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Terror and elections: Lessons from Spain

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Abstract

The present paper explores the ways a terrorist event can influence electoral outcomes by examining the Madrid bombing terrorist attack immediately before Spain's 2004 national elections. Uncharacteristically, rather than ''rally'' public support towards the incumbent leadership this terrorist incident contributed to the electoral upset. Based on individual level survey data, the analyses suggest the terrorist attack mobilized citizens who are traditionally less likely to participate in politics as well as center and leftist voters, and encouraged some of these voters to switch to the opposition. Quite critically, the incumbent government's unpopular foreign policies and handling of the attacks had substantial and independent effects on their party's defeat. Overall, this study highlights the key roles of timing of attacks and priming of issues when understanding the effects of terrorism on elections.

Keywords: Terrorism; Elections; Spain; Rally effect; Voting; Turnout

The Spanish elections of 2004 were marked by two extraordinary yet possibly related events: a large-scale terrorist attack shortly before the election and an unexpected electoral upset for the incumbent party. On March 11th 2004, only 3 days before the national elections to the Spanish parliament were to take place, Spain endured a large-scale terrorist attack at the hands of Islamic militants, as later established. In the early morning, during the commuter rush, several bombs exploded at three railway stations in Madrid resulting in almost 200 casualties and close to 2000 injured. Days later, the ruling Popular Party (PP), led by José-Maria Aznar, lost in a surprising upset to the main opposition Socialist Party (PSOE), led by José-Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, who then became the new Prime Minister. Thereafter, pundits and academics alike were left to determine whether the terrorist event had actually derailed in a matter of days what some polls suggested was up to a 4% points advantage for the incumbent government's party.

Terrorist attacks have clearly become a major concern for both governments and citizenries across the world. Though terrorism, in particular in its domestic variant, has been a common affliction throughout the last century (Hoffman, 1998; Wilkinson, 2000), some of the recent notorious terrorist events have been transnational large-scale operations involving citizens or organizations from other countries. As scholars and experts have noted, the motivations, as well as the tactics, for terrorism have been changing. The nationalist, separatist and Marxist groups of the 1960s and 1980s gave way in the 1990s to religious fundamentalist movements which have engaged in less frequent terrorist acts though acts with higher visibility and greater

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casualties (Enders and Sandier, 2000; Hoffman, 1998; White, 2005). By now, scholars have extensively studied the historical and institutional conditions that give raise to terrorism, and, more recently, have focused on the strategic relations between terrorists and governmental actors (Kydd and Walter, 2002; Bueno de Mesquita, 2005; Pape, 2003). However, studies on the political ramifications of terrorist acts on electoral outcomes are still much needed.

This paper aims to investigate the link between a large-scale international terrorist attack, the Madrid bombings of March 2004, and electoral outcomes. Unlike other terrorist attacks, where the main political repercussions of the incident develop across a period of time, with the Madrid bombings some of its key political and policy consequences were felt immediately, at the ballot box. Unlike other dramatic terrorist events that generated large rallies of support for the incumbent leadership, for example, in the American context after the 9/11 attacks in 2001, the Madrid attack is linked to an unexpected electoral upset for the ruling party.

Using survey data, before and after the elections, I analyze the impact of the Madrid attacks on Spanish citizens' participation and vote choice. In general, I seek to understand how exogenous shocks like terrorism might influence the outcomes of an election. To do so, I examine *how* the attack influenced turnout and vote choice, *who* was differentially influenced by the attack, and ultimately, *why* the attack had such an impact on those influenced. The findings suggest that the attacks altered both Spaniards' turnout and vote decisions. The event mobilized those who are traditionally less likely to vote, such as the young and the less educated, as well as centrist and leftist voters. The attacks also spurred some of these types of voters to switch their party vote. Spaniards' dissatisfaction with the government's foreign policy of support of the war on Iraq and the government's handling of the Madrid attack seem to have been decisive to the upset. Overall, the analyses imply that the timing of a terrorist event and the priming of policies related to it can play a key role in shaping approaching elections. In the Spanish case, the timing of the event focused attention on the current situation while priming those issues, foreign policy and government transparency, on which the incumbent government happened to be susceptible.

That the March 11th Madrid bombings may have caused a government to fall quickly became a possible model from which other countries sought to draw lessons. For example, much discussion was made in the press preceding the 2004 American and Australian elections and the 2005 British elections with fears of similarly influential terrorist attacks. Given that well-timed dramatic terrorist attacks can expose some of the vulnerabilities of the democratic process, it is important to understand how they might mobilize the electorate and shape an election.

1. Theoretical considerations on elections and terror

There is a dearth of theoretical studies expressly focusing on terrorism and elections, therefore to answer the general research questions, how and why a terrorist attack may alter citizens' opinions and electoral behavior, we must build upon various related literatures. Specifically, previous work on terrorism and its strategies, international crises and rallies, and issue salience and electoral behavior can begin to guide our expectations.[1]

1.1. The strategies of terrorism

Many have argued that the patterns and timing of terrorists' activities are not arbitrary but actually respond to strategic goals and political conditions (Berrebi and Klor, 2004; Kydd and Walter, 2002; Bueno de Mesquita, 2005; Pape, 2003). For example, when focusing on the Israeli–Palestinian struggle, the frequent increase in terrorist activities after government concessions has been explained as the result of the more radical factions' goal of sabotaging the peace process (Kydd and Walter, 2002) or the more radical factions' condition of having been left in control after the moderates transacted (Bueno de Mesquita, 2005). According to Pape (2003, p. 346), in the case of suicide terrorism, extremists have sought, in most cases successfully, to inflict enough damage to "cause either the government to concede or the population to revolt against the government," and the timing of such attacks has often been careful and critical.

Do terrorist groups then also time their activities in relation to electoral politics? According to Berrebi and Klor's (2004) model, based as well on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, terrorist activity is expected to be higher when the left-wing party (more favorable to concessions) is in power than when the right-wing party (less favorable to concessions) governs, and the electorate will be more likely to support the right-wing party after periods of high levels of terrorism, but less likely to do so after calmer periods. At the crux of their argument, which

[1] Terrorism in this paper will be interpreted as in Norris et al. (2003, p.6) who define it as "the systematic use of coercive intimidation against civilians for political goals," in line with the U.S. State Department's definition.

ultimately predicts a cyclicity of terror and alternating parties in the Israeli government, are the scare tactics of the more moderate factions, who once they have established a more credible reputation with the government, at suitable times, accommodate terror from the more radical factions so as to convincingly threaten the electorate.

So, based on the existing research on terrorist strategies, we would expect terrorists to selectively ratchet up their violent acts such as to garner the most concessions, including a more favorable party government renewal. Within this framework, the Madrid bombing and its effects could be explained if Spanish citizens expected high levels of terrorism would ensue after the bombings and thought concessions, such as bringing back Spanish troops from the war in Iraq, would curtail further attacks. However, most of the conclusions derived from the literature on strategic terrorism are illuminated by the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, and in general, are better suited to explain on-going interactions between a government and a domestic terrorist organization, but not a single transnational terrorist event.

1.2. International crises and rallies

Another way in which we can guide our expectations regarding the impact of terror on elections in general, and for the Madrid case in particular, is by referring to the ''rally-'round-the flag'' literature. Public opinion and foreign policy scholars have extensively examined the rally phenomenon, or when leaders experience a sudden short-lived spike in approval after an unexpected, dramatic international crisis, including transnational terrorist acts. Earlier on, Mueller (1973, p. 209) seminally elaborated on the conventional wisdom of a rallying effect, arguing that a president would experience a spike in approval following an international crisis that was ''specific, dramatic and sharply focused,'' regardless of how the event was managed, since citizens would experience a heightened sense of patriotism when their country was threatened. Others have subsequently built upon some of the original claims. In competing though not mutually exclusive explanations, rallies have been argued to stem from causes related to increased levels of patriotism, elite criticism, and media coverage (Baker and Oneal, 2001; Baum, 2002; Brody and Shapiro, 1989; Brody, 1991; Edwards and Swenson, 1997; Hetherington and Nelson, 2003) and decreased levels of credibility in the informational context and actions stemming from the government (Colaresi, 2005).

Based on the rally literature, why did a rally not happen after the Madrid bombings? That a rally did not occur may have been the result of any of the various sufficient conditions implied by this literature not holding. That is, after the event there may have been low levels of patriotism, high levels of elite opposition criticism, high levels of media dissemination of anti-government information or opinions, or low levels of credible government information and actions. In spite of previous Spanish tendencies towards low levels of political participation and attachments (McDonough et al., 1998), given the number and size of spontaneous popular demonstrations against domestic terrorism, in general, and, after the Madrid attacks, in particular, it is unlikely that Spain experienced low levels of patriotism after the bombings (Funes, 1998; Cué, 2004). The answer then may still rest within the interplay of the critical media, the opposition, and the credibility of the available information, the remaining explanations from the rally literature.

However, as with the literature on strategic terrorism, the rally literature also may not provide the entire picture. I argue next that when examining dramatic international events around election times the theoretical framework for rallies needs to be adapted to take into consideration the specific incentives triggered during elections.

1.3. Priming of terror and government performance during elections

Around election time, given the stakes involved, the media escalates and intensifies its focus on political and governmental actions. When a ''rally-worthy'' dramatic international event occurs in the context of an election the media has now more incentives to spotlight the crisis because of the political race and since the political elites will make it newsworthy. If the event resonates favorably for the government, the leadership will find it advantageous to emphasize it. In contrast, if the event reflects poorly on the government, the opposition will find it advantageous to expose the crisis, partly to preempt any short-lived and costly rally. In general, I argue that with the proximity of an election the media will inevitably stress the existing policies involving the event and push to the forefront the government's performance on them.

What distinguishes this interpretation from those previously put forth in the rally literature is the added emphasis on priming of the event's related policies and the new relevance given to government performance because of the election. So far, most accounts of variations in rally effects have not hinged on the perceived performance of the government on that issue precisely because at the core of what is being argued is the existence of un-critical swells of support. I claim that because of the closeness to an election, assessment

and discussion of government performance becomes unavoidable, directly influencing approval rates.

There is much research that gives support to the notion of the media's power to prime collective perceptions by making certain issues more salient to citizens (Edwards et al., 1995; Iyenegar, 1991; Krosnick and Brannon, 1993; Zaller, 1992). There is also much research devoted to the media's "framing" of an issue, by providing a guiding interpretative framework for media consumers to understand the narrative of events, including the promotion of specific interpretations (Entman, 1991; Goffman, 1974; Iyenegar, 1991; Norris et al., 2003). For example, in the context of public opinion and terror, Davis and Silver (2004) find that citizens' perceptions of a terrorist threat after 9/11 significantly and independently affected their level of presidential approval, though the direction of the effect seemed to vary with the current explanatory "frame," positive or negative, on the president's performance.

1.4. Issue salience and electoral behavior

Finally, to fully understand the effects of terrorism on elections we must address *who* a terrorist attack may influence, in addition to *how* and *why* these influences occur. The literatures on turnout and voting behavior can provide some insights. A terrorist attack, through the gained saliency of the issues surrounding the attack, can alter turnout by mobilizing or demobilizing the participation of selected groups, and can affect vote choices by turning voters to an alternative choice or reaffirming voters who are undecided. In either case, we might expect the "threshold" citizen to be more likely to be influenced by these external events (Baum, 2002; Zaller, 1992).

From a specification of turnout that allows for both sociological influences as well as cost–benefit policy assessments (Downs, 1957; Riker and Ordeshook, 1968; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980), one set of mobilizable citizens after a terrorist attack are those on the margin between participation and abstention. In the case of the Madrid bombings marginal citizens may have comprised centrist voters, that is, those more likely to have had any minor policy reevaluations affect their chances of voting. Marginal voters may also have included the young, the less educated, and those on the left who in many contexts are already more likely to be marginal participants and to abstain (Anduiza, 2005; Font and Rico, 2003; Pacek and Radcliff, 2003). Another set of mobilizable citizens after a terrorist attack are those who now experience a heightened benefit from the act of voting itself. The empirical evidence on Spanish turnout has suggested higher participation rates when in times of more generalized discontent (Boix and Riba, 2000; Font and Rico, 2003). On the other hand, a terrorist attack can dampen voting, or demobilize, if the costs of voting increase. For example, those living in Madrid or in urban areas may have been more concerned with further attacks during election day.

For voting, as with turnout, we can appeal to a stylized model that incorporates both sociological attachments as well as rational choice policy evaluations (Campbell et al., 1966; Downs, 1957). If, as many scholars have argued, peace and prosperity are the "bottom line" deliverables by an incumbent, then a large-scale terrorist attack under an incumbent's watch would further expose to scrutiny the current and past foreign policies of the leadership (Key, 1966; Fiorina et al., 2003). In addition, the terrorist attack may also change the relative importance of any given policy dimension. According to the voting literature then citizens will reevaluate their assessments of candidates after a dramatic external event close to an election, and as just argued, the media will prod along this process. As a result, who will be the constituents of change? As Baum (2002) has found in the context of presidential approval and external crises, it is more likely that those individuals who are ambivalent, on the verge between approval and disapproval for the leader, who are more likely to change their support as a result of external conditions. Furthermore, as suggested by Zaller's (1992) arguments on public opinion formation, we can expect that those moderately politically aware may be more susceptible to change their political opinions. Finally, based on research on public opinion and terror, Huddy et al. (2003) find that in the United States those more likely to have experienced fear and anxiety in relation to 9/11 and have this fear arouse their disapproval for the leadership, were more likely to be women, less educated, younger, with higher rates of TV watching, and in closer physical proximity to the attacks. Overall then, many of those who reevaluate their vote decisions after a terrorist attack may include the more marginal participants in politics.

1.5. Hypotheses

In sum, taking together the various streams of literatures and the adaptations suggested, I present the following hypotheses regarding the effects of terrorist acts on elections. In the context of an on-going campaign of terror: (*H1*) a terrorist act will induce a renewal in power towards the concessionary party if there is an expectation that terrorism can be arraigned by the moderates and towards the intransigent

party if terrorism is expected to stem from the radical factions. In the context of a single terrorist event, and in addition to the expectations from the rally literature: (*H2*) the closer a (transnational) terrorist attack is to an election, the more the media will prime and render salient the relevant (foreign) policy dimension; (*H3*) as the saliency of this policy increases, the performance of the government on this issue becomes more important to citizens' evaluation of the political candidates; and (*H4*) a terrorist attack will have its strongest impact on those on the margin in terms of political participation and approval.

Though focusing on a single terrorist incident like the Madrid bombings, the Spanish case study can still provide many insights regarding the soundness of the conjectures, in particular those related to ''one-shot'' transnational terrorist events and their effects on elections. In the following sections I examine closely the impact of the Madrid bombings on Spanish citizens' 2004 electoral behavior, which should be specifically relevant to the voter behavior conjectures.

2. The Spanish context

The Spanish elections of March 14th 2004 were scheduled legislative elections in this constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system. Five years after the return of democracy and from 1982 to 1996, the Socialist Party (PSOE) led the government with Felipe Gonzalez in the presidency. Between 1996 and up to 2004, the Popular Party (PP), Spain's national conservative party, led the government with José Aznar in the presidency. The third national party, the United Left (IU), a coalition of leftist groups, has had more limited representation. Apart from these three national parties Spain has myriads of local and small parties, in part, a reflection of the many nationalist and separatist tendencies across the regions (Heller, 2002; Lancaster and Lewis-Beck, 1989; Pallarés and Keating, 2003). For example, the 2004 election saw over 100 parties vying for seats in the Congress, though only 11 parties obtained representation.

In spite of the abundance of regional parties, the PP and the PSOE parties, the national conservatives and socialists, have de facto dominated Spain's national political scene, including the 2004 electoral campaigns which provided few surprises. The center-right PP party ran a campaign emphasizing mainly its record in government: a market-oriented economic program, a strong national stance against territorial and constitutional reorganizations and concessions, and a much stepped-up campaign against domestic terrorism, themes that had evolved under Aznar's two terms in power (Colomer, 2005; Torcal and Rico, 2004; Van Biezen, 2005). Against these national and patriotic themes invoked by the incumbent PP party, the socialists were left to conduct a much more defensive campaign, since the conservatives were quick to insinuate any party links from the PSOE to territorial or separatist sentiments, which focused in a less coordinated fashion on issues such as welfare, housing, political transparency, and the PPs' unpopular support for the war in Iraq (Colomer, 2005; Torcal and Rico, 2004).

Fighting domestic terrorism was at the top of the 2004 electoral agenda for the PP party, though it was not a novel issue. The government of Aznar, like those of his predecessors, had had to tackle the long-lasting problem of regional and separatist terrorism. Specifically, the Basque organization Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (*Basque Country and Liberty*) or ETA has had a long and deadly trajectory of seeking Basque independence from the rest of Spain through violent means, though with increasingly diminishing support (Funes, 1998). Since its foundation in 1959, over 800 deaths have been attributed to ETA.[2] To this domestic violence Aznar's government took a strong counterterrorist stance, pursuing policies that included collaboration with French authorities, the outlawing of ETA's political branch, and the support of President Bush's war on terror.

The electoral expectations in 2004, and in the last days up to the election, were favorable for the PP party, though not with such large margins as in the 2000 election. When we consider all published national pre-electoral Spanish polls from the months of February and March – 17 polls – the PP averaged a support of 42.7% across these polls while the PSOE averaged 36.9%, with an average margin of advantage for the PP of 5.8%.[3] As the elections approached, the PP's advantage got smaller, possibly a reflection of a gradual undercurrent for discontent (Torcal and Rico, 2004), but did not vanish, averaging 4.7% if we consider only the polls conducted in March. Although Spanish polls may have less forecasting success compared to American polls (Michavila, 2005), and some of the PP/PSOE differences fell within the margins of errors of the polls, none of the pre-attack polls predicted a victory for the PSOE.

The early morning explosions in three of Madrid's commuter train stations on March 11th, 3 days before the elections, generated an upheaval in the media, the

[2] For information on terrorism in Spain, see Spain's Civil Guard's website at http://www.guardiacivil.org/terrorismo.

[3] For a list of pre-electoral poll results see Valencia's Autonomous website, www.pre.gva.es/argos/demoscopia.

political leadership, and the citizenship. All mass media dedicated its March 11th programming almost entirely to the follow-up of the event, and the three national newspapers, *ABC*, *EL PAIS*, and *El Mundo* came out with extra editions (Comisión de Investigación del 11 de Marzo, 2005). This intense coverage continued for the next days, even almost into election day, though the day before the election is intended by law as a non-campaign "day of reflection." The coverage focused at first on the event itself, the victims and the tragedy, though soon enough the implications of the attack and the issues surrounding its authorship also became prevalent (Comisión de Investigación del 11 de Marzo, 2005; Cué, 2004; Olmeda, 2005). The media, then, because of the scale of the attack and its timing in relation to the elections pushed to the forefront and primed matters related to terrorism.

The government experienced high media visibility during those 4 days, in particular in television, due to the numerous interviews and updates it provided (Comisión de Investigación del 11 de Marzo, 2005). The flurry of attention on the government stemmed in part from the desire for information but also due to the conflictive information circulating in terms of the authorship of the attacks. Immediately after the bombings the government seemed to have concluded that ETA was behind the attack, which given the PP's agenda would have been more opportune, keeping to this position even when more information and evidence soon emerged suggesting a link to Islamic militants. For example, on March 13th, 2 days after the attack, Prime Minister Aznar and his Secretary of Interior, Angel Acebes, stated to the press that the first line of investigation on the attacks was still focusing on ETA, even though an ETA communiqué had denied their involvement. To this denial, Acebes countered: "We do not believe this" (*EL PAIS*, March 13th 2004). Later that evening, on the eve of the election, the minister acknowledged that several Islamic suspects were taken in for questioning. Given the circumstances, the media and its own actions, the incumbent PP government brought much attention upon itself and its performance.[4]

The Madrid attacks had a dramatic mobilizing effect on the Spanish citizenship. On March 12th, unprecedented popular demonstrations took place across the country with close to 11 million people taking to the streets to protest against terror and to express their outrage with the attacks (Cué, 2004; Van Biezen, 2005). Flash demonstrations continued through election day, with the later protests taking a more anti-governmental turn. Although Spanish citizens had been exposed to a long history of sub-national terrorism, the Madrid attacks struck a chord, and their concerns with terrorism rose dramatically. When asked in surveys before the 2004 elections which are the three most important problems that Spain faces today, over 40% of respondents placed terrorism as one of Spain's largest problems though over 60% considered unemployment to be among the top issues (CIS, 2004). However, after the Madrid attacks and during March 2004, close to 80% of the population considered terror to be among the top problems in the country (CIS, 2004). Quite dramatically, several months after the attacks and the electoral upset, these levels of concerns began to approach pre-attack levels, suggesting that the attacks had strikingly but only temporarily intensified citizens' concerns and focus on terror.

The results for the 2004 election revealed an unexpected turnaround in the margins between the main two parties, and the socialist PSOE led by José Zapatero won with 42.6% of the votes, or 11,026,163 votes, against the PP's 37.7% of the votes, or 9,763,144 votes. The immediate popular explanations for the electoral defeat of the Popular Party focused on three factors: discontent with the government's foreign policy in Iraq, dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the early stages of the investigation, and a larger than expected turnout that gave vent to these discontents. One galvanizing element seems to have been Prime Minister Aznar's position on Iraq. From the beginning, and in synch with his domestic anti-terrorist campaign, Aznar had fully supported the United States and President Bush in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, solidifying this alliance with the presence of over 1400 Spanish troops. In contrast, Spanish popular sentiment was opposed to the sending of troops to Iraq, by 66%, and to the military intervention in general, by 92% (OPINA, 2003, 2004). The other focal point of popular discontent may have been the government's handling of information on the attacks. Governmental transparency in general had already been an issue with the PP government, brought to the forefront with the sinking of the *Prestige* oil tanker in 2002 when the government initially tried to minimize the degree of the environmental disaster (Torcal and Rico, 2004).

The Madrid bombing attacks and the subsequent electoral upset triggered a large number of journalistic accounts and books, though detailed and careful

[4] The Islamic fundamentalist interpretation was not unfounded since after the start of the war in Iraq, Osama Bin Laden had suggested in an audio-tape aired by Al-Jazeera (October 18th, 2003) that there would be further retaliations for those nations that participated in the war coalition, as Spain did. The Madrid bombings have been ascribed to Islamic extremist groups linked to the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group Abu Hafs al-Masri, with over 29 detainees as of January 2007.

analyses of the results have been scarcer and from a substantive point of view, there are still varying conclusions regarding how decisive the attack was on the subsequent electoral outcomes (Colomer, 2005; Lago Peñas and Montero, 2005; Michavila, 2005; Torcal and Rico, 2004; Van Biezen, 2005). Unlike previous studies, in the analyses that follow I examine the impact of the attack using individual level data, from two different polls, and with the goal of understanding more generally who, and, how and why, terrorist acts can influence around election times.

3. Data and methodology

To assess the impact of the Madrid bombing attacks on the 2004 Spanish electoral outcomes I examine three aspects of the voting process: the decision to turnout to vote, the vote choice decision, and whether the attack influenced a citizen. The decision to turnout to vote and the event of being influenced by the attack were estimated with a binary logit specification, and the vote choice decision was estimated with a multinomial logit (MNL) specification.[5]

The vote choice options faced by Spanish citizens are quite numerous, as mentioned before, from national parties to the various regional and local parties. Properly accounting for all the minor parties in a vote model is not possible since minor parties vary in their ideologies, pre-empting aggregation, while most of them are only present in certain regions. Therefore, I have focused the vote choice decision among the three national parties: Partido Popular (PP), Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE), and Izquierda Unida (IU). These three parties have captured at least 316 of the 350 seats in the Congress in the last four elections and over 90% of the seats in the 2004 election.

The empirical analyses presented below focus on survey data from two complementary Spanish sources: post-electoral surveys from the Center of Sociological Investigations (CIS), one of the largest repositories of polls in Spain, and post-electoral surveys from the OPINA Institute, a private pollster that runs polls for clients such as the newspaper *EL PAIS*. The CIS survey, with a sample size of 5377 respondents, includes questions that address in which way the attack influenced voters' election time behavior while the OPINA survey, with a sample size of 1000 respondents, includes questions related to why voters were influenced. (A statistical summary of the variables is available from the author.) I will also refer to pre-electoral surveys from these polling institutions but mainly for descriptive and comparison purposes.

To explain turnout and vote decisions, a key explanatory factor will be a discrete binary measure (1–0) indicating whether a respondent was by their own account influenced by the Madrid bombings (*M11 Influenced*), which both the CIS and OPINA surveys include.[6] The CIS survey includes further refinements of this measure that specifically capture how the attacks influenced the vote decisions of citizens. We can flag those whom the attack instigated to turnout when they would not have voted otherwise (*M11 Instigated to Vote*); those whom the attack instigated to switch party votes (*M11 Instigated to Switch*); those whom the attack reaffirmed their decision to vote for a given party (*M11 Reaffirmed Vote*); and those on whom the attack had "other effects." I will also examine these more detailed influence variables as dependent variables so as to understand which dimensions from respondents' backgrounds and inclinations correlate with an increased likelihood of having been affected by the attacks. Quite importantly for this study, the OPINA survey includes as well indicator measures (1–0) of whether the PP's policy regarding Iraq influenced a respondent's vote and whether a respondent believes Prime Minister Aznar mishandled the aftermath of the bombings.[7]

In addition to the measures of influence of the attack on voters, the turnout and voter choice models include measures of political orientation as well as many standard demographic controls. In terms of political inclinations, the models account for respondents' ideological identifications, evaluations of the PP and PSOE parties and political leaders (OPINA) and assessments of the PP and PSOE's electoral campaigns and their political leaders' campaigns (CIS). More specifically, ideology includes four indicator variables: Left, Right, Center (the base category), and No Ideology for those respondents who failed to place themselves on the ideological scales. The OPINA survey provides respondents' evaluations of parties and political candidates (Mariano

[5] For the survey that allowed for an alternative-specific variable (ideological distance) a multinomial probit (MNP) vote choice specification was also considered, providing comparable results to the MNL, while there was no statistical evidence supporting the need for a MNP specification.

[6] The CIS survey asked: "Would you say the attack of M11 influenced you personally a lot, some, a little, or not at all in your vote decision?" OPINA asked: "Did the terrorist attack of March 11th in Madrid influence your vote?"

[7] The OPINA survey asked: "Did the PP government's policy of support of the military intervention in Iraq influence your vote?" and "Do you believe Aznar's government manipulated and/or hid information regarding the Madrid attack?"

Rajoy and José-Luis Zapatero) on a 10-point scale.[8] The CIS survey provides respondents' evaluations of the parties' electoral campaigns and the candidates' campaigns on a five-point scale.

With regards to socio-demographic factors, all models include age, gender, education, level of employment, and student status. The CIS-based models incorporate as well an indicator for being Catholic and measures, on a five categories ordered scale, of religiosity, social class and interest in the electoral campaigns. The OPINA-based models include a measure of personal economic circumstances. Moreover all specifications include binary indicators controlling for residence in Madrid, Andalusia, Basque country, Catalonia, and Galicia. Madrid is flagged given the location of the attacks; Andalusia is controlled for since local legislative elections were also taking place at the time; Basque, Catalonia and Galicia regions are accounted for given the strong regional identities of these communities.

As is the case in most surveys, item non-response is present in the data. In particular, the items on political evaluations have considerable non-response. To avoid losing many of these respondents, who may have been precisely those who surged due to the attacks, binary indicators are included as well flagging whether these political attachments items were answered, and when not answered the items are set to zero. The results presented in the following analyses then are from data obtained after list-wise deletion of cases with missing data among non-political independent variables. However, to address concerns with missingness in general all the models were also estimated with complete imputed data sets (King et al., 2001) and, quite importantly, the results did not differ from those obtained with the present design.

Finally, as is also common in political surveys, there is over-reporting for the winner in one of the surveys that could bias the inferences made regarding explanatory factors (Bernstein et al., 2001; Karp and Brockington, 2005; Silver et al., 1985). The actual ratio of PSOE votes to PP votes in the 2004 Spanish elections was 1.13; these parties' ratios in the CIS and OPINA samples are 1.65 and 1.15, respectively. Although the CIS survey suffers from over-reporting, maybe due to satisficing since the interviews were in person, it is lower than those from other post-electoral surveys (Lago Peñas and Montero, 2005). The OPINA (telephone) survey, on the other hand, is right on target, evincing little if any over-reporting. In the paper I draw inferences from both the CIS and OPINA surveys.

[8] While José-Maria Aznar was the current president and leader of the PP, Mariano Rajoy was the PP's candidate for the new term.

4. Results

To begin the analyses I examine selected frequencies of turnout and vote choice from the actual election returns and from the CIS and OPINA surveys. These are shown in Table 1. The first set of rows shows actual returns as well as pre-electoral expectations. The following set of rows presents CIS post-electoral frequencies, including counterfactual ones, that is, assuming the attacks had no influences. The last set of rows presents OPINA post-electoral frequencies.

Both the CIS and OPINA pre-electoral surveys had in early March quite similar forecasts that predicted a PP victory with at least a 4% lead over the PSOE. In comparison to these surveys, the March 14th electoral upset resulted in an almost exact turnaround from the pre-electoral margins, with the POSE winning by a 5% margin over the PP, and the IU losing some of its expected representation. The turnout of the eligible population around 76% was a rise from the 2000 level of 69%, but not an historic high since turnout in 1996 and 1993 were comparable, at 77% and 76%, respectively. As mentioned earlier, the CIS survey displays over-reporting for the winner, but the OPINA vote frequencies are very close to the mark.

Based on the respondents' self-reports the Madrid bombings influenced the vote decisions of many of citizens, around 28% of the CIS and OPINA respondents, referred to as "*M11 Influenced*" in Table 1. In both post-electoral surveys, those who reported to have been influenced by the bombings had substantially higher rates of support for the PSOE than the full samples. For example, in the OPINA overall sample roughly 44% voted for the PSOE but among those influenced by the attack 54% did so. In the CIS sample, those who were instigated to vote by the attacks (6.2%) and those who switched votes because of the attacks (3.8%) had higher rates of support for the PSOE *and* higher turnout rates than the overall sample.

Moreover, respondents who were ideologically on the left, had as to be expected higher rates of support for the PSOE than the overall sample, but also higher rates of turnout, by 3–4% points. Was this over-representation of those in the left unexpected? As a comparison, in the 2000 election the reported turnout among those on the left in CIS's post-electoral survey was 84% and statistically indistinguishable from the overall sample. Instead, in the CIS (2004) post-electoral survey, reported turnout among those on the left was 92.6%, higher than in 2000, but more importantly over 4% points higher than the turnout for the whole sample.

Table 1
Turnout and vote in the 2004 Spanish elections: actual, reported and counterfactuals

	Turnout (%)	PSOE (%)	PP (%)	IU (%)
Actual returns	75.6	**42.6**	**37.7**	**4.9**
CIS survey pre-electoral – full sample	71.4–87.1	36.7	42.1	6.4
OPINA survey pre-electoral – full sample	NA	38.0	42.0	6.3
CIS survey post-electoral				
Full sample	88.2	**51.1**	**31.0**	**5.3**
M11 influenced (28.9%)	91.4	65.6	19.4	4.7
M11 influenced to vote (6.2%)	95.5	63.7	15.5	4.4
M11 influenced to switch party vote (3.8%)	96.5	74.4	8.6	4.8
M11 no influence (71.5%)	86.9	44.8	36.1	5.6
Ideology Left	92.6	74.2	2.0	10.5
CIS counterfactual				
M11 influenced to vote did not vote	82.2	50.1	32.2	5.4
M11 influenced to switch did not switch	88.2	47.8	34.7	5.1
M11 influenced to vote did not vote and M11 influenced to switch did not switch	82.2	46.6	36.2	5.2
OPINA survey post-electoral				
Full sample	90.0	**43.6**	**37.9**	**5.0**
M11 influenced (28.4%)	NA	54.2	22.4	4.5
M11 no influence (71.6%)	NA	38.9	43.1	4.0
Ideology Left	92.9	73.9	2.0	0.6

Note: party vote shares do not add to 100% since remaining share is for other parties or blank votes. The sample sizes are $N = 24{,}109$ (pre-electoral) and $N = 5377$ (post-electoral) for the CIS surveys, and $N = 4000$ (pre-electoral) and $N = 1000$ (post-electoral) for the OPINA surveys. Each frequency in the table was obtained after excluding non-respondents from these original samples.

These preliminary breakdowns open the possibility that due to the attacks new voters in general were added to the pool who may have tipped the balance towards the PSOE, and similarly, voters who switched votes may also have contributed to the upset. To begin to evaluate this, we can conduct simple counterfactuals based on the self-reports of CIS respondents. For example, if we assume that those who stated to have been instigated to vote by the attacks did not vote, then turnout is reduced by around 6%, though the PP increases its share by only 1% point (third section in Table 1). If instead we assume that those who switched parties because of the attacks did not switch their vote, and supposing a worst case scenario for the PP, then the PP increases its share by over 3.5% points.[9] When we assume that both effects, instigated to turnout and switch parties, did not take place then turnout is reduced by 6% and the PP's margin is increased by around 5% points.

The CIS counterfactuals do not alter the identity of the winning party, most likely due to over-reporting for the winner, but given the magnitude of the changes they are very suggestive that the attacks played a critical role in the electoral outcomes. However, bivariate frequencies do not take into account other ideological and background factors that may also influence turnout and vote decisions. Besides, many respondents who claimed no influence by the attack may have actually been affected by it, and despite their reports, some of the respondents may have behaved differently had the attack not taken place. In the following sections I conduct regression analyses that can help address some of these concerns, as well as provide further opportunities to understand the consequences of the attacks.

4.1. Impact on turnout

Table 2 provides logit estimates, marginal effects, and counterfactuals when predicting turnout of CIS respondents. The turnout models include many of the standard demographic and background variables that we expect to matter for turnout, such as interest in the campaign, as well as the self-reported measures of influence by the attacks. The first model is a turnout specification with the dichotomous (1–0) indicator of whether a respondent was affected by the attacks (*M11 Influenced*), while the second model includes the four refinements by type

[9] A worst case scenario for the PP is one where every switcher who voted for a party other than the PP would have voted for the PP and switchers who voted for the PP would have voted for a smaller non-national party or in blank.

Table 2
Logit estimates of turnout in Spain 2004, CIS survey

Variable	(1) CIS turnout		(2) CIS turnout	
	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values
M11 factors				
M11 influenced (28.9%)	**0.57**	**0.00**		
M11 influenced to vote (6.2%)			**1.90**	**0.00**
M11 influenced to switch party (3.8%)			**1.70**	**0.00**
M11 influenced to reaffirm party (15.4%)			**1.59**	**0.00**
M11 had "other" influence (3.1%)			**−2.23**	**0.00**
Political				
Ideology Left	0.44	0.01	0.40	0.02
Ideology Right	−0.23	0.23	−0.20	0.29
No Ideology	−0.76	0.00	−0.82	0.00
PP campaign evaluation	0.07	0.37	0.04	0.64
PSOE campaign evaluation	0.10	0.21	0.07	0.44
Rajoy (PP) evaluation	0.08	0.44	0.11	0.33
Zapatero (PSOE) evaluation	0.20	0.04	0.18	0.10
Interest in campaign	0.65	0.00	0.68	0.00
Demographic				
Male	0.08	0.58	0.09	0.56
Age	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.00
Education	0.07	0.00	0.07	0.00
Unemployed	−0.16	0.50	−0.26	0.27
Student	0.27	0.20	0.28	0.17
Catholic	0.51	0.00	0.64	0.00
Religious intensity	0.05	0.25	0.04	0.40
Social class	0.08	0.43	0.10	0.33
Regional/location				
Madrid	0.38	0.11	0.46	0.05
Size of community	−0.07	0.03	−0.09	0.01
Constant	−1.88	0.00	−2.06	0.00
N		4909		4909
Correctly predicted		89.9%		90.6%
Test		F (27, 29) = 39.57		F (30, 26) = 33.14
Marginal effects (%)				
M11 influenced		3.80		(7.3, 7.0, 6.8, −38)
Average and counterfactuals (%)				
Average predicted turnout		88.5		88.5
Average if all M11 influence = 0		87.2		87.2
Average if all M11 influence = 0 and instigated to vote did not vote				80.2

Note: the marginal effects of M11 for model 2 are for each of the types of influence, in the order they appear. The coefficients in bold are from M11 related factors and are statistically significant at the 0.01 level or less.

of influence.[10] Marginal effects are changes in predicted probabilities when toggling one independent variable while holding all other variables at their median.

All of the indicators of having been influenced by the attacks have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of turnout (*p*-values less than 0.05), and in most cases the effects work to increase turnout. Those who were affected by the attacks in general, over 28% of the sample of analysis, increased their probability of turnout by 3.8% compared to those who were not influenced at all. More specifically, those who the attack instigated to turnout to vote increased their likelihood of voting by 7.3%; those who were instigated to switch

[10] For the OPINA survey, which is mainly a survey of voters, the question on M11 influence given how it is worded is only applicable to those who voted, so I do not include a turnout model for this survey.

parties were 7% more likely to turnout, while those who were reaffirmed in their vote intentions were 6.8% more likely to turnout. However, those who were influenced in some other way, not specified, were 38% less likely to vote. Most of the respondents who were influenced by the attack were more likely to turnout to vote, though not all.

The logistic analyses confirm the independent influence of the attacks on turnout suggested in the bivariate breakdowns. To obtain an estimated aggregate impact of the attacks on turnout we can examine counterfactual scenarios. First, we compute the average predicted turnout under the assumption that the attack had no influence, that is, with the measure(s) of influence of the attacks set to zero. The average predicted probability of turnout for the sample of estimation is 88.5%, but when we assume that there was no influence, the average drops to 87.2%. This is an extremely conservative estimate since we are ignoring the fact that some of the voters actually stated they would not have voted had the attack not taken place. If, we also assume that all of those who were instigated to vote by the attacks did not vote, now a very liberal estimate, the average drops as we would expect by over 6% points to render an average predicted turnout of 80.2%.

Note that the impact of the attacks will be missestimated if respondents did not acknowledge to, or were not aware of, having been influenced. In such a case, variables such as interest in the campaign or political evaluations may pick up some of the indirect effects of the attacks. A comparison of the effects of these variables in the pre- and post-electoral CIS surveys can provide an alternative perspective. Appendix A presents predicted turnout rates by selected groups of the CIS samples, before and after the 2004 election. When looking at the turnout rates of those who stated *no influence* by the attacks, the largest discrepancies with pre-electoral dispositions are found for those with low evaluations for the PP (more likely to turnout) and those ideologically on the right or with high evaluations for the PP (less likely to turnout). Even though the turnout rate for those who stated no influences from the attack (86.8%) is statistically indistinguishable from the pre-electoral sample's turnout predisposition (87.2%), it is likely that the attacks also had indirect effects on the turnout of certain groups, to the PSOE's advantage.

All in all, the evidence suggests that the Madrid bombings affected directly and indirectly the turnout decisions of many citizens with an overall net effect to increase turnout. As mentioned earlier, if we simply focus on those who reported to have been instigated to vote due to the attack and actually did so, over 6% of the full sample, then turnout in the CIS sample was increased by that amount. If we consider a multivariate analysis, having been influenced by the attack raised the probability of a respondent's turnout by close to 4% points, while the estimated aggregate impact of the attack on turnout for the sample can range from over 1% point, very conservatively, to the upper bound estimate of 8% points.

Before moving on to the predictions of vote choice, the other control variables merit a few observations. First of all, as with many models of turnout, in the Spanish samples younger and less educated voters were less likely to turnout as well as those without an ideological identification. Those of higher social class were more likely to turnout and similarly so those of a Catholic religious orientation. Quite importantly, residing in Madrid, where the attack took place had a positive impact on turnout suggesting physical proximity to the event spurred, rather than deterred, participation. None of the other regional controls was statistically significant with the exception of Galicia, for which turnout was lower.[11]

4.2. Impact on vote decisions

The Madrid bombings also influenced vote choices, in particular towards the PSOE. The first model in Table 3 presents results from a multinomial logit estimation of CIS respondents' vote choice among the PSOE, PP and IU. The second model presents logit results of OPINA respondents' vote choice between the PP and PSOE only, since the IU/PP component of the choice model cannot be estimated due to identification problems. Both models include the dichotomous (1–0) indicator of having been influenced by the attack (*M11 Influenced*). For the CIS model, a specification with the four refinements by type of influence was also estimated, but not shown for space considerations.

For either survey, those who say they were influenced by the attacks were more likely to support the PSOE as opposed to the PP, the baseline choice. The marginal effects of having been influenced by the attack on the probability of voting for the PSOE hover around 18% and 19% points for both surveys. Moreover, in the CIS vote choice model with the four refined measures of influence from the attacks (not shown), each of these measures has a positive influence on the PSOE vote, with the largest

[11] I also examined interactions between being influenced by the attacks and background characteristics and found interactive effects for rightist ideology (less likely to vote) and low interest in the campaign (more likely to vote).

Table 3
Multinomial logit estimates of vote in Spain 2004, CIS and OPINA surveys

Variable	(1) CIS vote				(2) OPINA vote	
	PSOE/PP		IU/PP		PSOE/PP	
	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values
M11 factors						
M11 influenced	**1.43**	**0.00**	**0.87**	**0.00**	**0.88**	**0.09**
Political						
Ideology Left	3.25	0.00	4.25	0.00	2.49	0.00
Ideology Right	−2.05	0.00	−35.60	0.00	−1.77	0.04
No Ideology	0.13	0.59	0.36	0.51	0.41	0.44
PP evaluation	−0.76	0.00	−0.81	0.00	−0.86	0.00
PSOE evaluation	0.79	0.00	0.20	0.18	0.96	0.00
Rajoy evaluation	−1.28	0.00	−1.45	0.00	−0.61	0.00
Zapatero evaluation	1.16	0.00	0.71	0.00	0.62	0.00
Demographics						
Male	−0.57	0.00	−0.51	0.02	0.21	0.65
Age	−0.02	0.00	−0.03	0.00	−0.20	0.40
Education	−0.13	0.00	−0.08	0.17	−0.22	0.20
Unemployed	−0.01	0.98	0.01	0.98	−0.01	0.99
Student	−0.48	0.10	−1.31	0.01	0.51	0.62
Catholic	−0.42	0.11	−1.17	0.00		
Religious intensity	−0.23	0.00	−0.43	0.01		
Social class	−0.03	0.78	−0.38	0.07		
Poor personal economic conditions					−0.02	0.98
Regional/location						
Madrid	−0.23	0.35	0.24	0.45	−0.70	0.36
Size of community	0.11	0.01	0.10	0.10	−0.14	0.34
Constant	1.76	0.00	1.19	0.12	1.24	0.44
N				3238		587
Correctly predicted				84.8%		95.2%
Test			$F(52, 4) = 4726.4$		LR χ^2 (24) = 647.5	
Marginal effects (%)	PSOE	PP	IU		PSOE	PP
M11 influenced	19.2	−18.5	−0.6		18.2	−18.2
Average and counterfactuals (%)						
Average predicted vote share	59.3	34.7	6.0		53.1	46.8
Average if M11 influence = 0	55.1	38.3	6.6		52.0	47.9
Average if M11 = 0 and no switches and no added voters	53.9	40.3	5.8			
Average with pre-electoral sample (M11 = 0)					44.9	55.1

Note: The coefficients in bold are from M11 related factors and are statistically significant at the 0.1 level or less.

marginal effect being for those who were instigated to switch, at 24.4%, followed next by those who were instigated to vote, at 21.4%. The attacks and their influence thus had a large independent effect on vote choice.

As with turnout, we can also estimate the aggregate impact of the attacks on vote choice through various counterfactuals. If we assume that there was no influence from the attacks (i.e., we set the indicator to zero) the average predicted vote share for the PP increases by over 3.5% points in the CIS survey and by 1% point in the OPINA survey, with a comparable decrease in the support for the PSOE. The IU share increases by close to half a percentage point (CIS). In addition, in the CIS survey we can also take into account the self-reports. That is, we can compute the average predicted vote share assuming no influence (i.e., set the indicator to zero) *and* that those instigated to switch did not switch *and* that those instigated to turnout did not do so, assuming as before a worst case scenario for the PP. In this instance the predicted share for the PP increases by around 5.5% points (see bottom of Table 3).

On the other hand, a counterfactual that only toggles the indicator of influence cannot ''rewind'' the effects from changes in the distribution of key political

assessments, such as evaluations of parties and leaders, which we may suspect were also affected by the attacks. For example, in the OPINA survey, the average performance rating, in a scale from 1 to 11, for the PSOE was before the election 5.9 but, after the election it increased to 6.7. Conversely, the average PP's evaluation decreased. An alternative counterfactual that also seeks to address these changes in the distribution of key independent variables is one that estimates predicted shares with the *post-electoral* estimates, with the indicators of influence set to zero, but on the *pre-electoral* sample.[12] In such a case, the predicted share for the PP in the OPINA model, for which this estimation can be carried out since the same set of questions are available in the pre- and post-survey designs, rises by over 8% points providing the PP with a clear lead (see bottom of Table 3).

Finally, we can also examine the vote dispositions of respondents before and after the elections to uncover further indirect effects from the attacks. As seen in Appendix A, while in the pre-electoral OPINA sample 51.3% supported the PP, post-electorally among those who stated no influence by the attack 53.1% did so, a small but statistically significant increase. For most groups examined the discrepancies are of the order of the overall increase (i.e., within 2%), with the exception of centrists, though this may be due to a smaller percentage of voters describing themselves as centrists after the elections. This suggests that indirect effects of the attacks on voting may have mainly taken place through changes in respondents' political evaluations.

In sum, the various analyses and the reports from the respondents reveal that the attacks had a considerable impact on vote decisions. Overall, for voters who were influenced by the event this increased their likelihood of voting for the PSOE by at least 18 percentile points. The negative impact of the attacks on the PP's vote share goes from the lower bound of 1% to the upper bound of 8%. For one of the surveys the assumption of no influences from the attacks in a counterfactual analysis using the pre-electoral sample renders the PP back in the lead.

The remaining explanatory factors work in general in the manner we would expect them. Those with higher evaluations for the PP or its candidate, Mariano Rajoy, were less likely to support the PSOE as opposed to the PP. Catholics were less likely to support the PSOE, and similarly so the elder. Education, had a statistically significant effect in the CIS model, with those more educated being more likely to support the PP, though not in the OPINA model. The Madrid indicator was not statistically significant in any of the models, while, not unexpectedly given regional politics, those from the Basque region were more likely to support the PSOE, and those from Galicia were less likely to do so.[13]

4.3. Reasons behind the impact

The two most commonly voiced explanations for the PP's electoral upset are Aznar's policies regarding Iraq and Aznar's government handling of the investigation after the attacks. Table 4 presents the vote choice models re-estimated taking now into consideration some of the political opinions of respondents surrounding these issues and the attacks.

The CIS and OPINA surveys include several questions that allow one to prod the rationale for respondents' vote choices. The CIS survey queried respondents' about the reasons behind their vote, providing them with a list of options including the statement "because of the M11 attacks and their consequences." Only 5.5% within the sample considered the attacks and their consequences as the reason for voting for their chosen party, the least frequently given reason. Over half of respondents voted for a party because it was the party they always voted for or since it was the party that best matched their views, while one-fourth of respondents voted for a given party because they thought it was the best in terms of its capacity to govern.

The OPINA survey included questions that better assess respondents' opinion in relation to the attacks. Specifically, the survey includes a discrete indicator of whether the PP's support for the military intervention in Iraq influenced respondents' vote, and a discrete indicator of whether they think Aznar's government acted properly after the Madrid attack. In the OPINA sample, 42% of the respondents' vote choice was influenced by the government's support for the Iraq intervention while 47% believed Aznar had mishandled the post-attack events by manipulating or hiding information.

From the CIS results we observe that if the reason reported for the vote choice was the attack and its consequences, this translated into a 23% increase in the likelihood of voting for the PSOE, while reporting

[12] Of course, the caveat now is that post-electoral coefficients, apart from the M11 indicator, may also have changed.

[13] I also considered interactions between being influenced by the attacks and background orientations and found interactive effects for age (less likely to support PSOE versus PP) and education (less likely to support IU versus PP).

Table 4
Multinomial logit estimates of vote in Spain 2004 with Opinions CIS and OPINA

Variable	(1) CIS vote				(2) OPINA vote	
	PSOE/PP		IU/PP		PSOE/PP	
	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values
M11 factors						
M11 influenced	**1.04**	**0.00**	**0.59**	**0.02**	−0.29	0.69
Opinions CIS						
M11 reason for vote	**1.87**	**0.00**	**1.14**	**0.06**		
Opinions OPINA						
PP's Iraq policy influenced vote					**2.91**	**0.00**
Aznar mishandled M11					**1.13**	**0.08**
Political						
Ideology Left	3.29	0.00	4.25	0.00	2.93	0.00
Ideology Right	−2.04	0.00	−30.59	0.00	−2.55	0.02
No Ideology	0.16	0.54	0.41	0.46	0.78	0.29
PP evaluation	−0.78	0.00	−0.81	0.00	−0.79	0.00
PSOE evaluation	0.82	0.00	0.21	0.16	0.89	0.00
Rajoy evaluation	−1.26	0.00	−1.43	0.00	−0.48	0.04
Zapatero evaluation	1.17	0.00	0.72	0.00	0.66	0.01
Demographics						
Male	−0.59	0.00	−0.52	0.02	0.18	0.78
Age	−0.01	0.01	−0.03	0.00	−0.22	0.49
Education	−0.12	0.00	−0.07	0.24	−0.21	0.33
Unemployed	0.00	0.99	0.04	0.91	0.95	0.41
Student	−0.39	0.19	−1.26	0.02	0.62	0.67
Catholic	−0.39	0.14	−1.16	0.00		
Religious intensity	−0.24	0.00	−0.44	0.01		
Social class	−0.03	0.78	−0.39	0.07		
Poor personal economic conditions					−0.09	0.91
Regional/location						
Madrid	−0.22	0.38	0.26	0.42	−0.05	0.96
Size of community	0.10	0.02	0.09	0.13	−0.25	0.21
Constant	1.60	0.00	1.09	0.16	0.12	0.96
N				3238		528
Correctly predicted				85.5%		97.3%
Test				F (54,2) = 3706.6		LR χ^2 (26) = 626.8
Marginal effects (%)	PSOE	PP	IU		PSOE	PP
M11 influenced	16.2	−15.6	−0.5		−4.4	4.4
Reason for vote M11	22.8	−21.9	−0.8			
PP's Iraq policy influenced vote					62.1	−62.1
Aznar mishandled M11					23.9	−23.9
Average and counterfactuals (%)						
Average predicted vote share	59.3	34.7	6.0		53.9	46.1
Average if M11 influence = 0	56.4	37.0	6.5		54.2	45.7
Average if M11 = 0 and M11 reason = 0	55.0	38.2	6.6			
Average if policy Iraq = 0					49.5	50.5
Average if Aznar mishandled = 0					52.9	47.1
Average with pre-electoral sample (M11 = 0, Aznar = 0)					45.8	54.2

Note: The coefficients in bold are from M11 related factors and are statistically significant at the 0.1 level or less.

having been influenced by the attacks increased the likelihood of support for the PSOE by 16% points. In a counterfactual analysis in which these indicators are set to zero the vote share of the PP increases by 3.5% points.

Focusing on the OPINA survey we find that those whose vote was influenced by the PP's policy on Iraq were more likely to vote for the PSOE, by 62% points, and belief that Aznar's government mishandled the events also translated into support for the PSOE, by around 24% points. In terms of aggregate effects, if we assume no respondent assessed the performance of Aznar as improper, then the PP would have gained a 1% point. If we assume that no respondent's vote was influenced by the PP's policy on Iraq then the PP would have ended up a victor, with 50.5% of the PP/PSOE votes. However, the latter counterfactual may be too extreme in that some respondents would have still considered the PP's policy in Iraq as relevant to their vote, even if the attacks had not taken place. As an alternative counterfactual we can estimate the average vote shares using the post-electoral estimates but with the pre-electoral sample, with the indicators of influence from the attacks and Aznar's mishandling of them set to zero but, with the dispositions towards the PP's support for the war in Iraq being those in the pre-electoral sample. As seen in Table 4, in this case the PP ends up as the winner, by a margin of 8% points.

4.4. What difference did it make?

The sum of the evidence indicates that the attacks went a long way to explain the outcome of the election, and quite likely decided it. In terms of direct effects, those based on self-reports, the attacks had independent and significant effects towards increasing the support for the PSOE at the expense mainly of the PP. Assuming that these effects did not take place improves the margins for the PP by at least 1% point (OPINA) to 4% points (CIS) but does not leave the PP the winner. However, electorally these are dramatic changes. If we also attempt to incorporate indirect effects through a counterfactual based on pre-electoral samples, with the cautions of such an endeavor, then the PP is rendered the clear winner. Of course, without analyses, the fact that all pre-electoral polls gave the lead to the PP also points to the power of the events to have decided the outcome.

From the analyses we can conclude that the political dimensions highlighted by the terrorist attack, foreign policy and government transparency were critical to the electoral upset. The attacks induced close to half of the respondents to believe Aznar mishandled the investigations, and the attacks increased the share of respondents for whom the PP's foreign policy on Iraq was critical to their vote from 37.5% to 42%. Quite notably, when we include measures of concern with these two areas the indicator of being influenced by the attack is no longer statistically significant. This suggests that the concerns with foreign policy and government transparency exhaust the ways a respondent was influenced by the attack.

Finally, the analyses also suggest that both turnout and switching effects were critical to channel the influences of the attacks. However, if we restrict ourselves to the self-reports then switching may have played a more considerable role. Based on the CIS survey, the largest marginal effect is observed for those who were instigated to switch, while the preliminary breakdowns (Table 1) already suggested that ''switchers'' seem to have had a larger brunt on the final tally than new voters. This is contrary to popular accounts that gave more emphasis to an invigorated turnout for the upset. However, these comparisons have limitations since voters may have felt instigated to turnout *and* switch, but the CIS survey's wording preempts such reports.

4.5. Who was influenced by the attack?

The last and critical aspect of the Spanish 2004 elections to be examined is who was influenced by the attack. Table 5 shows the estimations from predicting several measures of influence by the attacks and opinions related to the attacks from the two surveys.

We observe several common denominators throughout the models. First, focusing on the CIS models, voters ideologically in the center, the omitted category, were the most likely to have been influenced overall by the attacks, to have been instigated to vote and to have been instigated to switch parties. Voters on the left were as likely to switch parties as rightist voters (which explains the IU's loss in shares), but more likely to have been instigated to turnout to vote. In general, the majority of CIS voters who were influenced by the attacks were to the center and left of the ideological spectrum. In fact, 72% of voters who switched parties and 82% voters who were instigated to vote were at the center or to the left of the ideological scale.

In the OPINA models we find that those ideologically on the left were more likely to have been influenced overall, felt that Aznar acted improperly in relation to the attacks, and been influenced by the PP's Iraq policy. After leftist voters, those in the center (or those with no reported ideology) were next in terms of expressing these opinions, with voters on the right being the least likely. Among the respondents who were influenced by the attacks, 84% were at the center

Table 5
Logit estimates of who M11 influenced in Spain 2004, CIS and OPINA surveys

	CIS opinion						OPINA opinion					
	(1)		(2)		(3)		(1)		(2)		(3)	
	M11 influenced		M11 influenced to vote		M11 influenced to switch		M11 influenced		Aznar mishandled		PP's Iraq policy	
	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values	Coeff.	*p*-Values
Political												
Ideology Left	−0.21	0.03	−0.47	0.00	−0.83	0.00	0.35	0.08	1.64	0.00	0.92	0.00
Ideology Right	−0.62	0.00	−0.99	0.00	−0.79	0.03	−0.60	0.04	−1.32	0.00	−0.61	0.02
No Ideology	−0.40	0.00	−0.31	0.09	−0.73	0.01	0.29	0.18	−0.08	0.72	−0.09	0.02
Interest in campaign	0.04	0.07	−0.16	0.00	0.06	0.40						
Demographics												
Male	−0.14	0.11	−0.23	0.02	0.15	0.43	−0.32	0.04	−0.10	0.52	−0.28	0.05
Age	−0.02	0.00	−0.03	0.00	−0.03	0.00	−0.21	0.00	−0.06	0.44	−0.24	0.00
Education	−0.10	0.00	−0.06	0.04	−0.18	0.00	−0.10	0.07	0.09	0.10	0.02	0.77
Unemployed	0.20	0.05	0.26	0.13	0.17	0.52	0.35	0.20	0.10	0.76	0.26	0.34
Student	0.22	0.05	−0.11	0.63	−0.14	0.65	−0.19	0.53	0.38	0.27	−0.07	0.82
Catholic	0.11	0.36	−0.18	0.29	−0.13	0.57						
Religious intensity	0.03	0.43	−0.01	0.82	0.08	0.33						
Social class	0.07	0.21	0.12	0.21	−0.08	0.48						
Personal econ. Conditions							0.24	0.21	0.38	0.07	0.12	0.51
Regional/location												
Madrid	−0.08	0.57	−0.01	0.97	−0.61	0.01	−0.77	0.00	−0.26	0.33	−0.35	0.14
Size of community	−0.02	0.40	−0.04	0.24	0.05	0.42	0.01	0.88	−0.01	0.85	−0.04	0.34
Constant	0.26	0.36	−0.29	0.52	−1.02	0.03	0.37	0.44	−0.95	0.06	0.62	0.17
N	4914		4914		4914		939		855		927	
Correctly predicted	71.0%		93.8%		96.1%		72.3%		73.6%		64.4%	
Test	F (18,38) = 13.8		F (18,38) = 11.6		F (18,38) = 5.04		LR χ^2 (15) = 54.1		LR χ^2 (15) = 235.7		LR χ^2 (15) = 100.5	

or to the left of the ideological scale, and similarly so, for 92% of respondents who believed the government mishandled the investigations and 87% of respondents who were influenced by the government's policy in Iraq. That is, again we see the pattern that those influenced by the attacks and their aftermaths were mainly on the center and the left of the ideological spectrum.

In terms of demographics in the CIS models, the young and those with less education were more likely to have been influenced by the attacks consistently throughout all the models. These sets of voters were more likely to have been instigated to vote and to switch votes. In relation to gender effects, females were more likely to have been instigated to vote while in terms of regional influences those residing in Madrid, the location of the attacks, were not differentially affected. Economic-related factors showed no statistically significant effects.

In the OPINA survey, younger and less educated voters were also more likely to have been influenced by the attacks overall. Younger voters were more likely to have been influenced by the government's policy in Iraq while discontent with Aznar's policy seems to have cut across age and educational levels since neither of these variables achieved statistical significance in this model. Males, however, were more likely to have been discontent with this issue.

These analyses based on self-reports can also be complemented with an examination of pre- and post-electoral dispositions. For example, in terms of bivariate breakdowns, in the pre-electoral CIS survey and among the respondents who stated that they would vote in the next elections, 22% were young, 50% were less educated (high school or less), and 41% were ideologically on the left. In the post-electoral survey, among the respondents who reported to have voted, 22.5% were young, 62.5% were less educated, and 46% were ideologically on the left. The increases in the representation of the less educated and those on the left in the electorate from pre-electoral expectations provide further evidence that the Madrid bombings altered the make-up of the likely electorate.

The results suggest that the attack mobilized some citizens to vote who in general are less likely to vote: the young and the less educated, and possibly females, as well as those from the center and the left. Furthermore, the events prompted a switch in parties for the young, the less educated, and the centrists. Leftist voters

were more likely to reveal discontent with the Aznar government's handling of the investigation and its Iraq policies, while younger voters were more susceptible to the influence of the government's policies on Iraq.

5. Conclusion

The March 11th 2004 attack and its aftermath had a substantial effect on the Spanish electorate. Both actual reports and analyses show that some citizens were induced to vote by the attacks when they would otherwise not have done it and some citizens were induced to switch parties. The attacks and the government's response mobilized voters that are traditionally less likely to participate in the electoral process: the young and the less educated. These voters as well as those from the center and the left were differentially mobilized to turnout. These voters as well as those from the center were differentially disposed to switch parties. The magnitudes of the influences of the attack, as manifested in increased concerns with foreign policy and government transparency, go a substantial way to explain the electoral upset. The evidence suggests that Aznar's government mismanagement of the investigations and its support of the policies in Iraq had considerable and independent effects on the elections. One counterfactual analysis, taking into consideration both direct and indirect effects from the attacks, suggests had the attacks not taken place the PP would have kept its lead.

The Madrid bombings constituted a ''specific, dramatic and sharply'' focused aggressive international event (Mueller, 1973). Under a strict interpretation of a rally event we might have expected a raise in support for the incumbent leader, which did not occur. However, I have argued that to understand the effects of dramatic terrorist events on elections we need to adapt the expectations from the rally literature to take into consideration the specific incentives triggered around election times. In the Madrid bombings case, the event and its timing helped to prime precisely those policies on which the incumbent government was vulnerable, extinguishing any potential for rallying around the government.

More broadly, the evidence provided by Spain's 2004 terrorist attack is supportive of the general set of hypotheses on single dramatic terrorist events and elections posited in this paper. The pre-electoral journalistic and investigative accounts indicate that the media gave intense and continuous coverage to the attacks and subsequently to the government's performance, even more than would have normally been expected around election times (*Hypothesis 2*). The empirical analyses of pre- and post-electoral surveys provide evidence that the performance of the government on key dimensions (foreign policy and government transparency) were key in explaining the electoral defeat of the incumbent party, which is congruent with the notion that the priming of relevant policy dimensions impacts the directionality of the effect of a terrorist act on electoral outcomes (*Hypothesis 3*). Finally, the analyses indicate that those less likely to participate in the political process were more likely to be influenced by the terrorist attack (*Hypothesis 4*).

There are several key lessons that the Madrid attacks can impart. First, citizens' evaluations of the government's performance in the policy areas related to the attack are clearly critical. If the citizenship generally approves of the government's performance in those areas, a terrorist attack close to an election may result in a rally of support or at least not hurt the incumbent government. If, on the other hand, the government is vulnerable on those policies, the attack may very well result in an anti-rally. According to this logic, the incumbent parties in the Australian 2004 and British 2005 elections would have been quite challenged by a terrorist attack close to the election, given the strong popular discontent with each government's foreign policies at those times. On the other hand, a terrorist attack right before the United States 2004 elections may have proved much less deleterious.

Another implication from the present research is the importance of the timing of the terrorist act in relation to the elections. A terrorist attack, distant from election times, should trigger, in principle, the mechanisms associated with rally events. In such cases, an immediate focus on the government's performance is not likely. In contrast, if the terrorist event occurs close to election times, because of the political race and the media's incentives, a speedy zeroing in on a discussion of the government's performance becomes harder to avoid. Had the Madrid bombings occurred 3 months before the elections, the time it took Spanish citizens to approximately return to ''normal'' levels of concern with terrorism, the electoral outcomes may have been different. Finally, the present research also highlights the importance of where the terrorist event takes place. We might expect more forceful effects on elections from one-shot terrorist attacks in societies with lower levels of political participation and attachments.

There is clearly more work to be done in this vital area of terrorism and elections, including in particular a re-assessment of this paper's hypotheses in relation to other terrorist events and other political contexts. The Madrid bombings provide a vivid case where the exposure of the electoral process to external, possibly strategic shocks, were exemplified. Democratic electoral processes strive to aggregate the will of the majority, though they may also be susceptible, in their final stages to the strategies of the few.

Appendix A

Pre- and post-comparisons of predicted turnout and PP vote share in Spain 2004, CIS and OPINA

Sample	CIS turnout (%)				PP OPINA vote share (%)			
	Pre-electoral	Post-electoral			Pre-electoral	Post-electoral		
	All	All	M11 = 1	M11 = 0	All	All	M11 = 1	M11 = 0
All	**87.2**	88.2	91.4	**86.8**	**51.3**	46.8	28.3	**53.1**
Young	81.5	82.2	87.2	79.1	49.2	39.7	21.4	48.6
Not young	89.1	90.1	93.5	88.9	52.1	49.9	32.8	54.7
Low PP evaluation	81.2	88.8	91.4	87.6	0.02	0.4	0.2	0.5
High PP evaluation	96.9	95.1	96.0	94.1	99.4	98.2	97.1	98.4
Low interest	64.9	67.3	75.3	64.6	NA	NA	NA	NA
High interest	98.5	97.8	98.5	97.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ideology Left	90.4	92.7	94.7	91.8	3.4	2.6	1.1	3.4
Ideology Center	87.8	90.4	92.7	89.2	57.9	71.5	53.7	75.7
Ideology Right	95.0	90.3	93.2	89.5	97.4	94.4	83.4	96.6
No Ideology	73.9	74.6	80.1	72.7	60.8	52.3	30.2	63.4

Note: the predicted rates were obtained from multivariate models predicting turnout and vote, respectively. The PP vote share is from considering only voters for the PP or PSOE.

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