters has been on a collective rather than selective basis, with voters rewarding the national party rather than the local candidate for benefits provided.

(Table 6 about here)

Electoral Stability: A 'Captive Vote'?

Although the PSOE followed a broadly social democratic strategy in its period of office, changes in the composition of the Socialist electorate have led to accusations that the party has followed a clientelistic strategy of electoral mobilisation[64]. Having won power in 1982 with a socially heterogeneous electorate of over 10 million voters, the party's electoral base in the 1990s is dominated by the most direct beneficiaries of its redistributive policies. Boix's research (Table 7) has shown how the PSOE's electoral support has declined precipitously amongst managers, white collar workers and supervisors, but has held up amongst blue-collar workers and the retired and actually *increased* amongst agricultural workers. The PSOE has lost ground amongst the young but gained amongst older voters, and suffered significantly higher losses in urban than in rural areas[65]. The decision to skew public spending (particularly after 1988) to the benefit of the lower status social groups, the Socialists' natural reserve of support, has contributed to stabilising the party's vote, in spite of a sharp decline in its popularity amongst the young and the middle classes.

(Table 7 about here)

This is reflected in changes in the geography of Socialist electoral support since the first democratic elections. The party has declined most in former strongholds, such as the relatively industrialised provinces of Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia and Málaga[66]. In contrast, it has gained most in the rural areas of Galicia, Andalusia, Extremadura and Castile. Boix has made the striking finding that the importance of the primary sector of production alone explains almost two thirds of the variation in the change in the PSOE vote across Spanish provinces between 1982-93[67]. Table 8 shows that in 1996, the Socialist vote was highest in Extremadura (48.2 per cent) and Andalusia (46.2 per cent), both regions with higher than average levels of agricultural employment, and which had benefited from the introduction of subsidies in the PER and from high levels of public investment. The PSOE's lowest shares of the vote were in the Basque Country, the Canary Islands, Navarre and Madrid, all areas where the secondary and tertiary sectors dominate the economy. However too much should not be read into these bare figures. Andalusia and Extremadura were also the PSOE's strongest regions in 1982, whereas the Basque Country was its weakest, followed by Galicia, the Canary Islands and Navarre. The PER had not yet been introduced in 1982, and we have already seen that there is no evidence that the PSOE coopted existing clientelist structures during the transition to democracy. The PSOE's continuing strength in the south of Spain is not in itself evidence of clientelistic mobilisation of a dependent population.

(Table 8 about here)

A more useful strategy is to assess the PSOE's electoral losses relative to its original standing in 1982. In the case of the UCD clientelism contributed to electoral stability: the party's 1982 vote was highest in areas where it used clientelistic forms of electoral mobilisation. Column 4 of Table 8 details the percentage of the PSOE's 1982 vote it had lost by 1996, in each region. The territorial distribution of the PSOE's electoral losses does not follow a similar pattern to that of the UCD: the Socialists lost a higher than average percentage of their 1982 vote share in Andalusia (21.8 per cent), and suffered even greater losses in Castile-La Mancha (29.1 per cent), another largely rural southern stronghold. In a third Socialist bastion, Extremadura, the losses were much less significant (11.4 per cent), as they were in economically advanced regions such as the Balearic Islands, Catalonia and La Rioja. This does not support the hypothesis of a 'captive vote', although interestingly, the Socialist vote held up well in regions such as Galicia and Cantabria where clientelism of the right appears well established.

The territorial analysis in Table 8 suggests a different explanation of this electoral decline. A crude measure of institutional power at regional level - the number of years the PSOE held the presidency of each autonomous region (column 5) - suggests that Socialists have suffered heavy losses in most of the regions they have governed for long periods. Particularly striking is the party's decline in Madrid (39.2 per cent of its 1982 vote share) which it governed at both municipal and regional level throughout the 1980s, and its modest advance (0.6 per cent of the 1982 figure) in Galicia, where regional government (and most municipal power) has largely been in the hands of the right since the transition. This relationship may be spurious; the Socialists have governed longer in areas were they were strongest in 1982, and in those areas losses have been heavier than average, possibly because there were more uncommitted votes to be lost. But it does suggest that the PSOE

has disappointed its voters most in those areas where it has accumulated most power, perhaps as a result of the numerous corruption scandals involving Socialist office-holders. In any case, this runs counter to an explanation based on clientelism: if the distribution of state resources was fundamental to the maintenance of the Socialist vote, one would expect that vote to be most stable in those regions where the party had most institutional capacity to channel resources to their clienteles.

The Socialists' redistributive strategy, particularly after 1988, has contributed to the consolidation of a core constituency of industrial and agricultural workers and the economically inactive. This redistributive strategy, however, is of statewide scope, and (with the exception of the PER) leaves little room for the PSOE's territorial representatives to use discretionary powers to mobilise a 'vote of exchange'. Trends in the distribution of electoral support between regions seem to reflect a growing territorial uniformity of the Socialist vote[68], hardly an indication of a clientelistic electoral strategy.

CONCLUSION

Some scholars have claimed that Spanish parties exhibit the strong clientelistic tendencies characteristic of a 'Southern model' of electoral politics, where 'votes of exchange' become an important feature of electoral mobilization. This article has found little evidence for this claim. Instead, the recruitment, policies and electorates of the two parties which governed Spain in the 1977-96 period show the UCD subordinating its core constituency to the project of democratic change, and the PSOE following a broadly successful social democratic electoral strategy. Of

course, this is not to suggest that clientelism is irrelevant to electoral politics in contemporary Spain. The current governing party the PP, which has gained control over central state resources since 1996, has not been analysed here. The stability of the PSOE's electoral support in some of the poorest rural areas in Spain suggests that further more detailed research may reveal significant clientelistic networks controlled by that party. The available evidence, however, points to clientelism having a limited impact on electoral politics in democratic Spain.

Although this suggests that notions of a clientelistic 'Southern model' should be treated with caution, we should not neglect the distinctiveness of Southern Europe. In the 1990s the related phenomenon of corruption seriously undermined the legitimacy of the established political parties in Greece, Italy and Spain, overturning apparently strong governments and, in the Italian case, bringing a wholesale renewal of a discredited parliamentary elite. Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain all have organizationally weak parties which are excessively dependent on state resources for their functioning and increasingly distant from civil society. These are problems which afflict party politics in many European countries, but which do appear more acute in the Southern European cases. Understanding why this is the case is an important challenge for students of comparative European politics. The findings presented here show that Southern European electoral politics needs to be more carefully studied, so that its communalities and differences with respect to other European democracies can be effectively traced without relying on uniform stereotypical categories. Extensive and explicitly comparative research is necessary if this rather neglected region and its distinctive characteristics are to be properly understood.

NOTES

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5. Note 2.

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30. Gunther, Sani and Shabad (note 23) p.102.

31. ‘Canarias: Los ayuntamientos seguirán en las mismas manos’, *El País*, 3 April 1979; ‘Casi todos los actuales alcaldes y concejales desaparecerán tras las municipales’, *El País*, 14 March 1979.

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33. J. Linz *et al*, *Informe sociológico sobre el cambio político en España 1975-81. IV informe FOESSA* (Vol.1) (Madrid: Euramérica 1981) p.216.

34. In the 1979 election 48.9 per cent of status group I (entrepreneurs, professionals etc), 50.6 per cent of status group III (small businessmen and owners) and 65.7 per cent of status group V (small farmers) voted for UCD (Gunther, Sani and Shabad [note 23] p.195).

35. Working class voters in rural areas were much more likely than their urban counterparts to support UCD: the figure for 1977 was 28 per cent and for 1979, 25 per cent (Linz *et al* [note 34] p.216]).

36. See C. Boix, *Political Parties, Growth and Equality. Conservative and Social Democratic Economic Strategies in the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998) p.122.

37. Hopkin (note 25) Ch.6.

38. R. Tamames, *La economía española 1975-1995* (Madrid: Temas de hoy 1995) p.296.

39. Cazorla (note 11) p.41.

40. J.J. González Encinar, *Galicia. Sistema de partidos y comportamiento electoral 1976-81* (Madrid: Akal Editor 1982).

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43. Gunther, 'The Dynamics of Electoral Competition' (note 43) p.56.

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45. J.R. Montero, 'Partidos y participación política' *Revista de Estudios Políticos* 23 (October 1981) pp.33-72 (p.44).

46. See Pradera (note 12).

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49. R. Gillespie, 'Spanish Socialism in the 1980s', in T. Gallagher and A. Williams (eds.), *Southern European Socialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1989) pp.59-85 (pp.83-4).

50. Beltrán (note 48) p.269.

51. A. Rodríguez-Pose, *Reestructuración socioeconómica y desequilibrios regionales en la Unión Europea* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Económicos 1995) p.213.

52. Note 4.

53. J.M. Maravall, 'Accountability and Manipulation', Working Paper 92 (Madrid: Instituto Juan March 1996) p.14.

54. R. Gillespie, 'The Resurgence of Factionalism in the Spanish Socialist Workers Party', in D. Bell and E. Shaw (eds.) *Conflict and Cohesion in Western European Social Democratic Parties* (London: Pinter 1994) pp.50-69 (p.55).

55. Maravall (note 54) p.15.

56. See Boix (note 37) Ch.5; also R. Gunther, 'Spanish Public Policy: From Dictatorship to Democracy', Working Paper 84 (Madrid: Instituto Juan March 1996).

57. These two regions received anually more than 110,000 pesetas of public investment per inhabitant, whilst the more prosperous regions of the Balearic Islands and the Basque Country received just 30,000 pesetas per inhabitant; J. M. Maravall, *Regimes, Politics and Markets.*

Democratisation and Economic Change in Southern and Eastern Europe (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1997) p.88.

58. Boix (note 37) pp.142-4.

59. See P. Heywood, ‘From Dictatorship to Democracy: Changing Forms of Corruption in Spain’, in D. della Porta and Y. Mény (eds.) *Democracy and Corruption in Europe* (London: Pinter 1997) pp.65-84.

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61. Tamames (note 39) pp.296-7.

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63. Boix (note 37) p.112.

64. A typical example is the claim by conservative daily *ABC* (in its headline the day after the 1996 elections) that the Socialist party’s electoral strength in the south of Spain was due to its ‘captive vote’ based on the PER (*ABC*, 4 March 1996, p.1).

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66. P. Casas Alvarez, 'Elecciones generales de 1993: Una visión en perspectiva', *Revista de Estudios Políticos* 83 (1994) pp.313-38 (pp.326-9).

67. Boix 'Building a Social Democratic Strategy' (note 66) pp.42-3.

68. Casas Alvarez (note 67) p.314.

Table 1. Participation in Francoist local elite of councillors and mayors elected in 1979 (Andalusia) (per cent)

	Councillors		Mayors	
	pre-1979	1979-	pre-1979	1979-
AP	20.2	79.8	50	50
UCD	11.4	88.6	37.4	62.6
Independents	10.9	89.1	38.2	61.8
PSOE	1.7	98.3	4	96
PCE	0.9	99.1	4.1	95.9
Total	6.5	93.5	20.1	79.9

Source: Márquez Cruz (note 33).

Table 2. Participation in Francoist local elite of councillors elected in 1979 (Galicia) (per cent)

	Councillors pre-1979	Mayors pre-1979	Total of Councillors New in 1979
AP	11.2	6.2	82.6
UCD	11.5	4.6	83.9
Independents	6.4	4.6	89
PSOE	2.3	0	97.7
PCE	1.4	0	98.6
Total	8.2	3.8	88

Source: Márquez Cruz (note 33).

Table 3. Diaspora of UCD local elite in Andalusia 1983-87 (per cent of those elected in 1979)

	Councillors	Mayors
Not elected/ Did not stand	87.2	69
Elected AP	6.5	13.4
Elected independent	3.9	11
Elected PSOE	0.5	1
Elected CDS	0.4	4.6
Elected others	1.5	1
	100	100

Source: Márquez Cruz (note 33).

Table 4. Participation in Francoist local elite of councillors and mayors elected in 1983 (Andalusia) (per cent)

	Councillors		Mayors	
	pre-1979	1979-	pre-1979	1979-
CDS	13.8	86.2	20	80
AP	10.5	89.5	30.5	69.5
Independents	9.8	91.2	26.2	73.8
PSOE	1.2	98.8	3.2	96.8
PCE	0.7	99.3	4	96
Total	4.3	95.7	9.8	91.2

Source: Márquez Cruz (note 33).

Table 5. Government receipts and expenditure in Spain 1975-96 (per cent of Gross Domestic Product)

Year	Government Receipts	Government Spending	Social Transfers	State Investment
1975	24.6	24.6	9.2	2.7
1976	25.5	25.8	10.0	2.7
1977	26.7	27.3	10.3	2.9
1978	27.4	29.1	11.9	2.9
1979	28.7	30.3	13.0	3.0
1980	30.3	32.9	12.7	3.1
1981	31.6	35.5	14.1	3.1
1982	31.6	37.2	13.9	3.2
1983	33.6	38.3	14.3	3.4
1984	33.3	38.7	14.3	3.6
1985	35.2	42.2	14.3	3.8
1986	35.9	41.9	13.9	3.6
1987	37.7	40.8	13.8	3.4
1988	37.7	41.0	13.8	3.8
1989	39.5	42.3	13.9	4.5
1990	39.5	43.6	14.4	5.1

1991	40.2	45.1	15.2	4.8
1992	42.2	46.3	16.0	4.2
1993	42.0	49.5	16.9	4.2
1994	41.0	47.9	16.5	3.9
1995	39.9	46.0	15.8	3.7
1996	40.4	45.2	15.6	n.a.

Source: First three columns from European Commission, *European Economy* (Brussels: Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs 1996), pp.172-3, 178-9, 198-9; last column from Tamames (note 39) p.569.

Table 6. Evolution of distribution of wealth in Spain, 1974-91

Year	Gini index of inequality	Per cent of national income Bottom quintile	Top quintile
1974	0.446	4.94	51.95
1980	0.363	6.39	44.28
1986	0.356	3.82	44.08
1987	0.353	3.85	43.75
1988	0.345	7.01	43.06
1989	0.349	7.03	43.69
1990	0.347	7.36	43.43
1991	0.346	7.34	43.22

Source: Tamames (note 39) p.562.

Table 7. Support for PSOE amongst different social groups, 1982-93 (per cent)

	1982	1993
Working Status		
Active population	42	29
Students	55	33
Retired	39	37
Household	32	34
Occupation		
Professionals	24	12
Business owners	28	22
Top managers	36	14
White collar employees	42	17
Foremen/supervisors	55	25
Workers (industry/services)	n.a.	40
Skilled workers	49	n.a.
Unskilled workers	45	n.a.
Agricultural workers	41	43

Source: Summary of Table 6.4 in Boix (note 37).

Table 8. Changes in PSOE vote share 1982-96 (per cent), by region

Region	PSOE vote share 1982	PSOE vote share 1996	Change (absolute)	Change (% of 1982 PSOE vote)	Regional Control (years)
Madrid	52.1	31.7	-20.4	-39.2	12
Castile-La Mancha	48.2	34.2	-14.0	-29.1	13
Aragon	47.9	34.3	-13.6	-28.4	6
Valencia	51.9	38.0	-13.9	-26.8	12
Murcia	50.8	38.1	-12.7	-25.0	12
Asturias	52.1	39.9	-12.2	-23.4	12
Andalusia	59.1	46.2	-12.9	-21.8	14
Euskadi	28.6	23.4	-5.2	-18.2	0
Navarre	37.6	30.8	-6.8	-18.1	8
Canary Is.	35.6	29.7	-5.9	-16.6	6
Castile-Leon	41.2	34.6	-6.6	-16.0	4
La Rioja	43.5	37.1	-6.4	-14.7	10
Catalonia	45.2	39.2	-6.0	-13.3	0
Balearic Is.	40.5	35.8	-4.7	-11.6	0
Extremadura	54.4	48.2	-6.2	-11.4	13
Cantabria	45.0	35.2	-4.8	-10.7	1
Galicia	32.3	32.5	+0.2	+0.6	2