



On the Cultural Legacy of Political Institutions: Evidence from the Spanish Regions*

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Abstract

In the last decades, numerous studies have argued that political institutions are able to leave a persistent cultural legacy. Spain today presents a geographically concentrated distribution of societal traits that are related to social and political participation. This paper examines the possible historical origin of these regional patterns and concludes a) that those regions that historically experienced more inclusive political systems exhibit currently higher levels of this culture of participation and b) that inclusive institutions are able to leave a more intense cultural legacy when they are more proximate to the bulk of the population. This thesis is robust to controlling for other possible determinants.

Keywords: Political culture, social capital, institutional economics, political economy, institutional performance.

JEL Classification: Z13, D70, N93, P16

1. Introduction

Over the last decades, the study of the cultural aspects of a society has gained increased interest within political economy. This increasing interest is due to the (re)discovery of culture (beliefs, values, traditions, customs, etc.) as a fundamental element in the explanation of the functioning and evolution of formal institutions (Roland, 2004; North, 2005; Caballero and Soto-Oñate, 2015) and economic performance through time (North, 1990; Putnam,

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Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993, Knack and Keefer, 1997; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2006, 2011; Fernández, 2008, 2011).

Some well-known cultural traits within the research programs of political culture, social capital or institutional economics have been related to better political and economic performance. These cultural traits include: personal independence, generalized trust, political involvement and social participation, among many others. Important works have pointed out the role of inclusive institutional frameworks in the development of these cultural traits (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a; Tabellini, 2010, Becker *et al.*, 2016), but little research has been done with regard to which characteristics of inclusive institutions leave which kind of cultural traits. This article deepens the link between inclusive institutions and the development of cultural patterns of participation and cooperation and attempts to introduce and analyze the role of proximity in the depth of the imprint that inclusive institutions leave on culture. *Proximity* refers to how close and transcendental the inclusive institutions are to the life of the broad majority of the population. If those inclusive institutions are proximate, they are supposed to be able to leave a more persistent and intensive cultural imprint on a society.

This paper examines the regional patterns across Spain in terms of what is called here *political culture of participation* and argues that they may partially find their roots in the distant past. For that purpose, it delves into Spanish history and focuses on two historical institutional experiences that presented significant differences across regions. They will allow us to proxy the comparative level of inclusiveness in their political organization and the proximity of the political process to the population. The inclusiveness of political institutions at the local level is proxied by the capacity of the towns to develop their own custom-based legal order in the High Middle Ages. At that time, the municipalities of some Iberian areas held a transcendental part of the political process for the everyday life of the population. At a different level of proximity –the top of the State– inclusiveness is proxied by the levels of constraints on the executive during the Modern Age in the different kingdoms. The article provides evidence that (a) past inclusive political experiences may have played a determinant role in shaping the current disparities of participation patterns across the Spanish regions and (b) inclusive institutions were better able to leave this cultural imprint when they affected the political process at a more proximate level to the bulk of the population.

Section 2 reviews the literature on political culture, the cultural legacy of institutions and the mechanisms of long-term cultural persistence. Section 3 introduces the Spanish case, presents the current regional distribution of political culture of participation and the distinctive political trajectories that Spanish regions followed prior to unification. In section 4, the theses are empirically tested. Finally, the last section discusses the results and draws some concluding remarks.

2. Political culture, institutions and long-term persistence: A literature review

This section must necessarily delve into the concept of political culture, the capacity of institutions to affect culture and the mechanisms that permit their cultural legacy to survive in the long term.

2.1. Political culture and political culture of participation

The will to explain political phenomena through characteristic categories of the domain of political culture is as old as the political science itself (Almond, 1990). For instance, Aristotle, in *Politics*, called attention to the importance of civic virtue for political performance; Rousseau, in *The Social Contract*, pointed out the relevance of morality, customs and public opinion within a society; and Tocqueville remarked on the transcendental role of mental structures, the common notions and the “whole moral and intellectual conditions of a people” ([1835-40]1945, p. 310). More recently, Almond and Verba, in their seminal work *The Civic Virtue* (1963), developed a theoretical framework for the study of political culture and proposed an empirical analysis based on surveys of representative samples. They carried out a descriptive and comparative analysis across five nations (United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Mexico and Italy) that brought about as a result a revitalization of cultural perspectives in political science and the emergence of the political culture approach as a distinctive research program. It was followed by analyses in more or less depth on other nations, such as Switzerland and Austria (Lehmbruch, 1967), Sweden (Anton, 1969) or Canada (Ornstein, Stevenson and Williams, 1980); other cross-national comparative researches (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Inglehart, 1988; Inglehart and Baker, 2000); and studies that highlighted regional disparities within internally heterogeneous countries, such as Italy (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1983; Putnam *et al.*, 1988) or Canada (Henderson, 2004). Other subsequent works analyzed political culture’s interaction with political institutional systems (Pateman, 1971; Inglehart and Welzer, 2003) and economic modernization (Lipset, 1959; Inglehart and Baker, 2000; Inglehart and Welzer, 2010). Likewise, as a sign of its vitality and relevance, important publications presented exhaustive critiques and complete or partial theoretical revisits (Almond and Verba, 1980; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Torcal and Montero, 2006; Dalton and Welzel, 2014). Regarding Spain, a wide variety of studies on the political culture of Spaniards was published after the arrival of democracy. Important works were interested in the evolution of their political culture over time, especially in the effect on and of the transition to democracy (López Pintor, 1982; Benedicto, 1989, 2004; Montero and Torcal, 1990a; Botella, 1992) or its similarities and particularities within the European context (Torcal, Morales and Pérez-Nievas, 2005; Galais, 2012).

According to Almond and Verba, political culture refers to “the specifically political orientations –attitudes towards the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system” (1963, p. 13). They emphasize the importance of the coher-

ence between the formal political system and the political culture. We can thus identify a set of ideal traits that coherently fit the political system of democracy and that we could call *political culture of democracy*. That is, an ideal political culture that is proper to the democratic institutional system and makes it well-functioning and long-lasting. The present article is focused on a subset of traits within this political culture of democracy that foster active participation and cooperation. This subset of traits will be called herein the *political culture of participation*¹. These traits are similar to those included in the concept of social capital, which in Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti's (1993) work also finds its roots in the political culture literature. They are of interest since they are associated with, among other issues, the practical performance of democratic institutions through political accountability, governmental effectiveness, low levels of corruption or the overcoming of collective-action problems (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993, 1988; Boix and Posner, 1998; Uslaner, 2004; Nannicini *et al.*, 2013).

Inasmuch as participation is an important part of an ideal political culture of democracy, it has concentrated a great deal of attention in Spain (Morales, 2005; Montero, Font and Torcal, 2006; Cantijoch and San Martin, 2009) and several works revealed internal differences in participation based on gender, age, level of education, income and occupation (Justel 1992; Morán and Benedicto, 1995; Morales, 1999; Ferrer *et al.*, 2006; Morales, Mota and Pérez-Nievas, 2006; Morán, 2011), and across Spanish regions (Montero and Torcal, 1990b; Mota and Subirats, 2000; Frías, 2001; Mota, 2008). However, very little attention has been paid to the origins of these regional differences across Spain.

Those studies that attempt to explain participation based on individual features or immediate experiences with the political system are complemented by this approach, which suggests the existence of a generalized component rooted in the cultural environment. As will be seen in section 3, the highest levels of political culture of participation are concentrated in the northeastern quarter of the Iberian Peninsula and this article attempts to explain this geographical distribution by suggesting a possible institutional origin. The next paragraphs review the literature about the role of historical events, especially political experiences, in the shaping of these cultural traits and the mechanisms through which they can persist in the long term.

2.2. Roles of historical institutions in the origins of political culture disparities

Although culture is in constant evolution, it is also evident that a persistent or slow-moving cultural component exists that reflects historical experiences and is able to condition its evolutionary path (Inglehart and Baker, 2000; Roland, 2004; Portes, 2005). In the last decades, important empirical studies were conducted on some highly persistent cultural traits that found their roots in a distant past (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a; Tabellini, 2010; Nunn and Wantchekon, 2011; Voigtländer and Voth, 2012; Alesina, Giuliano and Nunn., 2013; Giuliano and Nunn, 2013). This cultural legacy is able to

persist even after its original circumstances have long ago disappeared. Part of these works has pointed out political experiences as powerful factors that deeply shape culture.

Two dimensions of institutions are taken into account here: *inclusiveness* and *proximity*. *Inclusiveness* is the level to which the members of a population condition political decision making and/or their interests are reflected in the institutions and public policy. In its concrete form, inclusiveness is usually associated with more democratic institutions, rule of law, separation of powers, or a set of individual rights and liberties for civil, political and economic matters. Those institutional environments where participation is permitted and even requested are better able to make participation and cooperation traditions flourish. On the other hand, it seems reasonable to think that in systems in which the political processes were more proximate (*i.e.*, in which the bulk of the important political decisions were made at a closer level to the population), the inclusive institutional environment would be more capable of generating the dynamics of political participation and the schemes of thought about the Political that leave a persistent imprint in the local culture. This *proximity* of the political process makes reference not only to geographical space but also to the location of the political process within the strata of a State's hierarchy and its distance with regard to the bulk of the population.

Important works have highlighted the relevance of inclusive political experiences at local levels in the development of persistent cultural patterns. For instance, Giuliano and Nunn (2013) suggest in an empirical research paper that democratic experiences at local levels helped to generate persistent beliefs and attitudes toward the appropriateness of democratic institutions. The case of Italy has been deeply studied (Banfield, 1958; Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a) and provides us with some guidance on the mechanisms through which inclusive institutions at local levels may generate these traits. It was suggested that the current disparities in societal traits across Italian regions have their roots in their different local political experiences during the Middle Ages. During the eleventh century, the Normans invaded the southern part of Italy and established "a feudal monarchy, which continued in some forms or another until the Italian unification in 1861" (Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a, p. 10). This regime, highly hierarchical and bureaucratic, precluded the formation of independent city-states. Even "any glimmerings of communal autonomy were extinguished as soon as they appeared" (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993, p. 123), thereby hindering the development of civic traits. In contrast, in northern city-states, "those who governed the communal republics acknowledged legitimate limits on their rule. Elaborate legal codes were promulgated to confine the violence of the overmighty. In this sense, the structure of authority in the communal republics was fundamentally more liberal and egalitarian ... [and] provided a breadth of popular involvement in public decision making without parallel in the medieval world" (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993, p. 125). From this perspective, it is understood that the effects of these historical institutional configurations have persisted until the present day by way of culture.

Similar phenomena were attributed to inclusiveness at the top of the State hierarchy. Tabellini (2010) considered institutional constraints on the executive as having an impact in

the development of similar cultural traits by preventing the elites from undertaking arbitrary actions and providing a space for individual freedom where cooperative behaviors could flourish. Becker *et al.* (2016) argued that the serious and well-functioning bureaucracy of the Habsburg Empire left a cultural legacy that promoted generalized trust and discouraged corruption. Although not related to the dimension of inclusiveness, other works showed how preferences could be shaped by the political regime and are able to persist in the long term. For instance, Alesina and Fuchs-Schündeln (2007) argued that 45 years of state intervention and communist indoctrination in east Germany instilled in people the notion that the state is essential for individual well-being; and Peisakhin (2015) presented how contemporary Ukraine is regionally divided in terms of political attitudes and behavior by the ancient border that separated the Austrian and the Russian empires.

The current article contributes to this literature by providing evidence and reflecting on the capacity of institutions to leave a cultural imprint depending on their degree of proximity.

2.2.1. Reverse causality and other background determinants

The causal relation between formal institutions and deep elements of culture (beliefs, values, attitudes, etc.) acts in both directions, and both directions have been covered in the social sciences². Important institutionalists in history, economics, political science and sociology have focused on how cultural elements are of fundamental importance for institutional performance and evolution (Denzau and North, 1995; Roland, 2004; Portes, 2005; North, 2005; Gorodnichenko and Roland, 2013). In turn, other works were centered on how political experiences leave a long-lasting cultural legacy (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a; Tabellini, 2010; Peisakhin, 2015; Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya, 2014; Becker *et al.*, 2016). It would thus be short-sighted to neglect this bidirectionality. The problem of reverse causality between culture and institutions hinders causal inference. One common way to overcome reverse-causality problems in economics has been to resort to the so-called *natural or historical experiments* (Dunning, 2008; Diamond and Robinson, 2010). They require finding historical events in which the effect of institutions on culture (the causal direction of interest) is observable in isolation from the effect of culture on institutions. Section 3 presents the conditions that allow one to consider the case of Spain within the framework of a natural experiment.

Besides endogeneity problems, other important relevant factors like socioeconomic modernization have preoccupied researchers when approaching this matter. In a famous article, Lipset (1959) suggested that the “modernization” associated to economic development led to or permitted the development of a sustainable and long-lasting democracy by generating fundamental sociocultural transformations. Inglehart and Baker (2000) empirically supported his thesis and concluded that economic development tends to push societies in a common direction but, rather than converging, they move in parallel, path-dependent trajectories that are shaped by their cultural heritages. In another empirical study, Inglehart and

Welzel (2010) explore the mechanism that links economic development to democratization and argue that prosperity certainly tends “to bring enduring changes in a society’s values and, at high levels of development, make the emergence and survival of democratic institutions incrementally likely.” Persson and Tabellini (2009) propose a feedback link between development and democratization through what they called *democratic capital*, an accumulated stock of civic and social assets. Therefore, shifts in cultural traits could have also been brought about by socioeconomic transformations and this must be taken into account.

2.2.2. *The mechanisms for long-term persistence*

An institutional environment can generate shared attitudes and behavioral patterns in a community as an immediate, rational response to the institutional environment’s conditions. For instance, Almond and Verba (1963) argue that apathy toward public issues may be a realistic response to a political environment due to the complexity of the political matters or the difficulties of getting information. However, in this kind of works we address the persistent imprint left by an institutional environment that no longer exists. This is what is known as the long shadow of history or, more specifically, the cultural legacy of political institutions. But, how can this long cultural shadow of history persist across centuries? Generally, researchers on this topic have appealed to an essentially cultural mechanism. In the last two decades, in order to explain cultural persistence, economists and political scientists have devoted a great deal of effort to the theoretical modelling and empirical investigation of the intergenerational transmission of cultural traits (Bisin and Verdier, 2001, 2011; Giuliano, 2007; Tabellini, 2008; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008b; Alesina and Giuliano, 2010; Fernández and Fogli, 2009; Luttmer and Singhal, 2011). For instance, Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales (2008b) propose a theoretical model to explain how as a result of an historical impact a community can be trapped in a low-trust equilibrium; however, a positive shock to the benefit of cooperation can permanently shift the equilibrium toward a cooperative one. They build an overlapping-generations model in which children learn beliefs and values from their parents and then, after interacting within the society, they inculcate (update) values in the next generation. This is the logic that complements the reasoning of this article. Therefore, it is assumed that, at aggregate levels, combined schemes of socialization and historical experience are what generate the patterns of persistence and change in a political culture.

3. The case of Spain

The intricate interrelationships among variables, the local specificities or the difficulty of measuring the qualitative complexity of culture and institutions distort the conclusions of the comparative research across nations. In recent decades, the usefulness of country (analytic) narratives to study complex puzzles such as those involving formal institutions, culture and economic performance have been highlighted (Rodrik, 2003). They permit one to hold variables of

interest or background variables constant, circumvent reverse causality and be more accurate with descriptions and interpretations. This is also the aim of natural experiments, which often find the proper conditions in specific events of a nation's history. According to Diamond and Robinson (2010, p. 2), natural experiments consist of “comparing ... different systems that are similar in many respects but that differ with respect to the factors whose influence one wishes to study”. They are empirical approaches that aim to take advantage of the inferential power of true experiments. In true experiments, researchers compare the response of experimental subjects to treatment with the response of a control group, the assignment of the subjects to treatment is random, and the manipulation of the treatment is under the control of the experimental researcher (Dunning, 2008). However, in social happenings, generally, the manipulation of the treatment and the background factors are out of experimenter's control. In natural experiments, researchers find the conditions in which the assignment of the subjects to treatment and control conditions is “as if” random. This is why, as Dunning (2008) argues, a detailed case-based knowledge is fundamental “both to recognizing the existence of a natural experiment and to gathering the kinds of evidence that make the assertion of ‘as if’ random assignment compelling”.

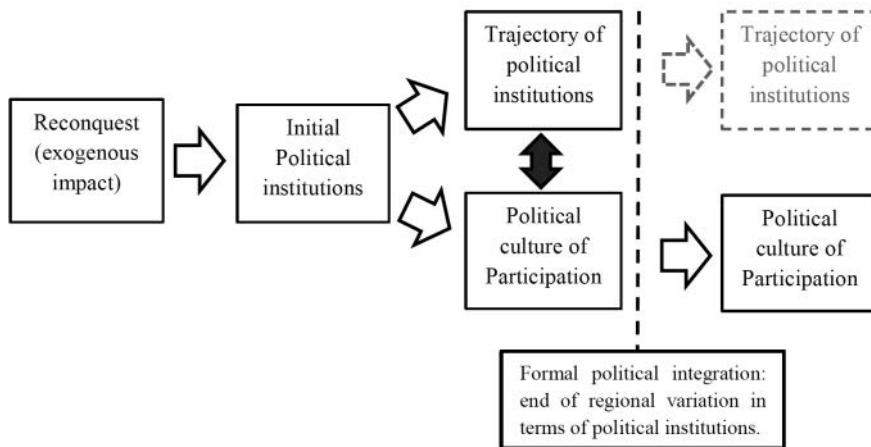


Figure 1: Regionally distinctive effects of political institutions on political culture

Source: Own elaboration.

The case of Spain presents the conditions for a natural experiment to study (a) the causal link between the inclusiveness of political institutions and the development of cultural traits that foster participation and (b) the autonomous persistence of this cultural legacy until the present time. Figure 1 uses a simplified outline to illustrate the chain of events and the causal flows covered in this reasoning.

Chronologically, figure 1 suggests that there was an exogenous impact, the so-called *Reconquista* –the Christian Reconquest– that established an early distribution of political institutions across Spain that had nothing or little to do with previous political cultures in the regions. It represents an “as if” random assignment of the subjects to treatment. This impact

laid the foundations of regional institutional trajectories, which were coevolving in continuous feedback with regional political cultures, until political unification. The dashed line indicates the moment from which political institutions no longer show regional variation, leaving the regional political cultures theoretically isolated from a regionally distinctive effect of formal political institutions. Of course, political institutions were still affecting political culture, but the effect of regionally distinctive political institutions no longer exists (remember that our intention is to know the cause of the regional distribution of cultural patterns). At this moment is when the shadow of history operates. It is understood that the old distribution of cultural traits affects the current one through a long and complex mechanism of intergenerational transmission in the fashion of those presented in section 2.

The exogenous impact of the medieval *Reconquista* allows us to observe a causal direction in the origin from institutions to political culture. On the other hand, modern Spanish unification offers the chance to investigate to what extent the current geographic distribution of political culture of participation is due to a long-lasting legacy that is capable to autonomously persist even when the originating institutional circumstances have long disappeared. Additionally, the Spanish case, as a novelty, permits one to reflect on the possible role of proximity in the generation of these traits.

The following subsections deepen this outline addressing three key questions: (a) How the regional patterns of political culture of participation are and how they are measured (subsection 3.1); (b) how the inclusiveness of the regional political trajectories are measured (subsection 3.2); and (c) why early political institutions in the regions are exogenous to a previous political culture (subsection 3.3).

3.1. The regional distribution of political culture of participation in Spain

In this subsection, a summary index of political culture of participation is constructed from survey data. This index is meant to proxy how political culture of participation is extended across the Spanish provinces. These traits are directly associated to political involvement and active participation, so the indicators should attempt to proxy beliefs, values and attitudes related to both the active role of the individual as a political actor and the intensity of his or her links with the political realm.

Initially, six cultural indicators are built from different surveys. Later, a summary variable, called *Participation Index*, is constructed from the first principal component of those indicators to reflect the variation of these cultural traits across 50 Spanish provinces (the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla are excluded).

Unfortunately, the available data are scarce and this fact involves a number of complications. There is no complete survey that could provide us with all the needed indicators, so we have to resort to different surveys from the Spanish *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (CIS), which nonetheless will not make it possible to cover all the factors that would be

desirable (e.g., early socialization process at home, generalized trust, social values, etc.). The aim of this index is to obtain a proxy for the provincial variation of this political culture of participation, but, lamentably, the sample of some of the considered surveys is designed to obtain regional aggregations at the autonomous community level and not at the provincial level³. Only the CIS surveys of 2000, 2008a, 2011a and 2015 are designed to get provincial aggregations. The other surveys from CIS (1998, 2002, 2008b and 2011b), although they cover all the Spanish provinces, provide an insufficient amount of observations for the smallest ones. Therefore, from the six indicators (which will be presented below), three will be aggregated at the autonomous community level⁴ and three at the provincial level. This construction, mixing aggregates at provincial and autonomous community levels, makes sense under the assumption that there exists certain consubstantiality among these variables and therefore their real provincial variability within the autonomous communities is similar.

To build this proxy for political culture of participation, we take into account information about people's interest in politics (*intpol*)⁵, the frequency in which they are involved in conversations on politics (*convpol*)⁶, their information-seeking habits about politics (*infopol*)⁷, their feeling of being informed about politicians' activities (*infogov*)⁸, and their tendency to participate in voluntary civil organizations (*association*)⁹ and in unconventional political actions (*action*)^{10,11}.

A summary variable called *Participation Index* is obtained from the first principal component of all these six measures –*intpol*, *infopol*, *convpol*, *infogov*, *association* and *action*. The principal component analysis returns a normalized variable, so this index shows mean 0 and standard deviation 1. Its highest value is reached in Madrid (2.84) and the lowest in Badajoz (–1.78). Figure 2 shows the geographical distribution of the resulting variable. The highest values are located in northern Spain, especially in the northeastern quarter of the Iberian Peninsula.

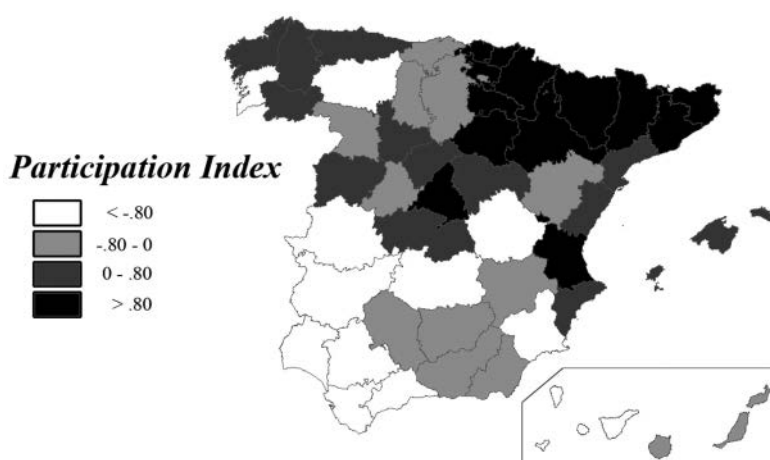


Figure 2: Geographical distribution of the *Participation Index*

Source: Own elaboration.

3.2. The regional political trajectories

As suggested above, the Spanish regions followed distinctive political paths. These regionally distinctive political paths end with the unification process. This fact is of fundamental importance, since it integrates all the regions in the same formal political institutional framework. Thus we do not consider formal institutions as transmitters of regional variation after unification. This is how we theoretically isolate subsequent political culture from the effect of subsequent formal political institutions.

This subsection presents the distinctive political paths that regions followed before unification in the early 18th century. We focus on two different periods in Spanish history that permit us to establish an interregional comparison in terms of political institutions. In each period, we can find institutional elements that present significant differences across regions and reveal information on the level of inclusiveness of the political institutional system and the level of *proximity* of the political process.

These institutional elements illustrate the level of inclusiveness of the institutional systems in the regions at two different levels of the State hierarchy. The inclusiveness of political institutions at the local level is proxied by the capacity of the towns to develop their own custom-based legal order in the High Middle Ages. At a different level of proximity, the top of the State, inclusiveness is proxied by the levels of constraints on the executive during the Modern Age in the different kingdoms. The following paragraphs assess both political experiences.

3.2.1. Local-level inclusiveness: *Municipal autonomy in High Middle Ages*

The literature review mentioned the case of Italy and highlighted the importance of the experiences of the northern free cities in the Middle Ages for the development of these cultural traits. We do not find in Spain free city-state cases in the Italian sense, but there did exist other kinds of political experiences at the municipal level during the High Middle Ages that presented clear regional disparities in terms of inclusiveness.

During the process of the *Reconquista* (8th-15th centuries), the Iberian Peninsula experienced a peculiar period in terms of sociopolitical organization. Significant events of this time, like the existence of a weak central and integrative power or the need to repopulate the newly conquered areas, gave rise to a wide range of political and legal arrangements at the local level across Medieval Spain. At this time, the municipalities were endowed with great competences, to the extent that in some areas the bulk of the important political decisions were located in the municipal corporations.

In the early stages of the *Reconquista*, the towns that were founded or repopulated were provided with a kind of contract, similar to small constitutions, called *fueros*, *cartas forales*

or *cartas pueblas*, in which a series of rights and freedoms were granted to the inhabitants. They were intended to make more attractive the newly reconquered areas and consolidate positions against Muslim raids.

The first documents granted were very much reduced and are known as *fueros breves* (brief *fueros*). They were fundamentally used in the central and northern areas of the Iberian Peninsula. This legislative corpus was insufficient to cover all the normative necessities that the daily life required. Therefore, gaps in the legal code had to be covered by another complementary legal code or (formally or informally) completed by locally developed legal codes or customary norms.

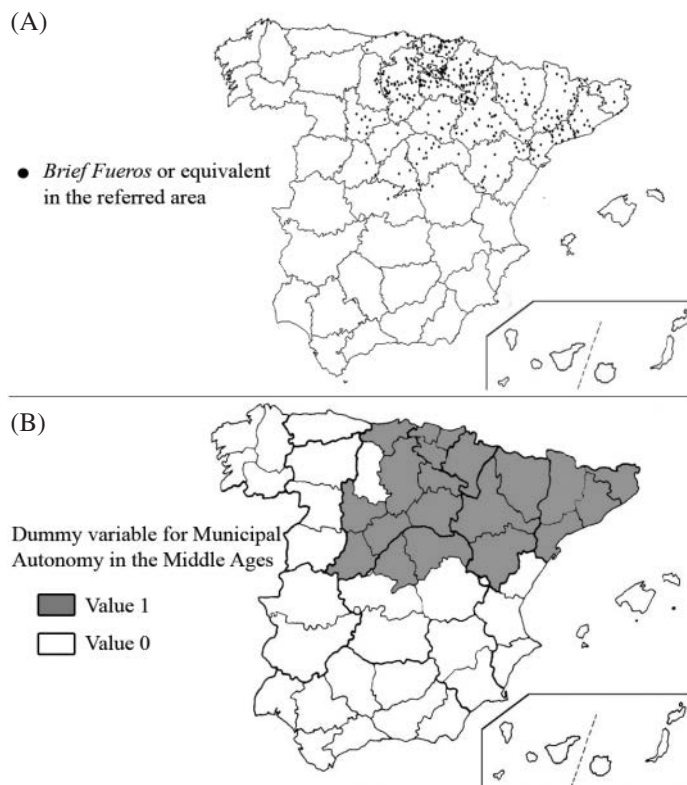
Later, in more advanced stages of the *Reconquista*, *fueros extensos* (extensive *fueros*) became more common. The elites of the kingdoms tended to offer more complete legal orders and, from a certain point on, large codes were imposed with territorial scope either as complementary texts or definitively displacing the local codes.

Until the eventual imposition of these large codes of territorial scope, extensive areas of the Iberian geography in its northern half were in need of a way to autonomously complete their own local law –endowed only with a brief *fuero*– either by the relatively direct and active participation of an important proportion of the population, the use of political delegates or through the judicial creation of law. However, this was only so in the northeastern part of the Iberian Peninsula, since the elites of the western kingdoms opted to complement the local orders with the Visigothic law¹² as an underlying legal corpus.

According to García-Gallo, “in stark contrast to the Visigothic system, centered on the validity of *Liber Iudiciorum*, we find what we could characterize as free law; that is, an always-in-progress legal order, within which the norms to be applied are freely sought for each case, and for any dispute judges judge freely according to their ‘free will’ ” (García-Gallo, 1979, p. 377). They created or formalized the law in accordance to what is “in the mind of the population”, even when it was not previously formalized. Except in rare cases, “it never was a capricious and arbitrary decision by the judge, since the people would have never accepted such a regime” (García-Gallo, 1979, p. 369). With regard to the expansion of this judicial creation of law, “it had deep roots in Castile¹³, Navarra and Aragon” (Gacto *et al.*, 2009, pp. 121-122). Although not by the judicial process, in these regions and in the Basque Provinces (Gacto *et al.*, 2009, p. 204) and Catalonia (García-Gallo, 1979, p. 445) custom-based legislation was also developed by local political actors.

It is a tough challenge to spatially delimit the extension of this kind of organization, comparatively more inclusive and autonomous, across medieval Spain; especially because a gradual degeneration of these features occurred both over time and in the spatial margins. Relying on the catalog of *fueros* by Barrero and Alonso (1989), figure 3.A illustrates the distribution of towns with known *brief fueros* and no complementary legal code before the beginning of the royal enactment of extensive *fueros* and long codes of territorial regency, such as the *Ordenamiento de Alcalá* in Castile (1348), the *Usatges de Barcelona* in current

Catalonia (1251) or the *Fueros Generales de Aragón* (1238)¹⁴. We thus take into account here the regency of a custom-based legislation locally developed as a proxy for the geographic extension of this modality of municipal organization that is comparatively more autonomous and inclusive. Although autonomy certainly was a *sine qua non* condition to maintain inclusive institutions in the period from the 9th to the 13th century, it does not mean that municipal autonomy leads necessarily to political inclusiveness. The empirical foundation addressing the comparative inclusiveness in these areas is provided by historians.



**Figure 3: Local-level inclusiveness in the High Middle Ages:
Presence of custom-based law at municipal level**

Source: Own elaboration.

With this information we build a dummy variable –*Local-level inclusiveness in Middle Ages*– that takes value 1 in 20 current provinces in the northeastern quarter of the Iberian Peninsula –Alava, Avila, Barcelona, Biscay, Burgos, Cantabria, Girona, Guadalajara, Gipuzkoa, Huesca, La Rioja, Lleida, Madrid, Navarre, Segovia, Soria, Tarragona, Teruel, Valladolid and Zaragoza– as presented in figure 3.B. This variable, by capturing the autonomy in the elaboration of local law in the towns of the province, attempts to proxy the geographic extension of these more inclusive and autonomous municipal organizations. The reasoning behind

it is that in these places that were granted with a *fuero breve*, and did not have an underlying extensive legal code to complement it, the population had to complete their own legislative framework by an explicit protodemocratic political process and/or the judicial creation of law. In this environment, comparatively more inclusive, the population as a whole was more influential upon the political process than in the rest of the territories.

3.2.2. State-level inclusiveness: Constraints on the executive in the Early Modern Age

The disparities among the political systems that coexisted within early modern Spain are broadly known. Even though the same monarch held both crowns –Castile and Aragon– they were separate regimes, with different political institutions, bodies, traditions, etc. However, drawing a solid comparative assessment about the inclusiveness of these different systems is a difficult task. Diverse ways of accounting for the different elements of political organization have emerged within political economy, and the level of constitutional and parliamentary constraints on the executive was considered a key aspect. Thereby, they attempted to compare the extent to which the executive power was monitored and constrained by an organized body, such as a parliament or equivalent.

In this paper, the assessment of the institutional environment in early modern Spanish regions relies on Tabellini's (2010) work. Tabellini evaluated past political institutions in the regions of five countries –including Spain– with regard to their constraints on the executive in the years 1600, 1700, 1750, 1800 and 1850. Following Polity IV methodology (see Tabellini's 2005 working paper), he assigns values from 1 to 7 in his evaluation of constraints on the executive, with 1 being “unlimited authority” and 7 being “accountable executive, constrained by checks and balances”. Between both extremes other situations are defined. A value of 3 is assigned if an executive has to face real but limited constraints (*e.g.*, a legislative body with more than consultative functions). A value of 5 is assigned when executive power is subject to substantial constraints (*e.g.*, a legislature that often modifies or defeats executive proposals for action or refuses funds to the executive). There are even values that correspond to transitions between situations. The values proposed by Tabellini for the Spanish regions (autonomous communities) are presented in the first columns of the table B.1 in Appendix B. He assigns a higher value to current autonomous communities of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencian Community in the years 1600 and 1700 due to the presence of stronger legislative Courts (the *Cortes*), as opposed to those in the Crown of Castile and the equivalent body in the Kingdom of Mallorca.

However, this part of Spanish history remains controversial (Grafe, 2012). The traditional liberal perspective that sees the early modern Castilian Crown as absolutist, unconstrained and highly centralized has been strongly contested (*e.g.*, Jago 1981; Thompson 1982; Fernández-Albadalejo 1984; Fortea 1991). Revisionist historians have argued that although the Castilian *Cortes* were actually debilitated over time, the power of the monarch was still constrained by the power of the elites of the main cities. Eventually, fiscal matters were bargained directly between individual cities' elites and the monarch with no need to summon the *Cortes*. Yet still

something can be said about the differences. Although the Crown of Castile should not be considered as a strongly centralized state, during the early modern age “the centralization and the tendency to absolutism are much greater than in the Crown of Aragon” (Le Flem *et al.* 1989, p. 185). The Castilian Crown certainly faced important constraints in fiscal policy; however, in eastern kingdoms, the *Cortes* had a much broader role. For instance, as Gil (1993) put it, “the *Cortes* of Aragon preserved their status as the highest legislative organ. The *Cortes* of Castile, in contrast, had early lost this power to the king and his Royal Council. Exclusive royal law-making was practically non-existent in Aragon, and if the viceroy had powers to issue pragmatics, these had to be subordinated to the higher principles established in the *fueros*¹⁵. [...] the *Cortes* not only dealt with fiscal matters [...], but also with legislative issues and, by extension, political questions in general”. Therefore, Tabellini’s comparative assessment of these systems remains useful for our purposes, but needs to be slightly revised.

Following Tabellini’s methodology and starting from the valuation of his indicator, the values for the levels of constraint have been modified in a new variable in order to take into account the most extended view among current Hispanists. On the one hand, the Crown of Castile could not be considered as centralized, unconstrained and absolutist; but, on the other hand, the new, modified variable has to express the difference in terms of constraints between the Crown of Castile and the Crown of Aragon before the *Decrees of Nueva Planta*. Therefore, the resulting valuation is the one presented in the two last columns of the table of Appendix B. The valuation for the Crown of Castile is elevated from 1 to 2 in 1600, and that of the Crown of Aragon is maintained in 3 in 1700 to express that distance contained in Gil (1993).

From this data, we rebuild his variable *pc_institutions*, which is the first principal component of all the periods assessed. Figure 4 represents the geographical distribution of this variable—*State-level inclusiveness in the Modern Age*. It takes value of 1.98 for Aragon, Catalonia and Valencian Community and -0.495 for the rest.



Figure 4: State-level inclusiveness in the Modern Age: Constraints on the executive, 1600-1850

Source: Own elaboration.

3.3. On the exogeneity of early political institutions

As suggested above, the “as if” random condition in the assignment of subjects to treatment is provided by the circumstances of the *Reconquista* and how they change at the different stages of the process. This fact allows us to circumvent reverse causality, since that exogenous impact imposes an institutional distribution that has nothing or little to do with previous political cultures. In this way, we can suggest a net institutional origin and defend the exogeneity of institutions with regards to a previous political culture in the area.

The Muslim invasion and the Christian *Reconquista* marked a break with previous political organization in the Iberian Peninsula. The subsequent local political configuration resulted as a consequence of the different needs of warfare and repopulation, the different identity of the individuals or organizations in charge of them—clergymen, military organizations, free peasants, etc.—and the different power imbalances.

In the first stages of the *Reconquista*, repopulation in the northeastern quarter of the Iberian Peninsula was more spontaneous. The need to make the newly conquered territories—uninhabited and desolated by war—appealing to new settlers led the monarchs to offer better institutional arrangements for those areas. The arrangements materialized into a broad set of civil and political rights and freedoms and the granting of land ownership to the settler who first ploughed it. In the last stages of the reconquest process towards the south, the increasingly powerful religious-military orders, nobility and royal power were mainly the organizations in charge of not only the warfare but also the repopulation, the selection of legal orders and the distribution of land in the new areas, giving rise to a highly concentrated distribution of land and more politically hierarchical societies. This means that, as war was progressing toward the south, political organizations became more and more hierarchical and the distribution of economic resources and political power became more and more concentrated, with this being reflected in the local legal codes. We can thus recognize an important component of exogeneity in the political institutions that were established across regions in the Middle Ages.

4. Empirical analysis

4.1. Historical political institutions and political culture

This paper attempts to demonstrate in the first place that there exist empirical reasons to believe that the current regional differences in these political culture traits may have, at least partly, a historical and essentially political origin. More formally, the theses to be addressed are (a) that past inclusive political experiences led to the different patterns of participation in the current Spanish regions and (b) inclusive institutions are better able to leave this cultural imprint when they affect the political process at a more proximate level to the bulk of the population. This section deals with the relation between the measures of participation and

the historical institutions separately and then argues about the capacity that inclusive institutions have to generate these cultural traits depending on their proximity.

Table 1
PARTICIPATION MEASURES AND HISTORICAL POLITICAL VARIABLES:
COEFFICIENTS OF LINEAR CORRELATION

	[1] <i>Local_incl</i>	[2] <i>State_incl</i>	[3] <i>Part_index</i>	[4] <i>intpol</i>	[5] <i>infopol</i>	[6] <i>convpol</i>	[7] <i>action</i>	[8] <i>association</i>	[9] <i>infogov</i>
[1] <i>Local_incl</i>	1								
[2] <i>State_incl</i>	0.306**	1							
[3] <i>Part_index</i>	0.605***	0.345**	1						
[4] <i>intpol</i>	0.435***	0.301**	0.818***	1					
[5] <i>infopol</i>	0.443***	0.192	0.726***	0.431***	1				
[6] <i>convpol</i>	0.420***	0.235	0.797***	0.854***	0.606***	1			
[7] <i>action</i>	0.420***	0.243**	0.619***	0.477***	0.157	0.389***	1		
[8] <i>association</i>	0.468***	0.418***	0.698***	0.384***	0.494***	0.255*	0.312**	1	
[9] <i>infogov</i>	0.423***	0.073	0.604***	0.220	0.366***	0.15	0.407***	0.619***	1

Notes: *Significant at 10%; **Significant at 5%; ***Significant at 1%. *Local_incl*, *State_incl* and *Part_index* are abbreviations for *Local inclusiveness in the Middle Ages*, *State inclusiveness in the Modern Age* and *Participation Index*, respectively.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 1 provides the correlation coefficients between the participation measures and the historical political variables presented in section 3.2. Both historical institutional factors present a positive relationship with the summary measure of political culture of participation and its components. Columns (1) and (2) in table 2 report ordinary least-squares (OLS) regressions of the summary measure for political culture of participation –**Participation Index** –on the historical political variables– **Local inclusiveness in Middle Ages** and **State inclusiveness in the Modern Age**. Both historical variables’ coefficients present a positive and significant effect on the development of these cultural traits. The following exercises introduce sets of controls in the regressions to assess the robustness of the results.

The regressions in columns (3) and (4) in table 2 include geographical factors as controls, which were also suggested to have a role in shaping individual preferences and cultural traits (Landes, 1998). The geographical control variables included in the regressions are **Latitude**, **Longitude**, **Altitude**, **Coast Density** (length of the coast divided by the province’s area) and the **Ruggedness** of the terrain. Appendix C presents, respectively, the descriptions and the main descriptive statistics of all the used variables. After the inclusion of these geographical factors, the coefficient for **Local-level inclusiveness** remains highly significant but **State-level inclusiveness** loses all its predictive power.

Table 2
THE IMPACT OF POLITICA INSTITUTIONS ON POLITICAL CULTURE
OF PARTICIPATION: CONTROLLING FOR GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]
	<i>Participation Index</i>			
<i>Local Inclusiveness in Middle Ages</i>	1.22*** (0.24)		0.867*** (0.29)	
<i>State Inclusiveness in Modern Age</i>		0.345** (0.14)		0.205 (0.16)
<i>Latitude</i>			0.082** (0.04)	0.127** (0.05)
<i>Longitude</i>			-0.046 (0.03)	-0.048 (0.05)
<i>Altitude</i>			-0.158 (0.34)	0.342 (0.41)
<i>Coast Density</i>			2.438** (1.17)	3.24 (2.53)
<i>Ruggedness Index</i>			0.01 (0.01)	0.017* (0.01)
<i>_cons</i>	-0.489*** (0.14)	0.00 (0.13)	-3.82** (1.65)	-5.692** (2.04)
N	50	50	50	50
adj. R ²	0.3527	0.1009	0.4248	0.3193

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; robust errors in columns (1) and (3) and uncorrected errors in the rest.

*Significant at 10%; **Significant at 5%; ***Significant at 1%. Estimation method: OLS.

Source: Own elaboration.

Another concern is that this distribution of cultural traits may simply be reflecting, as modernization theory could assert¹⁶, current regional socioeconomic conditions. These traits are supposed to be positively affected by the level of income (Inglehart and Baker, 2000) and the level of education (Campbell, 2006; Helliwell and Putnam, 2007), whereas inequality in its various forms is supposed to have a negative impact (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Kyriacou and López-Velásquez, 2014). However, one must also expect these issues to be endogenous to the considered cultural traits. Due to reverse causality, one must be careful when interpreting the outcomes. What we are able to assess is whether the historical political institutions had a distinctive effect on current cultural traits beyond that contained in the effect of these contemporary variables. Columns (1) and (2) of table 3 introduce a control variable for current provincial income levels: the logarithm of the average annual *GDP per capita* of the province between 1998 and 2008. While current levels of income are highly significant, historical political variables' coefficients are strongly affected, losing all their significance; but, in this case, this does not

mean that institutions did not play any role. It means that they do not contribute a further effect, apart from that offered by current GDP per capita; in fact, historical political institutions could be behind both political culture and income. Furthermore, as it was suggested (Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a, 2011; Tabellini, 2010), culture may be the missing link between historical experiences and current economic performance; this would explain the high correlation between the three factors in favor of our thesis. This complex interrelationship exceeds the scope of this article, but should be revisited in subsequent research for the case of Spain. Columns (3) and (4) introduce the current *Level of education*, the average proportion of active population with postcompulsory education during the period 1998-2008, and both institutional variables remain significant and show the expected sign. Finally, the regressions in columns (5) and (6) control for *Level of inequality*, the average Gini coefficient of household expenditure by equivalent person between 1998 and 2005¹⁷, and under this specification only *Local inclusiveness* are significant.

Table 3
THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS ON POLITICAL CULTURE
OF PARTICIPATION: CONTROLLING FOR CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
EDUCATION AND INEQUALITY

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
<i>Participation Index</i>						
<i>Local inclusiveness Middle Ages</i>	0.308 (0.24)		0.932*** (0.25)		0.72** (0.29)	
<i>State inclusiveness Modern Age</i>		0.065 (0.11)		0.215* (0.12)		0.174 (0.10)
<i>GDP per capita (1998-2008)</i>	2.99*** (0.55)	3.4*** (0.54)				
<i>Level of education (1998-2008)</i>			5.095** (2.17)	7.99*** (2.63)		
<i>Level of inequality (1998-2005)</i>					-21.89*** (5.79)	-29.19*** (4.9)
<i>_cons</i>	-29.26*** (5.26)	-33.19*** (5.27)	-4.26** (1.61)	-6.1*** (1.99)	6.34*** (1.86)	8.85*** (1.53)
N	50	50	50	50	50	50
adj. R ²	0.5219	0.5145	0.4062	0.2824	0.4812	0.4193

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. *Significant at 10%; **Significant at 5%; ***Significant at 1%. Estimation method: OLS.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 4
THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS ON POLITICAL CULTURE
OF PARTICIPATION: THE ROLE OF PROXIMITY

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
	<i>Participation Index</i>				
<i>Local Inclusiveness in Middle Ages</i>	1.113*** (0.26)	0.821** (0.32)	0.304 (0.24)	0.871*** (0.25)	0.668** (0.29)
<i>State Inclusiveness in Modern Age</i>	0.177 (0.13)	0.116 (0.16)	0.063 (0.12)	0.137 (0.12)	0.122 (0.12)
<i>GDP per capita 1998-2008</i>			2.87*** (0.63)		
<i>Level of education 1998-2008</i>				4.67** (2.27)	
<i>Level of inequality (Gini) 1998-2005</i>					-20.87*** (5.91)
<i>Latitude</i>		0.092** (0.04)			
<i>Longitude</i>		-0.03 (0.31)			
<i>Altitude</i>		-0.07 (0.40)			
<i>Coast Density</i>		2.72** (1.2)			
<i>Ruggedness Index</i>		0.01 (0.01)			
<i>_cons</i>	-0.445*** (0.13)	-4.29** (1.65)	-28.14*** (6.05)	-3.91** (1.7)	6.06*** (1.89)
N	50	50	50	50	50
adj. R ²	0.3684	0.4196	0.5150	0.4110	0.4840

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. *Significant at 10%; **Significant at 5%; ***Significant at 1%. Estimation method: OLS.

Source: Own elaboration.

The second thesis made reference to the level of proximity of the political process and asserted that those inclusive institutions that are more proximate to the bulk of the population are better able to leave this cultural imprint. When both historical institutional variables are included in the same regression and we make them to compete, as in table 4, *Local-level inclusiveness* remains always significant, except in column (3), while *State-level inclusiveness* loses its significance for all the specifications. This means that our proxy for inclusiveness at the top of the State has no distinctive effect when municipal experiences are taking

into account. Even despite being further back in time, the municipal experiences of inclusiveness in the Middle Ages seem to have been able to leave this cultural legacy in a more intense and persistent way or, perhaps, they were the only one capable of doing it.

4.2. About the unification assumption: The persistence of the historical private law

An issue that could raise doubts about the results is the continuity after unification of part of the historical formal institutions that were regionally distinctive and may have functioned as an alternative origin and factor of persistence. Formal differences in private law actually transcended unification and were not been taken into account in the stylized outline of the case. In order to isolate the direct effect of local inclusiveness on these cultural traits from the possible effect of these distinctive legal orders, strategically reduced samples will be used. These subsamples represent critical zones in which one can observe variability in *Local-level inclusiveness* within a specific civil code. The robustness of previous results is assessed in two subsamples:

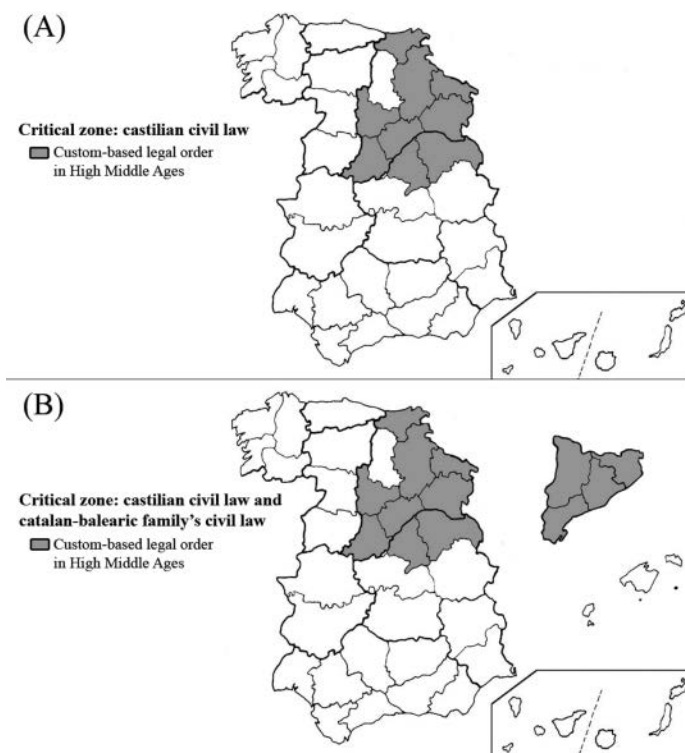


Figure 5: Critical zones: historical variables' effect isolated from the effect of civil codes

Source: Own elaboration.

- (A) Those regions in which Castilian private code had already formally ruled before the processes of unification: all the provinces under the Crown of Castile except Basque Country and Navarre. The geographic location of this critical zone of 35 observations is illustrated in figure 5.A. In column (1) of table 5, we can see how *Local inclusiveness* remains highly significant and its coefficient shows the expected sign.
- (B) Those provinces of subsample A plus Catalan provinces and the Balearic Islands are included here. Despite the unification of both crowns under the political institutions of Castile, both Mallorca and Catalonia maintained their civil codes. If one considers that the Catalan and Balearic legal orders share common roots, one could identify them as belonging to a common legal family within which to observe variation in the variable *Local inclusiveness* (see figure 5.B). Column (2) conducts the same regression on this new subsample and control for the fixed effects of these legal codes by including the dummy *Castilian private law*, which takes value 1 in the subset A. Results are again satisfactory: the coefficient for *Local inclusiveness* is significant and shows similar result to the basic model.

Table 5
ON THE UNIFICATION ASSUMPTIONS: THE PERSISTENCE OF THE HISTORICAL PRIVATE LAW

	[1]	[2]
<i>Participation Index</i>		
<i>Local Inclusiveness in Middle Ages</i>	1.103*** (0.30)	1.06*** (0.33)
<i>Castilian Private Law</i>		-0.709* (0.36)
<i>_cons</i>	-0.643*** (0.15)	-0.077 (0.36)
N	35	40
adj. R ²	0.2726	0.3932

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; robust errors in column (2) and uncorrected errors in the column (1). *Significant at 10%; **Significant at 5%; ***Significant at 1%. Estimation method: OLS. Column (1) shows reduced samples according to figure 5A and column (2) according to 5B.

Source: Own elaboration.

5. Discussion and concluding remarks

Tons of ink have been devoted to the characteristics that citizenry should have to make democracy work. Previous research has remarked upon the importance of an active citizenry that is more interested in political matters, more informed and conscious, more willing to hold the political elites accountable, etc. This research has focused on political culture of

participation, and a set of indicators has been used to account for its interregional variability within Spain. It addressed the origins of these differences and suggested the inclusiveness and the proximity of historical political institutions as principal factors. For that purpose, it delved into Spanish history and exposed the different political paths that regions followed. As proxies to account for the comparative level of inclusiveness in the political organization and the proximity of the political process, two factors were considered: the capacity of the municipalities to develop a custom-based legal order in the Middle Ages and the constraints on the executive at the top of the State in the Modern Age.

Both historical political experiences are positively correlated to the distribution of these cultural traits. The OLS regressions showed a significant effect of both facts, but not both of them presented the same robustness to the inclusion of other important determinants of culture, such as economic prosperity, education, inequality or geographic factors. The proxy for State-level inclusiveness—constraints on the executive—proved not to be robust to the inclusion of some of these controls. Moreover, when institutional variables were made to compete in the same regression, the proxy for State-level inclusiveness lost all its significance to the measure of local-level inclusiveness. It does not mean it did not have any causal effect; it could have played a role in preserving previous comparative levels of political culture of participation. It does suggest that constraints on the executive had no distinctive effect on the development of these traits apart from that related to municipal-level inclusiveness. The result is consistent with previous insights (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a) that suggested that prolonged experiences of more horizontal organization and citizens' empowerment at the local level were the factors that left this persistent legacy in northern Italy. In turn, an inclusive environment for the elites at the top of the political hierarchy may be insufficient to bring about cooperation and participation dynamics in the lower strata of society. The suggestive thesis of this work helps to open an elemental but necessary debate about whether inclusive institutions are linked to the development of participative traits simply because they offer a space of liberty within which they autonomously flourish or, rather, it is actually necessary an invitation or demand for participation from the political system.

In any case, the available data to carry out this work have important limitations affecting the investigation both in the architecture of the variables and the modelling. The procedure followed in the construction of the *Participation Index* to obtain a more complete variable with provincial variation required mixing indicators aggregated at provincial and autonomous community levels, which may have led to an overrepresentation of autonomous community-level variation. The variables to proxy institutional inclusiveness are essentially dummies, which do not capture differences in degree. Additionally, the ways to proxy inclusiveness at the two levels of proximity are not homogeneous. In order to obtain convincing empirical conclusions on the role of proximity, it will be necessary to find homogeneous ways to proxy inclusiveness at different levels of proximity.

Additionally, although this and other works (Tabellini, 2010; Peisakhin, 2015; Becker *et al.*, 2016) use the political integration of the regions to isolate culture from the subsequent

national institutions in their natural experiment designs, this involves a likely simplistic assumption that may not hold, which is that the same institutions have the same effect on different cultures. However, the coherence is different and institutions may thus have a different effect on the regional political cultures when they come into contact. When integration happens, institutions may affect differently the political culture of the regions. If this is true, it is not possible to speak with confidence about isolation from institutions and, therefore, of a cultural legacy that autonomously persists.

Given the limitations of this research, interpretations must be made cautiously. However, it remains useful as a starting point for further research and to motivate the elaboration of more complete surveys on political culture, covering a wider range of dimensions, allowing aggregations at lower administrative levels and thus facilitating the performance of more sophisticated models such as those used these last years (Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008a; Dell, 2010; Becker *et al.* 2016).

There is still a long way to walk before we fully understand the historical shaping of politically relevant orientations and behaviors. Further research should disentangle the causal links between specific institutions and specific traits and the mechanisms through which they affect each other. The most immediate developments could descriptively explore the factors (historical, social, economic, educational, etc.) that explain political culture traits. Multi-level models could be of usefulness for this enterprise¹⁸. Finally, though substantial effort has been devoted to it, many unknowns still remain about how these political orientations affect political actions and how they specifically interact with the performance of a democratic institutional system.

Annex A. Maps of Spanish autonomous communities and provinces

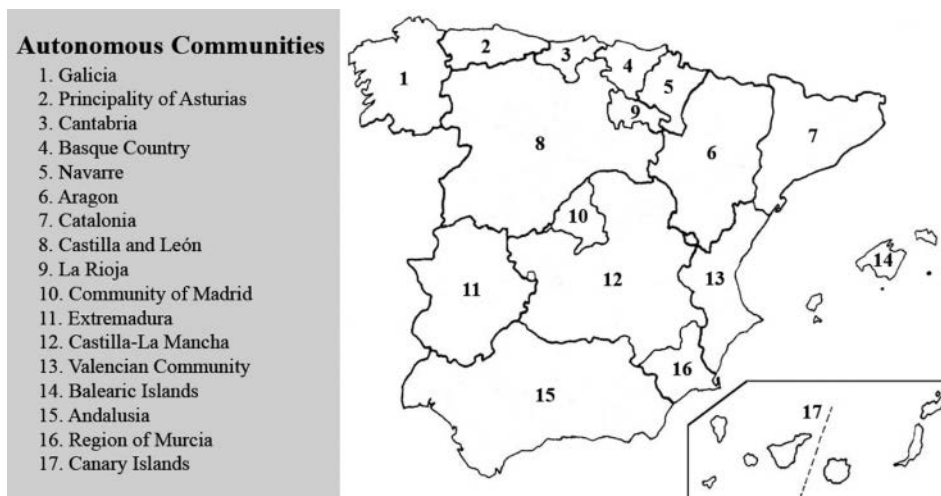


Figure A.1. Map of Spanish autonomous communities

Source: Own elaboration.

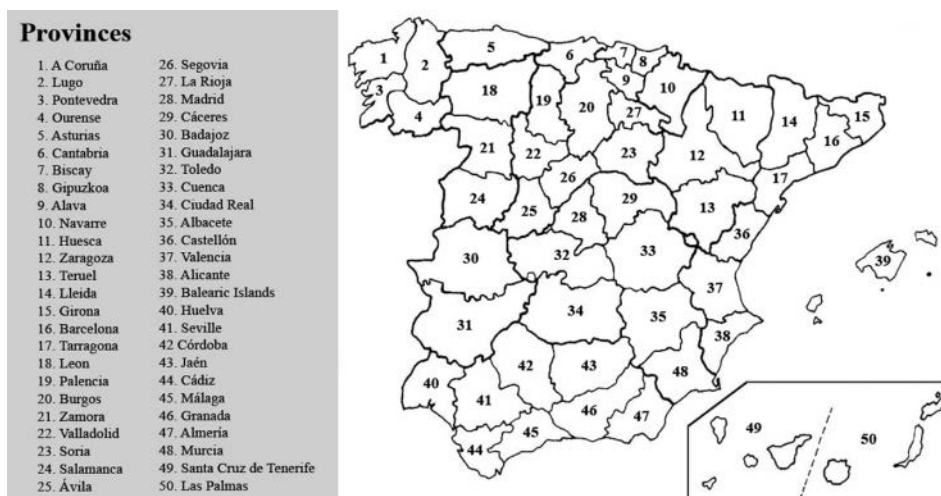


Figure A.2. Map of Spanish provinces

Source: Own elaboration.

Annex B. Assessment of constraints on the executive

Table B.1
CONSTRAINTS ON THE EXECUTIVE IN THE SPANISH REGIONS
IN 1600, 1700, 1750, 1800 AND 1850

Crown	Autonomous Community	Tabellini (2010)					Revised	
		1600	1700	1750	1800	1850	1600	1700
Crown of Castile	Andalusia	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Asturias	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Balearic Islands	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Canary Islands	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Cantabria	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Castile and Leon	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Castile-La Mancha	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Extremadura	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Galicia	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	La Rioja	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Madrid	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Murcia	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Navarre	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
	Basque Country	1	1	1	2	4	2	2
Crown of Aragon	Aragon	3	2	1	2	4	3	3
	Catalonia	3	2	1	2	4	3	3
	Valencian Community	3	2	1	2	4	3	3

Source: Own elaboration.

Annex C. Variables' description, aggregation, source and main descriptive statistics

Variable	Description	Aggregation	Source	Obs.	Mean/ freq.	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Variables on political culture of participation								
<i>infopol</i>	Information habits about politics	Province	CIS (2000)	50	-0.01	0.25	-0.65	0.50
<i>infogov</i>	Feeling of being informed about politicians' activities	Community	CIS (1998, 2002)	50	-0.001	0.14	-0.41	0.43
<i>intpol</i>	Interest in politics	Community	CIS (2000, 2008a, 2011a, 2015)	50	1.98	0.1	1.75	2.27
<i>association</i>	Participation in twelve kinds of associations	Community	CIS (1998)	50	-0.02	0.11	-0.26	0.21
<i>action</i>	Participation in alternative ways of political actions	Province	CIS (2008b, 2011b)	50	-0.04	0.13	-0.30	0.50
<i>convpol</i>	Frequency in which the respondent is involved in conversations on politics with friends, family or workmates.	Province	CIS (2000, 2011a, 2015)	50	2.35	0.15	1.98	2.71
<i>Participation Index</i>	First principal component from all political culture of participation indicators	Province	Own	50	0	1	-1.78	2.85
Variables on historical political institutions								
<i>Local inclusiveness in Middle Ages</i>	Local development of a custom-based legal order in the High Middle Ages	Province	Based on Barrero and Alonso (1989), García-Gallo (1979), Gacto <i>et al.</i> (2009)	50	20*			
<i>State inclusiveness in the Modern Age</i>	Assessment of constraints on the executive during 1600-1850, based on Tabellini (2010)	Province	Tabellini (2010)	50	0	1	-0.50	1.98

Annex C. Variables' description, aggregation, source and main descriptive statistics (*Continued*)

Variable	Description	Aggregation	Source	Obs.	Mean/ freq.	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Control variables								
GDP per capita 1998-2008	Log of the annual average GDP per capita of the province between 1998 and 2008	Province	INE	50	9.76	0.21	9.43	10.19
Level of education 1998-2008	Percentage of population that completed postcompulsory education between 1998 and 2008	Province	Fundación Banca and IVIE (2014)	50	0.76	0.06	0.57	0.86
Level of inequality 1998-2005	Average Gini coefficient of household expenditure by equivalent person between 1998 and 2005	Community	Fundación Caixa Galicia and IVIE (2009)	50	0.30	0.02	0.26	0.34
Latitude	Latitude (degrees) of the capital of the province	Province	AEMET (2013)	50	40.10	3.16	28.2	43.5
Longitude	Longitude (degrees) of the capital of the province	Province	AEMET (2013)	50	3.84	3.73	-2.82	16.25
Altitude	Altitude in meters of the capital of the province	Province	AEMET (2012)	50	0.37	0.368	0.01	1.13
Coast density	Province's coast length divided by province area	Province	Based on INE (2003)	50	0.03	0.06	0	0.29
Ruggedness	Terrain Ruggedness Index	Province	Goerlich and Cantarino (2010)	50	33.52	14.80	9.43	75.25
Castilian private law	Castilian private law before unification	Province	Own	50	35*			

Source: Own elaboration.

Notes

1. It should not be confused with the concepts of *participant political culture* or *civic culture*, which are broader concepts defined by Almond and Verba (1963). They include other dimensions related to evaluations and judgments about the system and their main actors, involving issues such as the legitimacy of the system, support for democracy or satisfaction with the performance of political parties.
2. For an exhaustive review on this topic, see Alesina and Giuliano (2015).
3. Autonomous communities are administrative and political entities of a higher hierarchical level. Most autonomous communities comprise more than one province (see Appendix A).
4. The value obtained for the autonomous community is imputed to its province(s).
5. From CIS (2000, 2008a, 2011a and 2015). The four surveys ask the same question: "Generally speaking, would you say that you are interested in politics a lot, considerably, a little or nothing at all?" By pooling both waves, a substantial number of observations is obtained, with the smallest provincial sample (Soria) comprised of 916 individuals. To build this indicator, the options are valued in a range from 1 to 4, with 1 being "nothing at all" and 4 "a lot". The indicator *intpol* corresponds to the provincial average of this measure. By pooling these waves, the province with the smallest sample was Soria, which had 916 observations after removing the missing values.
6. From CIS (2000, 2011a and 2015). The three surveys ask the following question: "Generally speaking, how often do you talk about politics with your friends, relatives or work colleagues?" The options are "usually," "occasionally," "rarely" and "never or almost never". To build this indicator, the options are valued in a range from 1 to 4, with 1 being "never or almost never" and 4 "usually". The indicator *convpol* is the provincial average of this measure. By pooling these data, the province with the smallest sample was Ávila, with 707 observations.
7. From CIS (2000) we use the questions "Could you tell me how often you read general-information newspapers? How often do you watch the news on TV? How often do you follow the news on the radio?" For every means of communication the options are "every day or almost every day", "four or five days per week", "two or three days per week", "only in the weekends", "rarely" and "never or almost never". To build this indicator, the options are valued in a range from 1 to 6, with 1 being "never or almost never" and 6 being "every day or almost every day". A single variable is obtained from the first principal component of the three means of communication and the indicator *infopol* reflects the provincial average of the variable. The smallest sample for a province corresponded to Soria, which had 233 observations.
8. From CIS (1998 and 2002). Both surveys ask "Generally speaking, would you consider you are very informed, quite informed, a little informed or not informed at all about the activities developed by your autonomous community's government? What about the activities of your autonomous community's parliament? What about your city council's activities?" Again we value the options in a range from 1 to 4, with 1 being "not informed at all" and 4 "very informed". We extract the first principal component of the responses in the three political actors (community's government, community's parliament and city council) and construct the indicator *infogov* from its average in the autonomous community. After pooling both surveys, the smallest number of observations for an autonomous community was 821 (La Rioja).
9. We obtain this information from CIS' (1998) question: "From the following associations and organizations, can you tell me about each of these organizations, whether you belong, whether you have ever belonged or whether you never belonged to...?" The kinds of associations listed were: "sports associations and groups," "local or regional societies", "religious associations", "educative, artistic and cultural associations and groups", "juvenile organizations or groups", "charitable associations", "ecologist associations", "labour unions", "political parties", "human rights organizations", "pacifist movement association", "feminist associations". For each kind of organization, a dummy is created, taking value 1 when the respondent currently belongs to any organization of that type. The first principal component of all the dummies is computed and the indicator *association* reflects its average for the autonomous communities. The autonomous community with the smallest sample was La Rioja, with 412 observations.

10. From CIS (2008b and 2011b). Both surveys ask the same question: “I would like you to tell me whether you have carried out on many occasions, sometime or never the following actions that people may pursue in order to make known their opinion about an issue”. However, because surveys do not present the same options, we take into account only those actions that appear in both surveys: “participating in a demonstration”, “buying or refusing to buy a product for ethical reasons or to protect the environment”, “participating in a strike” and “occupying buildings, participating in a lock-down or blocking the traffic”. A single variable is created by obtaining the principal component of these four alternative political actions and the indicator *action* computes its average for the autonomous communities. By pooling both surveys, the smallest sample for an autonomous community was La Rioja, which had 118 observations.
11. Although political orientations and political participation itself are often treated separately to study the effect of beliefs, attitudes and values on concrete forms of participation, since this is not the intention of this research, here they are jointly used to obtain a single indicator.
12. The ancient Visigothic code *Liber Iudiciorum* regulated the “private relations of all kinds, procedural and criminal” (García-Gallo, 1979, p. 259). It was an extensive and ambitious legal order that, given its romanist roots, granted the power to legislate to the monarch (Gacto *et al.*, 2009, p. 188; Orduña, 2003, p. 108). Although the *Liber Iudiciorum* corresponds to the Visigothic period, previous to the Muslim invasion, these monarchs opted for its validity after the *Reconquista*. The validity of this code implied generally the impossibility of developing an entire legal tradition based on the customs of the population and evolving according to the new requirements.
13. In that context, by mentioning Castile, the author refers to current provinces Ávila, Burgos, Guadalajara, La Rioja, Madrid, Santander, Segovia, Soria and parts of Palencia and Valladolid.
14. Although the current Valencian Community, especially in the north, received brief *fueros*, almost immediately after the reconquest of the zone (1261), King Jaume I promulgated a code of territorial scope for the entire Kingdom of Valencia called *Furs de Valencia*.
15. Here it refers to *Fueros Generales de Aragón*. They ruled in a territorial scope in the whole Kingdom of Aragón. Do not confuse with the municipal *fueros*.
16. For a brief discussion about this issues and modernization theory, see Section 2.
17. Unfortunately, last data that IVIE provides corresponds to 2005.
18. This empirical research was macro-analytically addressed since our independent variables of interest operate at territorial –not at individual– level.

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Resumen

En las últimas décadas, numerosos trabajos se han encargado de demostrar que las instituciones políticas son capaces de dejar un legado cultural altamente persistente. En la actualidad, España presenta una distribución geográfica considerablemente concentrada de rasgos culturales que están relacionados con la participación social y política. Este artículo estudia el posible origen histórico de estos patrones regionales y concluye a) que las regiones que experimentaron en su historia un sistema de instituciones políticas más inclusivas exhiben hoy mayores niveles de esta cultura de participación y b) que las instituciones inclusivas consiguen dejar un legado cultural más intenso cuando son más próximas al grueso de la población. Esta tesis es robusta incluso cuando se controla por otros posibles determinantes.

Palabras clave: cultura política, capital social, economía institucional, economía política, desempeño institucional.

Clasificación JEL: Z13, D70, N93, P16