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The evolution of leadership selection in Spain
(1977-2008)**

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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between democracy and political parties has been, since their emergence in the mid XIX century, a controversial issue: Political parties are indeed a key institution in representative government and, yet, they have not always showed the due respect to the internal democratic procedures. This contradiction has fuelled a debate were various issues were intermingled: On one side, the question initially raised by Michels (1919), whether the internal democracy in parties (whatever the meaning of the concept) is possible or not; On the other, the normative discussion on its benefits or risks; Finally, the problem of defining and measuring the concept, which has attracted less scholar attention.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to the last of these debates. Following Schattsneider's motto (1942) that, the one who controls the selection procedures is the owner of the party, this research will focus on what many authors consider the crucial point in the discussion on the internal democracy in political parties. Using the Spanish case as the unit of analysis, the goal of the research will point out whether there has been a democratization of the leadership selection processes in the main Spanish political parties between 1977 and 2008. To assess that, the paper will focus on four main dimensions of leadership selection, and will also try to use the evidence from the Spanish case as a way to suggest some hypothetic links between them.

APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF OLIGARCHY AND INTERNAL PARTY DEMOCRACY

The first seminal studies on political parties, according to the traditional suspicion aroused by the subject, intended to show the hidden realities within these organizations making special emphasis on its lack of internal democracy. This was one of the main conclusions pointed out by many of the first academic studies on political parties since the 1950s (Macy, 1904, Ostrogorsky, 1906, Michels, 1919, Weber, 1919; Duverger, 1957; Mackenzie, 1956). The study that analyzed more thoroughly the strategies and psychological mechanisms used by partisan elites to subvert democratic procedures and remain in power was the classic work of Michels on the SPD (then considered the archetype of modern party). With the motto "*who says organization, says oligarchy*" (Michels, 1919), this author summarized his pessimism regarding the prospect of democracy within

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the parties. That is probably why the main political theorists of representative government of post-WW II relayed on the idea that democracy had to be found in the competition between parties, not within them (Schattschneider, 1942; Schumpeter, 1950; Dahl, 1956).

The progresses made with the constitutionalization of western political parties after WW II favoured a substantial change in the observation of intra-party rules and democratic procedures (García Pelayo, 1986; Gallagher, Laver, Mair, 2001). Most constitutions established from then on some formal requirements about their internal democracy. These demands were reflected mainly in the leadership and candidate selection processes and probably less in the policy process. Although the closer scrutiny from the state bureaucracy did not end with the tendency of the elites to want to be in power, it served at least to eradicate the totalitarian parties from the western world. The best example of that is the transformation of many communist parties into specialized mass parties (Duverger, 1957).

The social changes and transformations experienced by political parties from the 1940s to 1960s led to a change of approach in their study. Without denying the critical role of the elites, their strategies now appeared seriously restricted or conditioned by the *new* democratic rights held by their members. This was due to the transformation of the mass parties and the emergence of the catch-all parties (in its various forms) (Kirchheimer, 1969). In both party types the growing formal influence of party members began to show the tensions and contradictions between the interests and views of members and voters (many of which no longer belonged to the same *social milieu*) (Caul Kittilson and Scarrow, 2006). Those differences were theorized, among others, by John May (1973) through his *law of curvilinear disparity*. May's law stated that leaders tended to moderate their approaches to get closer to the voters, whilst members were more (radical) ideologically driven. In these circumstances, members were seen by many politicians and academics as a serious obstacle to *modernize* the party organization or *moderate* their party manifestos (Kirchheimer, 1966; Epstein, 1980; Panebianco, 1988).

This approach was challenged during the 1980s. The significant organizational transformations (profesionalization, candidate-centered elections, the new role of the mass media, etc.), driven by many of the main western political parties pointed out towards a new reality: the changes in party members' functions (Norris, 1995a; Scarrow, 1996). That tended to be linked, moreover, with the growing crisis of party identification and party membership (Dalton, et. alt. 1984; Klingeman and Fuchs, 1995; Scarrow, 2000; Mair and Van Biezen, 2001). All those concerns speeded up the debate of whether political parties were failing or in the process of disappearing (Lawson and Merckl, 1988). To some members of the academy, the increasing capital-intensive orientation of party campaigns and the losses of party members were part of the same vicious circle. That is the reason why some scholars discussed about the possible existence of parties without members (Dalton and Watterberg, 2000).

More recently, the research has shown the variety of strategies used by the boards of the parties to adapt to these new conditions. These strategies have been characterized by the growing financial needs of the parties and by the small weight of party members in their overall economic

support. The main arrangement has been, indeed, the increasing dependence of parties on public finances. In some cases, the blurred distinction between state and civil society has led to some forms of *cartelisation* (Katz y Mair, 1992, 1995; Van Biezen, 2007). From time to time, public resources have not only been employed to finance electoral campaigns, but to increase the numbers of members by using patronage (Bolleyer, 2008). In other cases, political parties have decided to fuse themselves with big firms developing organisational forms between a corporation and a political party (Hopkin y Paolucci, 1999). In turn, some examples of oligarchic funding have been found through the modern cadre parties (Koole, 1994). Despite all this, political parties have tried to maintain and increase their members by giving them more formal power in the leadership and candidate selection, as well as in the policy process and the elaboration of party manifestos. However, it is not clear yet whether this new empowerment of party members is more rhetorical than real: While some of the scholars have maintained its existence (Scarrow, Webb and Farrell, 2002; Caul-Kittilson and Scarrow, 2006), others have played it down and linked it as a new sign of the growing stratararchy produced by the cartelization (Bolleyer, 2008).

LEADERSHIP SELECTION AND INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY: CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL REMARKS TO THE SPANISH CASE

Before referring to the role that members may have in the leadership selection processes must be defined, first, who is the party leader. Even ignoring the old distinction between *real* leaders and *formal* leaders (Duverger, 1957), it is difficult to establish a general definition of a leader because of the particularities of each party and every political system. Much of the Anglo-Saxon tradition tends to identify the party leader with the person who would become prime minister if the party came to hold that position in a future government (Gallagher, Laver, Mair, 2001: 282). In practice, the party leader tends to be identified with the *electoral leader* (Davies, 1998; Scarrow, Webb, Farrell, 2000; LeDuc, 2001; Caula-Kittilson and Scarrow, 2006). This is because many of the Anglo-Saxon parties have a specific procedure to select the electoral leader, which in many cases is the only politically relevant mechanism. This circumstance makes the *electoral leader* the *leader of the organization* and, when they are not the same, the latter is a clearly subordinate to the first¹.

However, in most of the Spanish parties there is not a politically important procedure for selecting the electoral leader². In fact, it is the leader of the organization who usually is proclaimed as the electoral leader, becoming indeed, the party leader. In the case of the State Wide Parties, the main *electoral leader* is the candidate to become prime minister. For the Non State Wide

¹ Duverger (1957) used a similar distinction when referring to the *inside leader* (the leader of the organization, i.e., the party chair-person, the secretary general, etc.) and the *outside leader* (the electoral leader).

² This does not mean that there is not any kind of formal procedure for electing the electoral leader. However, this procedure has not had (in most cases) the character of a real choice, but just a proclamation for electoral purposes.

Parties, the electoral leader tends to be the candidate to become the regional prime minister, not the national one. For this reason, the relevant procedures in the Spanish case are those to select the leader of the organization defined as the highest individual executive position in the party. However, there are two significant exceptions to this rule. On one side, there are those parties whose leader of the organization is not the electoral leader, which leads to a two-man leadership that can, sometimes, led to intra-party conflicts³. On the other, there are those parties being members of party alliances. In those cases tends to be a procedure to select the leader of the alliance, although the tendency is to elect as the electoral leader the one of the major party within the alliance⁴.

In this paper we are going to analyse the four main dimensions of the leadership selection process: the certification process, the voting procedures, the inclusiveness of the selectorate, the degree of participation, and, finally the competitiveness of the contests (Table 1). First, we are going to examine the certification process, which defines who is eligible for the post (Norris, 2006: 90). The key point to guide the analysis of this dimension will be whether these procedures have evolved over time and to what sense. That is to say, if they have evolved towards more restrictive or permissive requirements to become the party leader.

Second, we are going to analyze the general characteristics of the voting procedure and, in particular, whether the party is elected with the whole board of the party or not. In the first case, we are going to distinguish whether the list is open or closed (and blocked or not). We will also examine whether the votes are by all the party delegates or by territorial delegations. Voting procedures are important because this is the divide between an authentic voting system and an appointment system (Hazan and Rahat, 2006: 113). Be the election of the party leader and the board of the party separated (or with open lists) then it could be expected a more open and competitive leadership selection.

In third place, we are going to focus on the degree of inclusiveness of the selectorate (Scarrow, Webb, Farrell, 2000; LeDuc, 2001; Caul Kittilson and Scarrow 2006). To asses that we are going to use a combination of categories developed by LeDuc (2001: 325), and Scarrow, Webb, Farrell (2000: 153). In particular, we will make the distinction (from less to more democratic) between the following selectorates: the National Committee⁵, the parliamentary party, the party congress, closed primaries (where only members can vote), and primaries open to sympathizers. In this dimension, the question to discuss is whether the electorate that chooses the party leadership in Spanish has moved towards a more inclusive trend.

³ The most important case is the PNV where the leader of the organization has almost never been the electoral leader. In other parties this has happened during some periods of crisis: the PP in 1989, the PSOE between 1998 and 1999, IU between 1999 and 2000 and from 2008.

⁴ There are two cases: IU (with the important exception of the period of Gaspar Llamazares, as the leader of IU, but not of the leader of the PCE) and CiU, the party alliance between CDC and UDC.

⁵ Here we include both the board of the party (the executive branch) and the national committee (the representative branch) as the major bodies operating between party congresses.

Finally, the article is going to consider the political consequences of the leadership selection and, basically, its impact on the competitiveness (Hazan and Rahat, 2006: 115). A good indicator of this dimension is the number of candidates competing for the highest individual executive position in each election. Be the internal elections contested, another indicator then may be the vote share of the winner. Again, we are going to assume that the greater the numbers of contested elections, the higher the level of internal democracy.

The four dimensions are summarized in Table 1. The paper will also use the findings of the Spanish case to establish whether it can be established some links between these four dimensions. We are going to focus, mainly, on the impact of the certification process, the voting procedures and the selectorate (or some combination of them) on the competitiveness. Insofar the certification process could restrict the pole of possible candidates it can be hypothesised that the restrictions of the certification could have an impact on the degree of competitiveness. At its extreme, very restrictive procedures of certification can severely constrain intra-party competition. Similarly, the degree of inclusiveness of the selectorate may also be linked to the competitiveness in the sense that some party bodies can restrict the competition more than others. Finally, we can state that the more open may be the voting procedures, the more contested could be the internal ballots.

Table 1
The four dimensions of the leadership selection used in this study

Level	Certification	Selectorate	Voting procedures	Competitiveness
-	Being member of the board of the party	Parliamentary party	Election of the whole board of the party with closed lists	One candidate
		National committee Congress		Two candidates
	Support from other party members	Closed primaries	Open lists	More candidates
+	Membership seniority	Open primaries	Separated election of the party leader and the rest of the board	
	All members without special requirements			

Source: author's own

The following pages will use these four dimensions to examine the trends in the leadership selection processes of the five major political parties in Spain: The Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), Alianza Popular / Partido Popular (AP / PP), Izquierda Unida (IU), *Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya* (CDC) and the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (PNV). To study the certification process and measure the inclusiveness of the selectorate, we are going to examine various statutes of each party at different points in time: the case of the PSOE in the statutes of 1977, 1988, 1997 and 2008; the PP in the 1977, 1990, 2004 and 2008; IU in the 1986, 1996 and 2004; CDC in the 1977, 1987, 1997 and 2008; and the PNV in the 1977, 1985, 1987, 2000 and 2008. For the last two dimensions we use data (obtained through the press and official sources of the party) of the attendants and the electoral results of the different party congresses held in Spain between 1977 and 2008.

The certification process

The certification process of most political parties in Spain is somewhat restrictive. Some general requirements are established in all parties: being a member of the party or keeping updated their financial obligations. However, beyond these common elements, each party has tended to establish additional requirements, being the most common one the seniority rule (having an uninterrupted period of membership before the nomination)⁶. There are also other additional requirements that can restrict the possibilities of the general members to the leadership.

Throughout almost 30 years the PSOE has remained with the same eligibility terms for the appointment of the secretary general. Formally, from 1977 there were low restrictive requirements in order to be eligible, for the position only required a period of at least 24 months of continuous membership prior to nomination. However, in 2004 the requirement of seniority membership disappears. In exchange it is required the support of 25 % of the congress delegates, which is a clear tightening of the eligibility conditions. Furthermore, it should be noted that there are no limits to the number of mandates or to the time that someone can hold the post of general secretary, and that there is not any incompatibility rule between the position of secretary general and the exercise of public office⁷.

AP/PP has experienced several changes throughout its history in the eligibility terms of the party leader. This was first the secretary general and later the president). These changes have been linked to the general transformation of the organization. In 1977, the party leader (then the secretary general) had to be a party member and part of the board of the party (*Junta Directiva Nacional*). From the III Congress (1979), Fraga left the general secretary to become president, moving the leadership of the organization to that post. From 1990, after remaking the party and its transformation into PP, the post of party leader belongs again to the party president (Chadel, 2000). In 2004, it is introduced the distinction between different types of party members: activists and supporters. Both are considered members, but only the first ones enjoy the right to vote and to be eligible to the internal organs and be designated as congress delegates. As in the case of the PSOE, the PP statutes have never stated limits to the time that someone can occupy the post of president. Nor the party presidency has been incompatible with having a public office. Despite changes in the eligibility terms, we cannot consider that AP / PP has evolved towards less restrictive procedures. From 1979 it is *formally* easy to apply for the post of party president.

To be appointed secretary general of the Partido Comunista de España (PCE), it was traditionally required to be part of the Central Committee, a highly restrictive eligibility condition⁸.

⁶ We don't consider here informal requirements not included in the party statutes, or included in internal regulations as, for example, the non written criterion that leader must be member of parliament.

⁷ However, as stressed by Méndez (2000: 126) the incompatibilities were very high for the other members of the board of the party.

⁸ The PCE has adopted in recent years less restrictive mechanisms. Its secretary general is now directly elected by the party congress.

Instead, in the Izquierda Unida, the organization where the PCE is incorporated since 1986, the certification process cannot be considered so restrictive. From the beginning, the *coordinador general* (secretary general) is proposed by those members of the *Consejo Político Federal* (National Committee) chosen by the General Assembly. Unlike the PCE, it is not explicitly required in IU that the leader should be part of this body. This system has been maintained since the establishment of IU up to the present. In 1994 it was stated that when it cannot be possible to reach a consensus on a single candidacy, each candidacy in dispute would require the backing of the 10% of those attending the meeting. Unlike the PP and PSOE, in IU it has been stated from 1994 on, a two-term limit for holding the party leadership. Exceptionally, a mandate may be extended if 60% of the Federal Political Council agrees on it. However, there is no incompatibility between holding internal positions and public office, although it is noted that it should be desirable not to combine both positions. Thus, although the requirements have been changing, it is not possible to consider that IU has evolved towards more permissive terms of eligibility.

CDC stated in its 1977 party constitution that any member could be eligible for the highest post of the party, the general secretary. The nomination had to be endorsed by 10 members, while any member could support as many candidates as they desired. The party leader had to be elected by the party congress among the competing candidates. However, if there was only one candidate, the post will be decided automatically (without a ballot). The 1985 party constitution made the eligibility requirements become more restrictive, since it required 6 months member seniority and the backing of 25 members to compete as a candidate for the party leadership. In the 1995 party constitution, this condition was enlarged up to a year, a criterion that has remained unchanged since then. Furthermore, the 2008 party constitution added the need for an endorsement of 5% of party congress delegates to compete for the leadership. The party constitutions of CDC have not set any limits on the duration or incompatibility of the top leaders (president and general secretary). Some limits have been set up for other positions that currently cannot be held more than 8 years, although the national council can make some exceptions. As in other parties, we cannot conclude that CDC is evolving towards more permissive clauses, quite the contrary.

In the case of the PNV, the two main requirements for becoming the president of the *Euskadi Buru Batzar* (EBB, the board of the party) were being both a member of the party, and holding a position in the EBB⁹. The 1987 party constitution removed the last clause, allowing presidents from outside the board of the party. However, in the 2000 party constitution a new eligibility clause was added stating the obligation to speak Basque as an eligibility term to the party leadership. This is, indeed, a highly restrictive eligibility condition¹⁰. Furthermore, the position of president of the PNV

⁹ This body was composed by twelve members, three representatives from each one of the four regional (provincial) boards of the party (Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa, Alava and Navarre). The equitable representation of the four provinces, and the fact that belonging to the EBB was linked to the previous presence to the regional (provincial) boards of the party, made the party leadership strongly dependent on the internal dynamics of the regional organizations. Furthermore, the incompatibilities between party posts and public office caused a huge circulation of the party elites as the party gained the Basque government (Perez-Nievas, 2004).

¹⁰ It was a condition previously stated in some regional (provincial) constitutions of the PNV, and it had been

and other internal posts are affected by a scrupulous system of incompatibilities which has been tightened over the years. According to this principle, the highest individual executive post of the organization (as well as virtually all the other internal ones) cannot be exercised by officials or employees of public administration, and it is incompatible with the exercise of public office as well as with being the leader of unions or business organizations. For a while some *ad hoc* exceptions could be decided, but this was soon removed. Since 1992, to hold a party position it is required a membership seniority of two years. In the 2000 party constitution it is stated a 4 years limit for the exercise of each executive position, although it is provided that some exceptions can be made. Therefore, in the PNV there has been towards a progressive tightening of the eligibility conditions.

In general terms, it can be concluded that none of the Spanish parties has softened the eligibility conditions of their leaders. On the other hand, these requirements have progressively been strengthened. However, it may be said that most of them are not highly restrictive clauses, except for the PNV in which case the terms to hold the position of party leader are higher than in the other organizations.

The voting procedures

The voting procedures of the Spanish political parties show some differences due to the fact that some of them have separated the election for the leader and the board of the party. On the other side, almost all of them have allowed the voting by delegates and not by territories on their party congresses.

Since 1976, the PSOE has always chosen the party leader through party congresses. In all cases, the party leader coincided with the leader of the organization, the secretary general¹¹. Between 1977 and 2000, the process of leadership selection was based on a ballot with closed lists of candidates by the party congress. The lists contained the candidates for the general secretary and the other members of the board of the party¹². This has changed since 2000, when the election of the secretary general was divided from the rest of the board of the party. The striking feature of the party congresses of the PSOE from 1979 to 1990 was the vote for territorial delegations (each territory having one vote), not by party delegates. This left the leadership selection process in the hands of the regional and provincial leaders of each delegation (Colomé

working until then as a *de facto* requirement. To be Basque-speaking (*euskaldún*) can be considered as a highly restrictive condition, since only less than 40% of the population speaks this language (source: Basque Statistics Institute). Besides, the party constitution states that Basque is the official language of the party.

¹¹ The only exception to this rule happened between 1998 and 1999, when the celebration of closed primary elections to select the electoral leader led to a short period of *cohabitation* between the Secretary General and the party candidate for the national prime ministership.

¹² This procedure constituted an important break with the leadership selection processes of the PSOE during the years of the II Republic (Juliá, 1997). The only major exception came in 1981 by a symbolic gesture of the President of Andalusia (see note 20).

Nieto and Lopez, 1989). This rule changed after 1994, when the board of the party was then directly elected by the delegates.

Though initially the AP party constitution stated that the party leadership had to be chosen by the *Junta Directiva Nacional* (the board of the party), during the I Congress the whole board of the party was elected by the party delegates by acclamation (López Nieto, 1988:32). Since then, the AP leader has always been chosen by the party congresses. As in the PSOE until 2000, the election of the party leader and the rest of the board have been done in the same closed list¹³. However, unlike the PSOE, in the AP and PP congresses the party leader has always been elected through the individual vote of the delegates (López Nieto, 1988; Colomé and Lopez Nieto, 1989).

Since its formation in 1989, IU has chosen the party leader (named coordinator general) through an indirect process. The party leader of IU has always been the party's electoral candidate in the general election¹⁴. In the tradition of the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE) –the main party that integrates IU¹⁵–, the party assembly elects the board of the party who, along with other co-opted members elect the party leader. In this sense, IU is one of the Spanish parties where the participation of the party membership in the leadership selection has always been more restricted.

CDC has always selected the highest individual executive position through Congress. The organizational leader has always been the electoral leader of the several party alliances in which CDC has been involved¹⁶. As CDC is a Non State Wide Party, the party leader has always been the candidate in the Catalan autonomous elections¹⁷. The party leader of CDC has been elected by direct vote of the party delegates in a separated ballot from the rest of the board of the party.

The leadership selection processes of the PNV had traditionally been quite oligarchic. Furthermore, the party has long time maintained a rigorous system of incompatibilities whereby the organization leader (the president of the EBB, the board of the party) and the electoral leader cannot be the same person. At the beginning of the Spanish political transition, the EBB chose the party president amongst its members. From 1988 on, the party president became appointed by the territorial representatives of the *Asamblea Nacional* (the highest representative body between party assemblies) during the General Assembly.

¹³ The only exception was the 1986 congress, when the president's vote was divided from the rest of the board of the party (Verge, 2008: 321).

¹⁴ The only exception occurred in the 2000 general election, when the general coordinator, Julio Anguita, had to resign, due to health, a few months before the election to present a candidate.

¹⁵ IU was born as an alliance of parties and various social platforms. In 1992 they registered as a federation of parties. Despite the changes, the weight of the various parties (especially the PCE) and civil society organizations remains critical (Ramiro, 2004: 66 y ss).

¹⁶ CDC created in 1977 the electoral alliance *Pacte Democràtic de Catalunya*. From 1979 on CDC has formed a party alliance with UDC (Barrio, 2008).

¹⁷ In the 1977 and 1979 general election, the party leader was the electoral leader because there was not yet self-government in Catalonia.

The inclusiveness of the selectorate

Generally speaking, the Spanish political parties choose their leaders through representative selectorates (Table 2). Some parties do it from their creation, while others have evolved from oligarchic selectorates to representative ones. None of the parties analyzed in this study has adopted democratic mechanisms (direct election through primaries) to select their leaders¹⁸.

The PSOE has not changed the inclusiveness of the selectorate to elect the secretary general since 1977. The internal body dealing with this task are party congresses. Therefore, it has always used a representative system. The number of delegates to the party congress has increased over the years because of the growth of the party membership. However, over the years, the proportion of members to delegates has raised sharply. In the 1977 party congress the ratio was of 66 members to each delegate, while by the 2000 party congress each delegate represented 410 members¹⁹.

On the contrary, AP/PP has changed the selectorate of its party leader and has evolved from an oligarchic system towards a representative system. The party constitution of 1977 specified that the secretary general was chosen by the board of the party (Junta Directiva Nacional). In 1979 some changes were introduced: the president (and not the secretary general) became the party leader, and it has to be elected by the party congress. With these changes, AP/PP has introduced though a significant transformation in degree of inclusiveness of the selectorate. On the other hand, despite the fact that AP party congresses are much more crowded than those of the PSOE, the increase of the membership has produced a substantial change of the ratio members/delegates from 5 (1979) to 202 (2000)²⁰.

From its foundation until now, IU party leader is elected by an oligarchic selectorate. The coordinator general is chosen by the National Committee originally called *Comité Político Federal* and since 1990 *Consejo Político Federal* (Ramiro, 2004: 56). The leadership selection is the result of a two step procedure. First the party leader is nominated only by those members of the National Committee that have been elected by the General Assembly. Then the plenary of the *Consejo Político Federal* (which includes co-opted members) ratifies that decision. As IU has not changed the selectorate, there hasn't been any increase in its inclusiveness. However, there has been an increase in the proportion of members per delegate from 75 (in 1989) to 85 (in 2000), but this increase has been lower than in other cases because of the limited increase in membership²¹.

CDC has not changed the procedures to select the party leader from 1977 to now. What has been changing is the name of the position from secretary general to party president. The

¹⁸ However, there are other examples of parties in Spain that have used closed primaries, as in the case of *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* and *Iniciativa per Catalunya*, both Non State Wide Parties.

¹⁹ In 1977, the PSOE had 48.635 members, and in 2000 had 407.821 (Carreras y Tafunell, 2005: 140)

²⁰ In 1979 AP had 5.000 members and in 2000 had 601.731 (Carreras y Tafunell, 2005: 140).

²¹ In 1990 IU had 60.000 members and in 2000 had 67.802 (Carreras y Tafunell, 2005: 140)

selectorate has always been the party congress, though. As the other parties, the growth of the overall party membership has increased the disparity between party members and delegates in the party congresses. The ratio increased from 5 members per delegate in 1977 to 16 in 2000²².

The PNV is the party that has experienced major transformations in the leadership selection processes. In the early years of the Spanish political transition the party remained with the very model of organization inherited from the 1930s. Those procedures were characterized by a strong weight of the regional (provincial) organizations in the power structure of the party (Perez-Nievas, 2004). By then, the EBB (the board of the party) elected its president amongst its 12 members, making the leadership selection remarkably oligarchic. From 1988 on, the mechanism has substantially changed. The party leader (the EBB president) has to be proposed by the *Euskadi Buru Batzar*, but only the members of the *Asamblea Nacional* (National Committee) elected by the territorial organizations can vote. The ballot has to take place during the General Assembly²³. This change has had a great impact on the representativeness of the selectorate. The ratio has changed from 2002 members per delegate in 1978, to 408 in 2002²⁴. Therefore, during these years the PNV has evolved from an oligarchic towards a representative selectorate, a half way between IU and the rest.

Table 2
Inclusiveness of the selectorate. Spain 1977-2008

Party	Oligarchic		Representative Congress	Democratic	
	National Committee	Parliamentary Group		Closed primaries	Open primaries
IU	1986, 1996, 2004				
PNV *	1977, 1985		1987 ¹ , 2008 ¹		
PP *	1977		1990, 2004		
CDC			1977, 1987, 1997, 2008		
PSOE			1979, 1988, 1997, 2008		

*evolution towards more inclusive procedures between 1977 and 2008. ¹In the PNV the party leader is only elected by the members of the *Asamblea Nacional* (National Committee) previously elected by their territorial organizations (Not the whole *Asamblea Nacional*)

Source: author's own from LeDuc (2001) and Caul-Kittilson y Scarrow (2006). Data is from party constitutions

As a general remark, it can be said that Spanish political parties have evolved towards more inclusive selectorates, as they have gradually given the control of the leadership selection process to the party congresses. However, we cannot consider that the degree of democratization has been increased significantly since all parties continue to use mechanisms of representative nature. In some cases (IU), we can even find some indirect mechanisms that encourage the maintenance of

²² In 1977 CDC had 2.650 members and in 2000 had 30.000 (Carreras y Tafunell, 2005: 140)

²³ The General Assembly was created in 1988 and is composed by representatives from each municipal organization, representatives of the foreign organizations, representatives of the *Asamblea Nacional*, members of public office at regional and municipal level, etc. On the other hand, the *Asamblea Nacional* (National Committee) is composed by elected representatives of the regional (provincial) organizations as well as other co-opted members (other relevant party positions). The *Asamblea Nacional* is the highest representative body between General Assemblies.

²⁴ in 1978 the PNV had 24.030 members while in 2000 had 30.583 (Carreras y Tafunell, 2005: 140).

oligarchic connotations in the selection of the leader. On the other hand, the increasing ratio members/delegates is due to the fact that the growth of party membership has been greater than the selectorate. The main factor of this growing disproportionality has been the maintenance of the party congresses as a selectorate. Only the PNV has experienced a more inclusive trend.

The competitiveness

The following pages are going to discuss the evolution of party leadership in contemporary Spain. We are going to focus on the degree of competitiveness of their leadership selection processes. These dimensions will be analyzed with data from several party congresses stressing the leadership replacements that have taken place in each party.

Felipe González was the party leader of the PSOE from the mid-seventies until the mid-nineties, after being first elected secretary general during the party congress held in Suresnes (France) in 1974 (Julià, 1997). Gonzalez saw his leadership challenged in 1979 when the majority of the Congress delegates decided, against his criterion, to keep the Marxist ideology in the party manifesto (Table 3). Gonzalez's resignation to the General Secretary opened a period of crisis that led to a new party congress, four months later. In that congress an alternative candidate was presented by those who wanted to keep the Marxist references on the party manifesto. The victory of González (enhanced due to the change of the individual vote by the delegation vote) finally ended up consolidating his leadership within the party²⁵. From his victory in the 1982 general election to the late nineties González leadership was unchallenged. Despite the internal division during the 1990s between the *renovadores* (renewers, close to Gonzalez) and the *guerristas* (close to the deputy party leader, Alfonso Guerra), there were never any alternative candidacies in the party congresses. Furthermore, the disputes between the two sectors did never really challenge the leadership of Gonzalez (Méndez, 2000).

During the 1997 congress, held shortly after losing government, Gonzalez announced his retirement from the party leadership. However, this didn't open up a greater competitiveness for the succession. An agreement between the regional leaders (the so called *barones*) made possible the election of Joaquín Almunia, an exminister close to González (Hopkin, 2001). In order to provide himself with more legitimacy, Almunia called a closed primary election to elect the PSOE electoral candidate to the 2000 general election. In that process party members played a crucial role in deciding the candidate. But, contrary to Almunia's expectations, the victory was for the alternative candidate, José Borrell. Borrell's victory led to a period of *cohabitation* between the secretary general and the electoral candidate. That period ended one year later when Borrell was *forced* to resign by a scandal and, above all, by the disputes within the party leadership. Almunia became then the electoral candidate, but the party's poor performance in the 2000 general election led to

²⁵ In the 1981 party congress, internal disputes between the board of the PSOE and the President of Andalusia led to the latest to submit a solo candidacy for the board of the party (not to post of secretary general, though). That candidacy did not prosper.

his resignation as secretary general. The consequence was a very open competition at the congress of 2000, where contested four candidates. The winner was the most unknown of all of them, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. Despite a tight victory of Zapatero in the 2000 Congress, its victory in the 2004 and 2008 general election has consolidated him as the new and unchallenged leader of the party.

Table 3
Competitiveness in party congresses. PSOE 1977-2008

Year	Attendees ¹	Candidates	Leader change	Party Leader	Post	Votes % ²	Type of leader
1976	736	1	No	F. González	SG	Nd	Others
1979	1008	-	-	(managing committee) ³	-	-	-
1979ex	421	2	No	F. González	SG	85,9	MP
1981	765	1 ⁴	No	F. González	SG	100	MP
1984	769	1	No	F. González	SG	96,1	Prime minister
1988	862	1	No	F. González	SG	100*	Prime minister
1990	871	1	No	F. González	SG	100*	Prime minister
1994	891	1	No	F. González	SG	89,4	Prime minister
1997	954	1	Yes	J. Almunia	SG	72,9	MP
2000	995	4	Yes	J.L.Rodríguez Zapatero	SG	41,7 ⁵	MP
2004	974	1	No	J.L.Rodríguez Zapatero	SG	95,6	Prime minister
2008	995	1	No	J.L.Rodríguez Zapatero	SG	98,5	Prime minister

*approximate data. Nd: No data. SG: Secretary General. ¹Party delegates. Between 1979 and 1990 votes were by territorial delegations. ²Share of votes, not over total attendance. ³A managing committee chaired by José Federico Carvajal (president of that congress) was responsible for leading the party until the extraordinary congress. ⁴See note 20. ⁵In 2000 the PSOE split the vote of the general secretary of the executive. The figures are from the first ballot
Source: author's compilation from the press

Manuel Fraga has been the main leader of the AP from its formation until the end of the 80s (Table 4). Fraga was elected general secretary of the AP in the party congresses of 1977 and 1979²⁶, but he resigned from this post after the 1979 elections. This opened a period of crisis that reinforced Fraga's powers within AP. At the end of that, Fraga was elected president (López Nieto, 1988). The *sub-triumph* of AP in the 1982 elections, when AP became the first opposition party, favoured the consolidation of Fraga as party leader (Montero, 1989). However, the poor results in the 1986 general election led again to his resignation. At the 1987 party congress, two candidates disputed his succession. Finally, the winner was Antonio Hernández Mancha who for some time became the new president and party leader. Hernández Mancha's leadership was challenged by the poor performance of AP in the local and regional elections of 1987. The internal division led to the comeback of Fraga, who presented his candidacy for the party leadership shortly before the 1989 party congress. Fraga's candidacy led to the resignation of Hernández Mancha (Baón, 2001).

The 1989 party congress gave way to the refoundation of the party, which was renamed Partido Popular. Although Fraga returned again as party president, he rejected to be again the party electoral leader. Hence, the candidacy of the PP to the 1989 general election was decided just few months before the elections, with the designation by Fraga of José María Aznar (then

²⁶ AP was initially structured as a federation of parties (halfway between a direct party and an indirect party), but since 1979 the parties lost their importance (López Nieto, 1988).

regional prime minister of Castilla y León). The success of Aznar in the 1989 general election favoured his candidacy as a party leader, becoming the new party president in the 1990 congress. The victory of the PP in the 1996 general election led the party to the national government for the very first time and consolidated Aznar's leadership. After eight years as Prime Minister, Aznar pledged not to opt for a third term and, few months before the 2004 general election, appointed Mariano Rajoy (then vice-president of the national government) as his successor and electoral candidate. The PP lost the 2004 election, but the tight results and the strong polarization of the Spanish political life helped Rajoy to maintain his party leadership. He became thus, the new party president at the 2004 party congress. The good performance of the PP in the 2008 general election favoured, despite the new electoral defeat, Rajoy's leadership. Although some dissatisfied members tried to endorse an alternative candidate before the 2008 party congress, this attempt was finally unsuccessful.

Table 4
Competitiveness in party congress. AP-PP 1977-2008

Year	Name ¹	Attendees ²	Candidates	Leader change	Party Leader	Post	Vote % ³	Type of leader
1977	AP	3000	1	-	M. Fraga	SG	Nd	Francoism MP
1978	AP	sd	1	No	M. Fraga	SG	Nd	MP
1979	AP	1000*	1	No	M. Fraga	PT	92,4	MP
1981	AP	1800*	1	No	M. Fraga	PT	98,9	MP
1982	AP	2500*	1	No	M. Fraga	PT	Nd	MP
1984	AP	2700*	1	No	M. Fraga	PT	94,7	MP
1986	AP	2300	1	No	M. Fraga	PT	Nd	MP
1987	AP	2837	2	Yes	A. Hernández Mancha	PT	71,5	MP (Senate)
1989	AP/PP	2881	1	Yes	M. Fraga	PT	85,8	MP
1990	PP	2850	1	Yes	J.M. Aznar	PT	96,2	MP
1993	PP	2900	1	No	J.M. Aznar	PT	98,4	MP
1996	PP	2900	1	No	J.M. Aznar	PT	99,5	MP
2000	PP	2980	1	No	J.M. Aznar	PT	98,9	Prime Minister
2002	PP	3156	1	No	J.M. Aznar	PT	99,4	Prime Minister
2004	PP	3028	1	Yes	M. Rajoy	PT	97,5	MP
2008	PP	2774	1	No	M. Rajoy	PT	82,7	MP

Nd: No data. ¹AP from 1977 until 1989, PP since 1990. ²Congress delegates. ³Share of votes, not over total attendance

Source: authors compilation from the press

From its origins, the history of IU was associated to the leadership of Julio Anguita (Secretary General of the PCE, as well). Anguita was elected coordinator general and electoral candidate in the 1989 General Assembly (Table 5). The good performance of IU during the 1989 general election consolidated Anguita's leadership. But in 1991 he resigned because he felt that his authority had been undermined by the board of the party²⁷. From 1991 to the 1992 General Assembly, the party operated without a coordinator general. In the 1992 General Assembly, the disagreements on the conversion of the PCE into IU, and on the party line about the Maastricht EU Treaty divided the party in two factions: the *ortodoxos* (the *orthodox*, lead by Anguita) and the *renovadores* (the *renewers*). Anguita imposed his views on that General Assembly. However, the

²⁷ The problem was the degree of involvement of the PCE within IU (Ramiro, 2004: 125).

factionalist fights continued during the previous weeks of the 1997 party assembly. Finally, the discrepancies led to the split of the *renovadores*²⁸. The exit of this faction didn't put an end to the internal turmoil. The 1997 General Assembly was marked by the competition between three candidacies for the party leadership, though Anguita won clearly. Health problems and the poor performance in the 1999 election forced the withdrawal of Anguita as candidate some months before the 2000 general election.

The new electoral candidate of IU was Francisco Frutos, secretary general of the PCE. Despite a limited electoral alliance with the PSOE²⁹, the results in the 2000 general election were very bad, hampering Frutos' aspirations over party leadership. At the 2000 General Assembly, Frutos was defeated by Gaspar Llamazares, the first leader of IU not being at the same time the leader of the PCE. The division remained as well as the poor results in the 2004 general election³⁰. In 2007, a closed primary election was held to select the party candidate for the 2008 general election. Llamazares comfortably defeated the candidate of the PCE, although the turnout was very low, below 40% of the census (Table A1). The electoral decrease of IU in the 2008 general election left Llamazares in a bad position. Being the only representative of IU that gained a seat in parliament, Llamazares was forced to resign as coordinator general of IU. His succession took place in the stormy 2008 General Assembly where five candidates contested for the party leadership. Finally, Cayo Lara (from the PCE) was elected as the new coordinator general.

Table 5
Competitiveness in party congresses. IU 1977-2008

Year	Attendees ¹	Candidates	Leader change	Party Leader	Post	% votes ²	Type of leader
1989	Nd	1	-	J. Anguita	CG	Nd	Regional MP
1990	800*	1	No	J. Anguita	CG	84,7	MP
1992	Nd	2	No	J. Anguita	CG	60*	MP
1994	Nd	1	No	J. Anguita	CG	78,6	MP
1997	1300*	3	No	J. Anguita	CG	74,4	MP
2000	800*	3	Yes	G. Llamazares	CG	42,6	MP
2003	750*	3	No	G. Llamazares	CG	76	MP
2004	850*	3	No	G. Llamazares	CG	49,5	MP
2008	170	5	Yes	C. Lara	CG	55	Town councillor

*approximate data from media. Nd: No data. ¹Assembly delegates. ²The General Assembly elects the board of the party that, in turn, elects the coordinator general. The Share of votes are from the different candidacies in the General Assembly, not over total attendance

Source: compiled by authors from the press

²⁸ They formed the New Left Democratic Left Party, which was integrated at the end in the PSOE in October 2000.

²⁹ The PSOE and IU attempted to form an electoral coalition for the 2000 elections. However, the harsh conditions imposed by the PSOE prevented any coalitional pact. The final agreement was on some policy specifics and on some sort of mutual support in 27 Senate constituencies (Sánchez-Sierra, 2005).

³⁰ Llamazares won the 2004 General Assembly. However, he didn't achieve the 60% of the votes in the board of the party required for a third term re-election. Nevertheless, Llamazares remained as party leader because the alternative candidate finally decided not to contest the ballot results (Verge, 2008: 321).

The history of CDC has been deeply marked by the leadership of its main founder, Jordi Pujol (Table 6). He has always been the electoral leader, first in the 1977 and 1979 general election, and from 1980 to 2003 in the Catalan regional elections. Pujol was the president of the Generalitat of Catalonia (the Catalan regional government) between 1980 and 2003. In all party congresses Pujol recorded a support above 90 percent of the vote, and was never challenged by an alternative candidate. In the late 90s, he began to prepare his succession (known as *postpujolismo*) giving way within the party and the regional government to a new generation of leaders. Pujol's dauphin, Artur Mas, was elected in 2000 secretary general of CDC, and in the 2003 regional elections became CiU's electoral candidate. Despite the fact that Mas lost the regional government in 2003 and 2006 (mainly because of an alliance of all the leftist parties), it has remained as CDC's party leader.

Table 6
Competitiveness in party congresses. CDC 1977-2008

Year	Attendees ¹	Candidates	Leader change	Party Leader	Post	%votes ²	Type of leader
1977	580	1	No	J. Pujol	SG	- ³	Others
1978	Sd	1	No	J. Pujol	SG	sd	MP
1981	900*	1	No	J. Pujol	SG	93,9	Regional President
1985	442*	1	No	J. Pujol	SG	>90*	Regional President
1989	670*	1	No	J. Pujol	PT	99,7	Regional President
1992	887*	1	No	J. Pujol	PT	92,5	Regional President
1996	1721	1	No	J. Pujol	PT	94,4	Regional President
2000	1881	1	Yes	A. Mas	SG	85,2	Regional President
2004	1937	1	No	A. Mas	SG	96	Regional MP
2008	2028	1	No	A. Mas	PT	95,2	Regional MP

*approximate data from media. Sd: No data. ¹Party delegates. ²Share of votes, not over total attendance.

³Pujol was appointed without a ballot

Source: compiled by authors from the press

Unlike other parties, the first years of the PNV during the post-francoist regime were characterized by a high level of instability in the party leadership (Table 7). That led to a split during the mid 1980s. At the end of the francoist regime the PNV was a weak and old party. In an effort to renew the party leadership Carlos Garaicoetxea (a young politician) was elected in 1977 as the new president of EBB (the board of the party). For he failed to obtain a parliamentary seat in the 1977 general election, Garaicoetxea was not concerned by the incompatibility rule (as happened to other party regional leaders of the PNV) and was able to continue as party president (the leader of the organization) until 1980, when he became the new *Lehendakari* (president) of the Basque regional government. Xavier Arzalluz replaced Garaicoetxea as the leader of the organization, and remained in that post until May 1984. After serving four years, Arzalluz exceeded the time limit that had traditionally existed for the executive internal positions³¹. Arzalluz was substituted by Sudupe Román. However, few months later Sudupe lost his seat in the regional board of the party and had

³¹ In January 1984, Arzalluz had prompted a reform of the statutes in which annulled the limit of four years. But in a context of increasing internal confrontation, he preferred to leave the post to a candidate of his faction, rather than providing incentives favouring the candidate promoted by Garaicoetxea.

to leave his post in the national board of the party and thus, the party presidency. He was replaced in 1985 by Jesús Insausti, regional party leader³². During the Sudupe and Insausti period, an increasing confrontation grew up between the electoral leader and president of the government (Garaicoetxea) and the board of the party. This division spread geographically, threatening the integrity of the party. In this context, in February 1986 Arzalluz became again party president, fuelling the confrontation with Garaicoetxea, who finally left the party and created Eusko Alkartasuna.

In 1987, after the party split, the PNV reformed the party constitution and introduced important changes to the leadership selection process. On the one hand, the new party constitution created the figure of the General Assembly, which would function as a party congress every four years. On the other, the president of the EBB would be elected by the territorial representatives of the *Asamblea Nacional* (the National Committee) during the General Assembly. The president's mandate would last four years and its renewal would concur with the celebration of the General Assembly. Thus, the new system was representative, although the General Assembly delegates didn't participate in the election (except those of the *Asamblea Nacional*). Furthermore, the *Asamblea Nacional* would elect the rest of members of the EBB in a separate ballot. The new election procedure gave more stability to the central party elites and enhanced the figure of the president. That enabled Xavier Arzalluz to be re-elected as president for more than fifteen years. His replacement in 2004 was competitive, since two candidates ran for the party leadership. Finally, Josu Jon Imaz defeated the candidate supported by Arzalluz by a narrow difference. Imaz's presidency coincided with the presence in the Basque government of the *Lehendakari* Juan Jose Ibarretxe. This one had a more radical political line and was close to Arzalluz. During his term, Imaz highlighted his differences with Ibarretxe, which led to a new crisis just before the 2008 party congress. Eventually, the resignation of Imaz to be re-elected enabled a candidate of consensus between the two factions. Iñigo Urkullu became then new president of the PNV.

Table 7
Participation and competitiveness in party congresses. PNV 1977-2008

Year	Attendees ¹	Candidates	Leader change	Party Leader	Post	% votes ²	Type of leader
1977	12	1	Yes	C. Garaicoetxea	PT	100*	Party leader
1980	12	1	Yes	X. Arzalluz	PT	100*	Party leader
1984	12	1	Yes	R. Sudupe	PT	91,7	Party leader
1985	12	1	Yes	J. Insausti	PT	100*	Party leader
1986	12	1	Yes	X. Arzalluz	PT	100*	Party leader
1987	12	1	Yes	X. Arzalluz	PT	100*	Party leader
1988	75	1	No	X. Arzalluz	PT	100	Party leader
1992	75	1	No	X. Arzalluz	PT	100*	Party leader
1995	75	1	No	X. Arzalluz	PT	100*	Party leader
2000	75	1	No	X. Arzalluz	PT	100*	Party leader
2004	71	2	Yes	J.J. Imaz	PT	57'7	Party leader
2008	75	1	Yes	I. Urkullu	PT	100	Party leader

³² Insausti became president of the Biscaya regional board of the party because the expected candidate, Michel Unzueta could not speak *euskera*.

*Approximate data from media. Notes: 1. Attendees to the selectorate. 2. Between 1977 and 1987 the party president was elected by the board of the party. From 1988 on the party leader is elected by the members of the Asamblea Nacional elected by the territories. 3. Share of votes, not over total attendance.

Source: Compiled by authors from the press

Regarding to the competitiveness, the high continuity in the leadership has been the most dominant feature for the Spanish political parties. Overall, the competition has been quite exceptional and linked to the withdrawal of the incumbent leader (PSOE in 2000, PP in 1987, PNV in 2004, 2000, IU in 2008) or due to internal crisis (POSE in 1979, IU in 1992, 1997 or 2004). Any incumbent party leader has been defeated by an alternative leader through internal elections. The incumbency is a real advantage to any party leader. The best example of that are the high levels of vote share in party congresses, even when the party leader is challenged. IU is the only case where the competition between candidates is high, even being the most oligarchical of all Spanish parties. The high degree of competition at IU has been, indeed, a reflection of its internal factionalism and its electoral decline.

Conclusions

Overall, none of the four indicators chosen to analyze the evolution of the selection of party leaders tended towards greater opening in Spanish political parties. Firstly, it should be noted that although the certification process is not very restrictive, the trend has been to be progressively less open. The PNV is the party that has a tougher certification process because of the introduction of the Basque-speaking clause to be party president. On the other hand, the electoral procedures have been more stable. There are slight differences between parties because some of them have separated the election of the leader from the election of the rest of the board of the party. Other parties only have one ballot for the whole board of the party with closed lists. In contrast, all the Spanish parties (with the important exception of the PSOE between 1979 and 1994) have stated individual votes for their party congress delegates. Third, there have been no major changes in the inclusiveness of the selectorate. Most parties have maintained throughout this period the party congress as the core selectorate for party leaders. The exception to this trend are IU and, until 1988, the PNV. Fourth, though the number of delegates attending the party congresses has grown slightly since the late seventies, these figures have not increased in the same proportion as the membership. This has taken all parties to declining rates of representativeness in the leadership selection. Finally, another common feature of the Spanish political parties is the relatively low level of competitiveness in the leadership selection process. However this must be amended according to each party. CDC is the only case in which there have never been two candidacies contesting for the party leadership. On the other hand, IU has had constant contests between two or more candidates. Taken as a whole, the Spanish political parties analyzed in this study did not seem to have been inspired by the new wave of party democracy that seems to be spreading in other countries.

This work also was meant to establish, tentatively, some considerations about the relationship between the leadership selection rules and the competitiveness. In general terms, it has to be remarked the weak relation between them. The formal opening of the certification criteria has not been accompanied, in the Spanish case, with greater competitiveness. Instead, the low competitiveness can be linked, to some extent, to the inclusiveness of the electorate, especially of the choice of leader by Congress. That procedure seems to discourage the competition. Unsurprisingly, the vote share obtained by all incumbent party leaders in their party congresses has always been exceptionally high (with the exception of some internal crisis). However, the decline of the representativeness of the party congresses has had the opposite effect of reducing the effective participation of the party membership in the leadership selection process.

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