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Party, Ideology, Institutions and the 1995 French Presidential Election

MICHAEL S. LEWIS-BECK AND KEVIN CHLARSON*

In French election studies, a central debate concerns the French voter's 'standing decision' – is it party or ideology? The debate has been ongoing because of data and measurement issues and, we add, because of an inadequate understanding of the role electoral institutions play. The 1995 French National Election Study allows a fresh attack on these questions. It contains promising party and ideology measures, on a very large national sample. Both party identification and left–right ideological identification are shown to be widely held, with the latter more so. Their relative structural effects are found to depend heavily on the dynamics of the dual ballot. Party is more important for electoral choice on the first ballot, while ideology is more important on the second. This finding, demonstrated in fully specified logistic regression models of the presidential vote, seems also to inhere in the logic of French electoral institutions. The two-ballot rules, coupled with the pervasiveness of ideological and party identification in the public mind, go far towards revealing and explaining an underlying stability of the French political system.

Voters arrive at the polling booth with sentiments, preconceptions and preferences that they have held over time. These beliefs and attitudes distil into what V. O. Key called a 'standing decision', a predisposition to vote for certain parties and candidates. At least in the US case, that standing decision seems best summarized in 'party identification', a concept most developed in the seminal work of Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes.¹ The original strong American findings on party identification encouraged a search for a 'general theory' of the vote in advanced Western democracies.² Among the authors of *The American Voter*, the French case received special attention. Converse and Dupeux, in the wake of that volume, published their pivotal piece comparing party identification in France and the United States.³ Campbell, addressing a French scholarly audience, launched an investigation of '*un modèle en psychologie électorale comparative*'.⁴ Commenting on such 'cross-national use of party

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¹ Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: Wiley, 1960).

² Ian Budge, Ivor Crewe, and Dennis Farlie, eds, *Party Identification and Beyond* (New York: Wiley, 1976).

³ Philip E. Converse and Georges Dupeux, 'Politicization of the Electorate in France and the United States', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 26 (1962), 1–23.

⁴ Angus Campbell, 'À la recherche d'un modèle en psychologie électorale comparative', *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 7 (1966), 579–97.

identification', Miller referred to it positively as an 'American export product'.⁵ Converse, teaming up with Pierce, began extensive investigations of party identification in France, based on the 1967–69 French National Election Study.⁶

Thus, the power of party identification began to be granted by many, but by no means all, students of the French electorate. Political scientists in France studied the variable, concluding that it was of little value in explaining French electoral choice.⁷ As Haegel summed up, the idea of party identification never became 'very pregnant' among French scholars.⁸ One reason for their scepticism was belief in the paramount role of left–right ideology. Again to quote Haegel, 'in France, the structuring dimension shaping political attitudes has generally been identification with the left or right';⁹ that is, *ideological identification*, not *party identification*, was what counted.¹⁰ Certain work by American researchers also argued that ideology is what anchors the French voter. After an examination of legislative election surveys from 1958 to 1981, Lewis-Beck concluded: 'this self-perception [left or right] is their primary tool for deciding among the parties. Indeed, ideological identity appears generally to serve as the French voter's compass'.¹¹ Further, this argument reappeared for more recent French elections.¹²

Out of the foregoing, contrasting perspectives emerge. From one, the principal long-term attachment of the French voter is seen to be party. From the other, it is seen to be ideology. A limited amount of research has looked seriously at the effects of the two independent variables, when they are placed in direct statistical competition. Converse and Pierce eventually examine the influence of both, concluding that 'it appears as though partisanship is a more efficacious frame of orientation than is the sense of one's own left–right position'.¹³ In

⁵ Warren Miller, 'The Cross-National Use of Party Identification as a Stimulus to Political Inquiry', in Ian Budge, Ivor Crewe and Dennis Farlie, eds, *Party Identification and Beyond* (New York: Wiley, 1976), pp. 121–32, at p. 22.

⁶ Philip E. Converse and Roy Pierce, *Political Representation in France* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap–Harvard University Press, 1986).

⁷ See the recent collection of studies in Daniel Boy and Nonna Mayer, eds, *The French Voter Decides* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993).

⁸ Florence Haegel, 'Le Lien partisan', in Daniel Boy and Nonna Mayer, eds, *L'Electeur français en questions* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1990), pp. 153–74, at p. 153.

⁹ Florence Haegel, 'Partisan Ties', in Boy and Mayer, eds, *The French Voter Decides*, pp. 131–48, at p. 131.

¹⁰ See, for example, the survey results in Guy Michelat, 'In Search of Left and Right', in Boy and Mayer, eds, *The French Voter Decides*, pp. 65–90, at p. 81, Table 6.

¹¹ Michael S. Lewis-Beck, 'France: The Stalled Electorate', in Russell J. Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan and Paul Allen Beck, eds, *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 425–48, at p. 446.

¹² Michael S. Lewis-Beck and Andrew Skalaban, 'France', in Mark Franklin, Thomas Mackie and Henry Valen, eds, *Electoral Change: Responses to Evolving Social and Attitudinal Structures in Fifteen Countries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 167–78; Michael S. Lewis-Beck and Glenn Mitchell II, 'French Electoral Theory: The National Front Test', *Electoral Studies*, 12 (1993), 112–27.

¹³ Converse and Pierce, *Representation in France*, pp. 149–50.

contrast, Fleury and Lewis-Beck conclude: 'Ideology, not party, is the premier psychological anchor of the French voter, according to this [their own] analysis of the 1967 French National Election Study'.¹⁴ Of course, either result is handicapped by the use of data over thirty years old. Fortunately, Pierce returned to this question with a more recent survey from the presidential election of 1988.¹⁵ He affirmed their earlier conclusion: the 'bulk of the evidence suggests that on the individual level, partisanship has a more direct impact on electoral choice than ideology'.¹⁶ Unfortunately, as Pierce is careful to note, the conclusion 'cannot be unequivocally demonstrated with the available data'.¹⁷

This article attempts to overcome this data impasse, and aims to reconcile the opposing perspectives on the role of party and ideology in the electorate. It employs the 1995 French National Election Study (FNES), by far the largest and most carefully done survey of that electorate to date ($N = 4,078$ face-to-face interviews).¹⁸ Besides the formidable sample size, the study contains unique measures that promise to move the party versus ideology debate closer to resolution. Before moving to the technical issues of operationalization and analysis, it is worth recalling why the debate merits resolution in the first place. It informs us about the degree and the determinants of stability in the French electorate. For example, an electorate with few party identifiers might still be stable, showing enduring voting patterns over time, if it also had numerous ideological identifiers. Similarly, an electorate with few ideological identifiers might be stable, if they were accompanied by many party identifiers. In such circumstances, when only one of the variables is in focus, the instability of the system would be exaggerated. If we actually find that in France both party and ideological identification are widespread and strong in their effects, it might help explain any continuities in left-right party coalitions over time. An apparently chaotic political sea may be seen as less so once the deeper anchors

¹⁴ Christopher J. Fleury and Michael S. Lewis-Beck, 'Anchoring the French Voter: Ideology Versus Party', *Journal of Politics*, 55 (1993), 1100-9, p. 1101.

¹⁵ Roy Pierce, *Choosing the Chief: Presidential Elections in France and the United States* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995).

¹⁶ Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*, p. 138.

¹⁷ Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*, p. 138.

¹⁸ The 1995 French National Election Study was carried out in May, after the first and second presidential ballots (23 April and 7 May, respectively). The French survey organization, Société Française d'Enquêtes par Sondage (SOFRES), conducted face-to-face interviews with a national sample ($N = 4,078$) of registered voters. The investigators were Daniel Boy, Jean Chiche, Elisabeth Dupoirier, Gérard Grunberg, Michael S. Lewis-Beck, Nonna Mayer and Anne Muxel. The survey was funded in part by US National Science Foundation Grant No. SBR-9421869, with Michael S. Lewis-Beck as principal investigator. The data are archived in Ann Arbor at ICPSR, which bears no responsibility for the interpretations herein. STUDYNO = 06806; CITATION = Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Nonna Mayer, and Daniel Boy et al. FRENCH NATIONAL ELECTION STUDY, 1995 [Computer file]. ICPSR version. Iowa City, IA: Michael S. Lewis-Beck, University of Iowa, Dept. of Political Science/Paris, France: Nonna Mayer and Daniel Boy et al., *Centre d'étude de la Vie Politique Française* [producers], 1995. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 1996. The data analysis reported in the accompanying tables was carried out with the logistic regression procedures of the computer program 'SPSS version 9.0'.

of both party and ideology are taken into account, especially as linked to the institutional variation of the two-round ballot.

Our approach starts with the assumption that, in reality, both party and ideology have value for understanding French electoral behaviour. First, we try to solve some thorny measurement problems surrounding the concepts. Then, we propose rival hypotheses about how the impact of party and ideology change, as a function of changing electoral institutions under the dual ballot rules. For each ballot, we assess the comparative effects of party and ideology, and try to explain the observed differences. Finally, we draw conclusions about the overall relative importance of party and ideological identification, and their effects on political system stability. The core of the data analysis consists of a series of judiciously specified logistic regression models.

MEASURING PARTY IDENTIFICATION

Unlike the US case, there has been little consensus on how to measure party identification in French election surveys. Basically, researchers have either employed an open-ended item or a closed-ended item. Converse and Pierce, who began the measurement work here, used the following open-ended item in the 1967–69 FNES:¹⁹

‘What is the party you habitually feel closest to?’

Researchers using closed-ended items have generally offered the respondent a fixed list of 6 to 8 parties, and asked him or her to pick which one they feel closest to. Here is an example, from Inglehart and Hochstein:²⁰

‘Would you tell me to which party you feel closest, with the help of this card [which lists the parties]?’

In 1968, this closed-ended item yielded an estimate of 76 per cent party identifiers. Compare this estimate to that from the above open-ended item, for the same year, 48.7 per cent. There is a difference of 27.3 percentage points, far more than could be accounted for simply by sampling error. This difference highlights the instrumentation problem. The closed-ended items have generally yielded much higher estimates than open-ended items.²¹ A 1994 survey employing such a closed-ended item provides contemporary illustration.²² The sample was asked,

‘In general, do you feel yourself rather Communist, Socialist, Ecologist, UDF, RPR, National Front, close to another party, close to no party?’ [The interviewer, after reading the question, showed the interviewee a list of the six partisan choices.]’

¹⁹ Converse and Pierce, *Political Representation in France*, p. 75.

²⁰ Ronald Inglehart and A. Hochstein, ‘Alignment and Dealignment of the Electorate in France and the United States’, *Comparative Political Studies*, 5 (1972), 343–72, at p. 371.

²¹ See the review in Lewis-Beck, ‘France: The Stalled Electorate’, pp. 428–33.

²² Michael S. Lewis-Beck, ‘Cross-National Election Surveys: A French Pre-test’, *Electoral Studies*, 15 (1996), 513–26, p. 518.

Of all respondents, 76.4 per cent identified with a party by this measure, a proportion almost exactly the same as that arrived at by the above-mentioned closed-ended item of Inglehart and Hochstein about twenty-five years earlier.

Which of these formats is more accurate? The usual closed-ended item clearly seems to produce estimates that are seriously biased upwards. Respondents take them essentially as a question about vote intention, not party identification. Evidence for this contention comes from correlating the responses with direct vote intention questions. In the foregoing 1994 survey, respondents were also asked,

‘If new legislative elections were held next Sunday, which candidate would you have the most chance of voting for? Could you choose that candidate from this list?’ [The respondent is shown a party candidate list.]

The correlation between this ‘vote’ item and the above, ostensibly a ‘party’ item, shows their almost perfect collinearity, $r = 0.94$.²³ The two items, though conceptually distinct, measure the same thing – vote.

The 1995 FNES avoids this tautology. Further, it does not risk biasing respondents by pushing them to declare a party (as the Converse and Pierce question seems to do by explicitly asserting that the respondent ‘habitually feels closest to’ some party, and it remains merely for him or her to reveal it to the interviewer). The 1995 survey implemented the following innovation, a two-step inquiry about party identification. The first item, effectively closed, simply asked whether or not the respondent had a party identification. If the respondent said ‘yes’, then he or she was open-endedly asked to name the party. Here is the questionnaire set-up:

1. ‘Generally speaking, is there a party or political movement which you feel close to?’
2. [If ‘yes’] ‘Which is it?’

These straightforward questions would appear to have considerable validity. They are simple and neutral, yet exhaustive. Respondents are prompted to think about the parties, decide whether they are close to one and, if so, name it.

A first cut at the data shows that 56.3 per cent of the respondent total ($N = 4,078$) named something they considered a party or political movement, while 40.8 per cent named nothing, and another 2.9 refused to answer. But when the 189 distinct ‘names’ given were content analysed and individually coded, the percentage found to be mentions of a real party or partisan movement dropped to 46.9 per cent of the total sample.²⁴ In sum, slightly under half the French voting public have some party identification, judging from these 1995 FNES data.

²³ Lewis-Beck, ‘Cross-National Election Surveys’, p. 522.

²⁴ Details of the coding procedure are reviewed in the Appendix.

MEASURING IDEOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION

In comparison to party identification, the measurement of left–right ideological identification is more settled. To some extent, this is because the concept of ordering political preferences from left to right was born in France, during the Revolution. And, from that time, it has persisted as a device citizens and elites use for sorting out issues of the day. With regard to scientific measurement, survey organizations have explicitly been asking respondents to position themselves on the left or the right since 1946.²⁵ Generally, the strategy is to ask the respondent to place himself or herself on a scale running from left to right. Sometimes the scales are ten-point, sometimes three-point, but usually they are seven-point.²⁶ Here is what has come to be the standard item, from the 1995 survey:

‘One usually classifies French people on a scale of this type, going from left to right. Where would you personally place yourself on this scale?’ [Interviewer shows respondent a seven-point scale running from left to right.]

Of the total sample ($N = 4,078$), fully 98.1 per cent were able to locate themselves at one of the points on this scale. This high percentage is not atypical. In the 1988 FNES, 97 per cent were able to place themselves on the scale.²⁷ Moreover, from 1964 to 1988, SOFRES posed the question another eleven times, and placement ranged from 90 to 94 per cent.²⁸

Across the Fifth Republic, then, ideological identification, defined as socio-psychological attachment to a particular position on a political attitude scale ranging from left to right, appears to have been consistently high. But these estimates – of 90 per cent and up – undoubtedly exaggerate the degree of actual ideological thinking in the French electorate. In their pathbreaking work, Deutsch, Lindon and Weill observed that there was an uninvolved and uninformed group of citizens who came from the electoral *marais*, or ‘swamp’.²⁹ These respondents tended to pick the middle value of the left–right scale (such as the neutral value ‘4’) and, according to the argument, really held no ideological beliefs. Deutsch and colleagues estimated that this middle group numbered 31 per cent of the respondents.³⁰ One might contend that the option of the middle choice, e.g., number ‘4’, acts as a sort of filter on the left–right question, allowing those who actually possess no coherent ideology a face-saving way of ‘ducking’ a meaningless decision. If these in the centre are simply removed from the count, the number of ideological identifiers would

²⁵ See *Sondages*, 8 (no.14, 16 July 1946), 166.

²⁶ See the review in Michelat, ‘In Search of Left and Right’.

²⁷ Guy Michelat, ‘A la recherche de la gauche et de la droite’, in Boy and Mayer, eds, *L’Electeur français en questions*, at p. 71.

²⁸ Michelat, ‘A la recherche de la gauche et de la droite’, p. 73.

²⁹ Emeric Deutsch, Denis Lindon and Pierre Weill, *Les Familles politiques aujourd’hui en France* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1966).

³⁰ Deutsch, Lindon and Weill, *Les Familles Politiques*.

drop considerably, to 60 per cent or so, depending on the survey. For example, in the 1988 CEVIPOF national election survey, 97 per cent selected one of the ideology self-placement categories from '1' to '7', with 28 per cent selecting the middle '4'.³¹ Subtracting this centre category from the total reduces the estimated ideological identifiers to 69 per cent.

While 69 per cent may be a more realistic estimate, it poses a difficulty. By excluding all of those in the centre, it misleadingly implies that virtually no one in the centre is involved or informed (but those on the left or the right are). According to the 1988 CEVIPOF data, 39 per cent of the centre are 'not at all' interested in politics; however, of those on the right, fully 32 per cent are also 'not at all' interested in politics, while for those on the left, the number is 28 per cent.³² Thus, while political inattention is slightly greater at the centre, it affects voters along the entire spectrum. Put another way, someone may declare themselves on the right or the left, but in fact give that declaration little meaningful policy content. Thus, to rephrase the issue raised by Deutsch, Lindon and Weill: how do we exclude the uninvolved and uninformed from the ideological count, regardless of their self-placement (left, centre or right)?³³ Choosing a number on a scale is one thing, applying left-right reasoning to the messy world of politics is another. Within French political science, considerable methodological effort has gone into fleshing out the substantive meaning of these scale scores. Most particularly, Michelat has demonstrated those on the left have very different issue positions from those on the right.³⁴ The 1995 FNES data allow further tests of the issue content of the left-right dimension. We propose that, to the extent placement on the seven-point scale is meaningful, it will discriminate between issue positions. For voters who think ideologically, their *left-right self-placement* score will predict their issue stance; for the non-ideological thinkers, it will not. By separating these two groups, we can get a more accurate estimate of the percentage of ideological identifiers in the electorate.

In the 1995 survey, respondents expressed their views on thirteen national policy questions: equality, feminism, reform, competition, profit, unions, nationalization, authority, private schools, solidarity, privatization, Islam, Catholicism. They were asked to rate their attitudes on a four-point scale, from 'very positive' (scored '4') to 'very negative' (scored '1'). For example, someone who was highly in favour of nationalization would be expected to score a '4' ('very positive') on that item. These items, taken together, were used to compose an additive *issue index*, with a theoretical range of 13 to 52. The items were coded consistently, so that a 'very positive' score would be the expected leftist response, a 'very negative' score would be the expected rightist response.

³¹ Michelat, 'A la recherche de la gauche et de la droite', p. 71.

³² Jean Ranger, 'Les Français s'intéressent-ils à la politique?' in Boy and Mayer, eds, *L'Electeur français en questions*, at p. 138.

³³ Deutsch, Lindon and Weill, *Les Familles politiques*.

³⁴ Michelat, 'A la recherche de la gauche et de la droite'.

Given this coding, higher index scores should be predicted from more leftist self-placement scores.

In other words, if they are thinking ideologically, from a more or less coherent belief system, their left–right seven-point scale position will foretell their issue position. To test this proposition, we regressed the issue index variable on the left–right self-placement scale. The ordinary least squares (OLS) statistics from this left–right model of issues indicate a fairly good fit for survey data, $R = 0.50$, standard error of estimate = 3.62. Therefore, generally speaking, if we know how French voters see themselves ideologically, we can make a rather close determination of how they stand on these issues. But this generalization does not hold for all French voters. Specifically, it does not hold for the non-ideological voters.

What defines this non-ideological group? We defined them as those voters whose issue position was poorly predicted from left–right self-placement. That is, the residual (the actual value minus the predicted value of the issues index) was so large that their ideological placement really revealed little or nothing about their issue stance. Take as a cut-off point an absolute residual value exceeding one standard error of estimate (i.e., > 3.62). There are 28.9 per cent of the respondents over this line, a reasonable estimate of the non-ideological group, given the actual distribution of scores on the issue index. In particular, over 85 per cent of respondents had issue scores of from 28 to 39, for an effective range of 11. A prediction error exceeding 3.62 is equivalent to a third of that range, which substantively would mean, say, that an extremist on issues could be mistaken for a middle-of-the-roader, or vice versa. For voters with residuals of that magnitude, left–right self-placement has no issue content, it gives their political thinking no coherence, so they are properly labelled non-ideological. That group, added to the 1.9 who failed to place themselves on the left–right scale at all, reduces the estimate of actual ideological identifiers to 69.2 per cent (i.e., $100 - 28.9 - 1.9 = 69.2$). While only an approximation, it would seem to be a fairly good one. Commenting on the meaning of ‘left’ and ‘right’ among 1967 FNES respondents, Converse and Pierce conclude ‘only about 65 percent understand what these terms mean’.³⁵ We arrive at almost the same estimate.

Both these two long-term forces – party identification and ideological identification – have considerable reach across the French electorate. The former is possessed by about half the voters, the latter by about two thirds (more precisely, the estimates are 47 per cent versus 69 per cent). Electoral scope, i.e., how many actually possess the identification, is a necessary, but not a sufficient, measure of the power of these variables. A long-term force is marked by its dynamic properties. Unfortunately, these data are cross-sectional, rather than

³⁵ Converse and Pierce, *Political Representation in France*, p. 129.

panel.³⁶ Fortunately, results from key items have dynamic implications. Respondents were asked,

‘Would you say that your father (mother) was left-leaning, right-leaning, or neither left nor right?’

Among those who reported a left-leaning father, 71 per cent said they were also left-leaning. If the mother was reported as left-leaning, 75 per cent said they too were left-leaning.³⁷ These are recall data, so the percentages may exaggerate the fidelity of values transmission from parent to child. Still, these results certainly support the extended earlier work of Percheron, and Percheron and Jennings, which shows a strong left–right transmission from parent to child.³⁸ These scholars went on to demonstrate that this left–right transmission was actually stronger than the transmission of partisanship.

The 1995 data have no direct question on party transmission. However, an indirect measure of its stability comes from an item on strength of party attachment. About half (46.2 per cent) of those who declared a party identification said it was ‘very strong’, while the rest said ‘not very strong’. Overall, then, for about a quarter of the French electorate party identification does run deep. Because of measurement differences, no immediate comparison of the over-time stability of the two variables can be made. While ideology touches more voters than party, both obviously evoke lasting loyalties among large sectors of the public.

PARTY, IDEOLOGY AND ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

Understanding the vote choice in a French presidential election requires appreciation of the electoral rules. Beginning with the 1965 contest, the French president has been elected by a majority two-ballot system. In order to win on the first ballot, something which no one has done in the Fifth Republic, a candidate must gain more than 50 per cent of the vote. On the second ballot,

³⁶ Panel analysis, with individual voters surveyed repeatedly over time, would certainly aid in answering the question of which long-term force, party identification or ideological identification, has more pull on the electorate. Lamentably, the only panel study carried out, the 1967–69 work by Converse and Pierce (*Political Representation in France*, see especially Appendix A) has never been publically archived and therefore is not available for analysis. Further, reported analyses on that panel raise troubling issues concerning sample size (with *N* perhaps falling below 200) and atypicality of the sampling period (due to the events of 1968 and to the resignation of de Gaulle). These issues cannot be resolved here. See the spirited exchange between Philip E. Converse and Roy Pierce, ‘Comment on Fleury and Lewis-Beck: “Anchoring the French Voter: Ideology Versus Party”’, *Journal of Politics*, 55 (1993), 1110–17; and Christopher J. Fleury and Michael S. Lewis-Beck, ‘Déjà Vu All Over Again: A Comment on the Comment of Converse and Pierce’, *Journal of Politics*, 55 (1993), 1118–26. Suffice it to say that a publicly available, up-to-date, well-executed panel of French electoral data is much needed by the research community.

³⁷ Numbers are virtually identical for the transmission of right-leaning attitudes.

³⁸ Annick Percheron, ‘Ideological Proximity among French Children: Problems of Definition and Measurement’, *European Journal of Political Research*, 5 (1977), 53–81; Annick Percheron and M. Kent Jennings, ‘Political Continuities in French Families’, *Comparative Politics*, 13 (1981), 421–36.

the top two candidates from the first ballot face each other, with the lead vote getter declared the winner. These rules strongly influence the decisions of candidates, parties and voters.³⁹ For example, on the first ballot there tend to be many candidates, in part because it is easier to ‘win’. That is, one does not need a majority; rather, all one needs to do is avoid finishing ‘third’. In the 1995 presidential election, first round, eight candidates got over 3 per cent of the vote. Only the leaders – Jospin (23.3 per cent) and Chirac (20.8 per cent) – ‘won’, going on to the second round, which Chirac took.

Since the overwhelming majority of French voters (92 per cent) possess either a party identification or an ideological identification, our expectation is that these variables will largely determine choice at either ballot. After all, these variables generally represent long-standing commitments, not readily changed by considerations of the moment. However, because of the dual ballot rules, we do expect the relative importance of these two variables to change.

We begin by offering three axioms from the literature on voting under the dual ballot in France, then derive specific hypotheses about the relative effects of party identification and left–right identification on the first and second presidential votes. According to one well-known adage, ‘at the first round of French elections voters choose and at the second round they eliminate’.⁴⁰ That is, first round choice is ‘sincere’, while the second round choice is not. Rather, the latter is essentially negative, a rejection of the most objectionable of the two candidates. This suggests that on the first round party identification (P) will dominate ideological identification (I) as an explanation of vote choice, since the voter is selecting the party or a candidate closest to his or her true preferences. On the second ballot, the voter’s party is probably not running.⁴¹ And, in any case, the voter focuses on eliminating the candidate farthest away from his or her own issue position. The suggestion is that on the second ballot ideology now dominates party identification as an explanation of vote choice. To formalize Hypothesis 1: on the first ballot, $I < P$; on the second ballot, $I > P$.

Hypothesis 1 is closest to our own perspective. We see first ballot voters as taking the opportunity to exercise their party identification, which most will not be able to do on the second ballot. Then, they must rely on their ideology, in conjunction with signals from their party leaders (we develop these points further below). However, there are rival hypotheses. A competing view of the two-ballot vote calculus in France takes inspiration from David Hanley, who reports the idea that on the ‘first ballot one protests but that at the second one

³⁹ Joseph A. Schlesinger and Mildred Schlesinger, ‘The Stability of the French Party System: The Enduring Impact of the Two-Ballot Electoral Rules’, in Michael S. Lewis-Beck, ed., *How France Votes* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 2000), pp. 130–52.

⁴⁰ Robert Elgie, ‘The Institutional Logics of Presidential Elections’, in Robert Elgie, ed., *Electing the French President: The 1995 Presidential Election* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1996), pp. 51–72, at p. 61.

⁴¹ The second ballot candidates, Jospin and Chirac, received 44.1 per cent of the total first ballot vote. The remaining 55.9 per cent of first ballot voters selected another party candidate, who did not make it to the second ballot.

TABLE 1 *Rival Hypotheses on the Effects of Party Identification and Ideological Identification, 1995 First and Second Presidential Ballots*

	First ballot	Second ballot
Hypothesis 1	Ideology < Party	Ideology > Party
Hypothesis 2	Ideology = Party	Ideology < Party
Hypothesis 3	Ideology > Party	Ideology > Party

votes for real'.⁴² Here the sincere choice takes place on the second ballot, not the first. At first the voter lashes out, complains, seizes the moment. After that is done, the second ballot presents itself, and the voter settles down to his or her more serious convictions. By this scenario, on the first ballot the impact from longer-term attachments, such as party or ideological identification, should be limited and essentially equal. However, on the second ballot the voter chooses the party candidate he or she 'really' wants. The implication is that party dominates ideology in shaping the second ballot vote. To formalize Hypothesis 2: on the first ballot, $I = P$; on the second ballot, $I < P$.

A third perspective on decision rules for the presidential vote comes from David Goldey, who argues that the French 'vote from the first round for the most likely left or right victor on the run-off'.⁴³ The idea seems clear. The French voter, who appears rather sophisticated, makes broad ideological calculations for the long term. He or she considers his or her own ideological position, then asks, 'What candidate of my ideological stripe – left for left, right for right – has the best chance of being elected president?' In these circumstances, ideological identification obviously dominates party identification, on both the first and second ballots. To formalize Hypothesis 3: on the first ballot, $I > P$; on the second ballot, $I > P$. These three hypotheses, summarized in Table 1, begin our theoretical inquiry, but they by no means end it. After model specification, we provide more precise comparisons of the magnitudes of the coefficients of these variables, as operationalized below. These results provide fodder for the further elaboration of our theoretical concerns.

MODELLING THE PRESIDENTIAL VOTE

Conceptually, the model up for testing these rival hypotheses begins simply enough, with a focus on the long-term factors,

$$\text{Vote} = f(\text{party identification, ideological identification}).$$

⁴² David Hanley, 'Change and Continuity in the Mitterrand Years', in Elgie, ed., *Electing the French President*, pp. 1–25, at p. 14.

⁴³ David B. Goldey, 'Analysis of the Election Results', in John Gaffney and Lorna Milne, eds, *French Presidentialism and the Election of 1995* (Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 1997), pp. 55–84, at p. 55.

Obviously, these explanatory factors – party and ideology – need not occupy hermetically separate places in the voter’s mind, nor will they be generally shown empirically independent. In fact, depending on how they are operationalized, they may become so collinear as to make impossible reliable separation of effects.⁴⁴

Happily, a dummy variables approach to the measurement of party and ideology solves this knotty conceptual and empirical problem and, as well, facilitates the substantive assessment of their relative effects on the vote. The theoretical variable, party identification, has six major party groups – Communist, Socialist, Ecologist, UDF (Union pour la démocratie française), RPR (Rassemblement pour la république), National Front. We create six dichotomous (0–1) variables for the party identifiers, and leave one baseline category for the non-party identifiers (who so remain in the dataset and are represented in the intercept estimate). We follow a similar strategy for ideological identification. The seven-point left–right self-placement scale was transformed into six dichotomous variables, representing the distinct ideological groups: Extreme Left, Solid Left, Moderate Left, Moderate Right, Solid Right, Extreme Right.⁴⁵

These variables measuring some form of partisan attachment, taken together, can render a good statistical account of the vote for president in 1995. However, even given the decision-making context imposed by the dual ballot, they provide a theoretically incomplete explanation. Other general theories of the French vote need to be incorporated, in at least a basic way, to avoid distorted conclusions. Leading alternatives are the sociological and economic models.⁴⁶ For the former, the seminal work is Michelat and Simon, demonstrating the strength of the ‘heavy variables’ (*les variables lourdes*) of class and religion as determinants of French voting behaviour.⁴⁷ The political force of these cleavages has persisted across elections of the Fifth Republic. From an analysis of the impact of sociological variables in the 1988 presidential election, Boy and Mayer conclude these ‘basic variables continue to sketch the contours of the French electoral landscape’.⁴⁸ With regard to economic models, the basic notion is that voters are moved by their judgements of the national economy.⁴⁹ In a

⁴⁴ For examples of this, see the test results in Lewis-Beck, ‘Cross-National Election Surveys’.

⁴⁵ Those at the neutral scale value of 4 served as the baseline category. The non-ideological identifiers located earlier were also included in the baseline category, thus paralleling the inclusion strategy for the non-party identifiers.

⁴⁶ See the useful review in chap. 2 of Nonna Mayer and Pascal Perrineau, *Les Comportements politiques* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1992).

⁴⁷ Guy Michelat and Michel Simon, *Classe, religion et comportement politique* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po/Éditions sociales, 1977). See also Daniel Boy and Nonna Mayer, ‘Que reste-il des variables lourdes?’, in Daniel Boy and Nonna Mayer, eds, *L’Électeur à ses raisons* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1997), pp. 101–38.

⁴⁸ Boy and Mayer, *The French Voter Decides*, p. 174.

⁴⁹ Jean-Dominique Lafay, ‘Les Conséquences électorales de la conjoncture économique: Essais de prévision chiffrée pour mars 1978’, *Vie de Sciences Économiques*, 75 (October 1977), 1–7; Jean-Jacques Rosa and Daniel Amson, ‘Conditions économiques et élections: Une analyse politico-économétrique (1920–1973)’, *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 26 (1976), 1101–24.

review of French economic voting studies, Lewis-Beck asserted that 'economics is an important determinant of the vote in contemporary France. Indeed, for some elections, such as those of 1981, economic concerns are decisive'.⁵⁰ Under cohabitation, economic voting appears to have maintained itself, although in more sophisticated form.⁵¹ Reporting on the 1995 presidential contest, Lewis-Beck found economic effects pervasive.⁵²

We see these sociological and economic paradigms as complimentary to, rather than competitive with, the explanation developed here. Our intention is to incorporate the central variables of these other perspectives. Once these social and economic controls are in place, we eliminate a source of potentially serious spuriousness, and arrive at a truer assessment of the effects of party and ideology.⁵³ Table 2 shows a logistic regression analysis of choice among six first ballot candidates – Hue, Jospin, Voynet, Balladur, Chirac, Le Pen. These candidates effectively exhaust the active political space, receiving 90 per cent of the vote.⁵⁴

There are six equations, each with a dichotomous Dependent Variable, scored 1 = vote for the candidate, 0 = otherwise. Alongside the independent variables for party and ideology are the variables for social class, religious practice and economic evaluation. These measures have become standard in French election survey work.⁵⁵ Social class is measured by occupation of respondent, divided into three categories – Self-Employed, White-Collar, and Blue-Collar (where Blue-Collar is the excluded baseline category in a dummy variable treatment). Religion is measured by number of times the respondent attended mass. Economics refers to collective and retrospective evaluation, with the respondent asked to assess the condition of the national economy over the past year.

PARTY AND IDEOLOGY EFFECTS, THE FIRST BALLOT

The fuller model specification enhances the explanation of the first ballot vote. The classic 'heavy variables' from the sociological perspective perform as expected. Social class exercised a significant influence. In particular, workers were more likely to vote for the Communist candidate, Hue, than were the

⁵⁰ Michael S. Lewis-Beck, 'Economics and Electoral Behavior in France', in Norman Vig and Stephen Schier, eds, *Political Economy in Western Democracies* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), pp. 284–303, at pp. 300–1.

⁵¹ Jean-Dominique Lafay, 'Political Dyarchy and Popularity Functions: Lessons from the 1986 French Experience', in Helmut Norpoth, Michael S. Lewis-Beck and Jean-Dominique Lafay, eds, *Economics and Politics: The Calculus of Support* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1991), pp. 123–40.

⁵² Michael S. Lewis-Beck, 'Le Vote du "porte-monnaie" en question', in Boy and Mayer, eds, *L'Electeur a ses raisons*, at pp. 260–1.

⁵³ It is worth noting that the introduction of these controls does not generate a collinearity problem.

⁵⁴ Their first ballot shares were: Hue, 8.6; Jospin, 23.3; Voynet, 3.3; Balladur, 18.6; Chirac, 20.8; Le Pen, 15.0.

⁵⁵ Most recently, see Boy and Mayer, *L'Electeur a ses raisons*.

TABLE 2 *Model of the 1995 First-Ballot Presidential Vote (Logistic Regression Estimates, Unstandardized Coefficients, Standard Errors in Parentheses)*

Variable	Candidate						
	Hue	Jospin	Voynet	Balladur	Chirac	Le Pen	
Communist (COM)	3.17*** (0.25)	-0.87*** (0.26)	-1.70 (1.03)	-4.21 (4.89)	-1.16 (0.75)	-2.04** (0.74)	
Socialist (SOC)	-0.32 (0.20)	1.51*** (0.11)	-0.61* (0.29)	-1.35*** (0.38)	-1.43*** (0.30)	-1.20*** (0.24)	
Ecologist (ECO)	-0.83 (0.74)	-1.05** (0.41)	3.42*** (0.30)	-0.10 (0.55)	-1.28 (0.73)	-0.80 (0.60)	
UDF	-0.37 (1.03)	-0.85 (0.53)	-0.69 (1.03)	1.27*** (0.22)	-0.70** (0.29)	-1.56** (0.60)	
RPR	-1.82 (1.03)	-1.71*** (0.43)	-1.17 (0.75)	-0.26* (0.14)	1.12*** (0.11)	-0.66*** (0.18)	
National Front (FN)	-0.60 (1.03)	-5.67 (5.22)	-5.41 (13.77)	-1.39*** (0.44)	-2.60*** (0.59)	2.84*** (0.25)	
Extreme left	1.43*** (0.32)	0.98*** (0.20)	0.14 (0.44)	-2.38** (1.01)	-1.56** (0.54)	-0.38 (0.34)	
Solid left	1.43*** (0.28)	1.16*** (0.15)	0.02 (0.34)	-2.33*** (0.60)	-2.16*** (0.47)	-0.76** (0.28)	
Moderate left	1.29*** (0.26)	1.18*** (0.13)	0.18 (0.26)	-1.92*** (0.34)	-1.28*** (0.24)	-0.59** (0.20)	
Moderate right	-0.30 (0.42)	-1.19*** (0.22)	-1.62*** (0.49)	0.52*** (0.14)	0.83*** (0.12)	-0.02 (0.17)	
Solid right	-1.85 (1.04)	-1.72*** (0.38)	-1.94** (0.75)	0.58*** (0.16)	0.82*** (0.14)	0.65*** (0.18)	
Extreme right	-4.74 (6.91)	-1.65** (0.60)	-6.21 (11.22)	0.32 (0.24)	0.55** (0.20)	1.04*** (0.23)	

Religion	0.14 (0.10)	- 0.04 (0.05)	0.05 (0.11)	- 0.32*** (0.04)	- 0.06 (0.04)	0.21*** (0.06)
Self-employed	- 1.07** (0.43)	0.24 (0.17)	- 0.04 (0.38)	0.08 (0.16)	0.19 (0.54)	- 0.33 (0.19)
White-collar	0.03 (0.17)	- 0.09 (0.10)	0.20 (0.23)	0.30** (0.13)	- 0.02 (0.47)	- 0.14 (0.13)
Economics	0.09 (0.06)	0.05 (0.04)	- 0.21** (0.08)	- 0.23*** (0.04)	0.04 (0.24)	0.17*** (0.04)
Constant	- 4.67*** (0.59)	- 1.79*** (0.29)	- 2.89*** (0.63)	0.24 (0.27)	- 1.50*** (0.25)	- 3.52*** (0.35)
Percentage correctly predicted	95.68	83.32	97.28	88.23	82.68	90.90
- 2 log likelihood	1164.68	2844.62	809.07	2268.88	2830.67	2179.40
Pseudo R^2	0.33	0.32	0.25	0.22	0.24	0.19
Number of cases	3,891	3,891	3,891	3,891	3,891	3,891

Note: Statistical significance: *0.05 or better, two-tail; **0.01 or better, two-tail; ***0.001 or better, two-tail; 'Percent correctly predicted' = the percentage of the vote the model correctly predicts; Number of cases = the total sample size; Pseudo R^2 = the calculated pseudo R^2 for each model; the dependent variable = candidate choice of first ballot (1 = voted for the candidate named, 0 = otherwise). The party and ideology variables are defined as follows: party identification dummies (0,1) for each of the political parties shown (1 = party identifier, 0 = otherwise); ideology dummies (0,1) of the seven-point self-placement ideological scale with Extreme Left = 1 ... Extreme Right = 7 (with self-placement scores of 4 as the excluded baseline category). The other independent variables are as follows: Religion (six-point scale, from 1 = attend mass several times a week, to 6 = never attend mass or not Catholic); Self-employed (1 = respondents who are farmers, small business, artisans, liberal professions, 0 = otherwise); White-collar (1 = respondents who are salaried, not manual workers, 0 = otherwise); Economics (respondent evaluation of the national economic performance over the last year, where 1 = better, 3 = same, 5 = worse).

self-employed middle class. Religion also influenced preferences. Those who regularly attended mass gave significantly more support to the traditional right candidacy of Balladur, and significantly less support to the extreme candidacy of Le Pen. Economics had a statistically significant effect on the votes of Voynet, Le Pen and Balladur. Predictably, the strongest of these economic effects was on support for Prime Minister Balladur, who as head of government was official manager of the economy. These socio-economic results round out, in crucial ways, understanding of the first ballot choice. They provide a backdrop for consideration of the workings of partisan forces, our research focus.

As expected, identification with a candidate's party always significantly increases the vote for that candidate. And, certain parties have a stronger pull than others. Parties at the extremes, the Communists and the National Front, have the firmest candidate ties (coefficients of 3.17 and 2.84, respectively), along with the 'single-issue' Ecologists (with a coefficient of 3.42). Clearly, these voters appear to be firmly committed to sticking with their first preferences on this ballot. Interestingly, the RPR, which has the reputation of a strong party organization, has the weakest link, to candidate Chirac ($b = 1.12$). Undoubtedly, this is due partly to the draw of an incumbent RPR prime minister and candidate, Balladur, who himself received significant but mild support from identifiers ($b = 1.27$) of the weakly organized UDF. Overall, the comparative magnitude of the party coefficients conforms to general lore about the varying weight of these attachments in this particular contest. Also, they give validation to the dummy variable measurement strategy, which permits the impact of identification to vary from party to party.

One further observes that attachment to other parties can work against the given party candidate. It generally produces a negative sign, and sometimes these effects are significant and large. Consider the vote for the two top vote getters, Jospin and Chirac. Support for Jospin was significantly undercut by partisan rivalry on the left, as the negative coefficients for Communist and Ecologist identifiers indicate ($b = -0.87$ and -1.05 , respectively). From the right, his most significant opposition came from the RPR identifiers ($b = -1.71$). For Chirac, Socialist partisans on the left ($b = -1.43$), and National Front partisans on the right ($b = -2.60$) are seen to be especially against him.

Now consider ideology effects. Left-right group attachment always significantly moves these first ballot voters, independent of party identification. It is useful to reflect on the substantive meaning of this statistical independence. For example, it tells us that the likelihood of a Jospin choice is greater as a voter moves left, even if he or she does not identify with the Socialist party. In other words, ideology has its own force. Generally, ideological pressures show up in the data as expected. Moves left favour Hue and Jospin, while moves to the right favour Balladur, Chirac and Le Pen. Looking at particular ideological groups, those of the Extreme Left show their strongest preference for Hue ($b = 1.43$), and those of the Extreme Right show their strongest preference for Le Pen ($b = 1.04$). Further, there is mild disorderliness

of ideological effects, with the 'solid' and 'moderate' groupings demonstrating statistical significance (nineteen out of twenty-four coefficients) somewhat more often than the 'extreme' groupings (only seven out of twelve coefficients). Such disordinality reinforces the value of the dummy variable treatment of ideology.

We turn to the principal concern – the relative effects of Ideology (I) and Party (P). Recalling Table 1, the three general possibilities for the first ballot are $I < P$, $I = P$, $I > P$. How can the many coefficients of Table 2 serve to examine these hypotheses? We begin with the comparison of the 'home' party and 'home' ideology effects. In each of these equations, the dependent variable is the logit of Y , i.e., the logarithm of the odds of a vote [prob yes/(1 – prob yes)]. That formulation of the dependent variable permits efficient parameter estimation, via maximum likelihood rather than ordinary least squares. Also, since our independent variables of party and ideology have the same metric – simple (0,1) dummies – their unstandardized coefficients can be immediately compared to judge relative impact.⁵⁶ Take the example of the Le Pen equation. When a voter is identified with Le Pen's 'home' party, the National Front, the Le Pen logit is raised, by 2.84. Each candidate also has a 'home' ideology, indicated by the largest positive ideological group coefficient. When a voter is identified with Le Pen's home ideology, Extreme Right, the logit is raised, but only by 1.04. Party identification increases, then, the Le Pen logit much more. In Table 3, we compare home party and home ideology effects across all candidates. For every equation, home party has a bigger effect than home ideology (although typically not nearly as large as the Le Pen difference).

The extent of party influence is illustrated in another way, by translating the effects into probabilities. To estimate the probability of a candidate vote, particular X values must be set. Put the control variables at middle values: religion = 3, occupation (white-collar) = 1, and economics = 3. Fix party = 1 for home party (with the ideology variables all equal to 0), calculate the predicted log odds, and exponentiate to obtain the odds. Then, transform that result into a vote probability.⁵⁷ Applying this procedure, the estimated probability of a Le Pen vote when the National Front is the home party is 0.60. How does this compare to the home ideology effect? Follow the same procedure, but switch the party and the ideology scores, fixing the home ideology at Extreme Right = 1 (with all the party variables at 0). The estimated probability of a Le Pen vote becomes 0.20. Accordingly, home party identification triples the probability of a Le Pen vote, compared to the effect of home ideology. For all the candidates, home party changes the probability of a vote more than home ideology does (see the lower rows, Table 3). On the first ballot, party clearly surpasses ideology, as a structural influence on vote choice.

⁵⁶ Scott Menard, *Applied Logistic Regression Analysis* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage University Paper Series, 1995), pp. 43–5.

⁵⁷ For a clear explication of these steps, see Menard, *Applied Logistic Regression Analysis*, pp. 12–13.

TABLE 3 *The Relative Effects of Party and Ideology, 1995 First-Ballot Presidential Vote*

	Candidate					
	Hue	Jospin	Voynet	Balladur	Chirac	Le Pen
Home Party Effects						
Home party	Com.	Soc.	Eco.	UDF	RPR	FN
Logit change	3.17*	1.51*	3.42*	1.27*	1.12*	2.84*
Probability change	0.29*	0.40*	0.60*	0.57*	0.33*	0.60*
Home Ideology Effects						
Home ideology	Extreme left	Moderate left	None	Solid right	Moderate right	Extreme right
Logit change	1.43	1.18	†	0.58	0.83	1.04
Probability change	0.07	0.33	0.06	0.40	0.27	0.20

Notes: * The larger of the two changes, comparing party and ideology. 'Home Party' is the party variable with the largest significant positive coefficient in Table 2. 'Home Ideology' is the ideological group variable with the largest significant positive coefficient in Table 2. † No significant positive ideology coefficient in Table 2 for Voynet. 'Logit change' is the logit change when the party (or ideology) variable moves from 0 to 1 for the home party (ideology). 'Probability change' is the estimated probability of a candidate vote when the party (or ideology) variable moves from 0 to 1 for the home party (ideology), the ideology (or party) variables are at 0, and the control variables are set at middle values.

PARTY AND IDEOLOGY EFFECTS: THE SECOND BALLOT

In Table 4 the full model specification is estimated with second ballot data. First consider the impact of social and economic forces. As expected, occupation, religiosity and economic perception all yield statistically significant coefficients. The self-employed middle class favoured Chirac, indicating the traditional tie between class and right party vote still holds. Those who saw the economy as doing well also favoured Chirac, as representative of the governing party presumably responsible for the enjoyed successes. Practising Catholics, in historic fashion, went for Gaullist Chirac over Socialist Jospin.

The presence of these important socio-economic variables, operating as controls, strengthens the argument that the significant party and ideology effects are unbiased estimates. The party results are theoretically pleasing. The largest two coefficients are as expected, almost evenly balanced, with the RPR carrying the greatest pro-Chirac value ($b = 2.80$) and the Socialists carrying the greatest anti-Chirac value ($b = -2.43$). Further, Jospin picked up significant support from his major ally on the left, the Communists ($b = -2.25$). Chirac, in claiming the presidential victory, had much to thank his loyal party supporters

TABLE 4 *A Model of the 1995 Second-Ballot Presidential Vote (Logistic Regression Estimates)*

Variable	Unstandardized coefficients (Standard Errors)	Probability change
Communist	- 2.25** (0.74)	0.20
Socialist	- 2.43*** (0.24)	0.18
Ecologist	- 0.80 (0.49)	0.52
UDF	0.30 (0.38)	0.77
RPR	2.80*** (0.46)	0.98
National Front	- 0.70 (0.40)	0.55
Extreme left	- 2.56*** (0.45)	0.15
Solid left	- 3.07*** (0.37)	0.10
Moderate left	- 2.09*** (0.18)	0.23
Moderate right	1.85*** (0.19)	0.94
Solid right	3.14*** (0.41)	0.98
Extreme right	1.73*** (0.36)	0.93
Religion	- 0.32*** (0.06)	NA
Self-employed	0.62** (0.21)	NA
White-collar	- 0.02 (0.14)	NA
Economics	- 0.15*** (0.05)	NA
Constant	2.44*** (0.38)	NA
Percentage correctly predicted	89.00	NA
- 2 log likelihood	1596.23	NA
Pseudo R^2	0.63	NA
Number of cases	3,128	NA

Note: The dependent variable of second-ballot vote (1 = Chirac, 0 = Jospin); the other variables and statistics are defined as in the Notes for Table 2. NA = not applicable. 'Probability change' is the probability of a vote for Chirac when the particular party (or ideology) variable is at 1, all ideology (or party) variables are at 0, and the control variables are set at middle values. ** Significant at 0.01 or better, two-tail. *** Significant at 0.001 or better, two-tail.

for, especially as he gained no significant additional support from the other parties on the right. Observe, in particular, that the UDF coefficient is small and far from significance. Beyond party, ideology appears to have played a substantial role in the election of Chirac. On the second ballot, the coefficients for all the left-right groupings are easily statistically significant. Those in the Solid Right group were particularly likely to favour Chirac.

This brings us to the issue of the relative impact of party and ideology in the second round. A comparison of relative logit effects, like the assessment carried out with Table 3 for the first round, is straightforward. When the voter identifies with Chirac's home party, the RPR, the vote logit increases 2.80, an amount less than the 3.14 rise from identification with the home ideology of the Solid Right.

Moreover, since the second round poses only two candidate choices, the home party for the alternative is determined, unlike with the first ballot choice. Thus, we can also say that the home party coefficient for Jospin is that of the Socialists ($b = -2.43$). And, his home ideology coefficient is that of the Solid Left group ($b = -3.07$). Again, as with the Chirac choice, in terms of logit effects, ideology surpasses party.

What about a comparison of probability effects? The procedure followed for calculating vote probabilities is the same as with the first ballot equations, where the controls are set at the middle values and home ideology (or party) at 1, all else at 0. The estimated probability of a Chirac vote for an RPR identifier on the second round is 0.98. Likewise, the estimated probability of a Chirac vote for someone ideologically Solid Right is 0.98. Thus, the probability of a Chirac vote appears essentially the same here because of ceiling effects. That is, at the second round, for voters who actually label themselves as Gaullists or mainstream Right, the odds of a Chirac vote are overwhelming. In fact, the odds ratio for home party is enormous at 40.45, while the odds ratio for home ideology is even larger, at 54.60. What this means is that, for those so identified, an incumbent vote is almost certain.

But for the identifiers of other parties and ideologies, the probabilities of a Chirac vote are different, and these are also reported in Table 4 (second column). The results can be grouped, as the French do, into right and left 'political families'.⁵⁸ On the right, the family of parties consists of the RPR, the UDF, and the FN, while the ideological family is formed by the groups of the Moderate Right, the Solid Right, and the Extreme Right. Overall, one observes that those of the party family are less loyal than those of the ideological family. While the RPR supporters are completely behind Chirac, the UDF and FN supporters are much less so (respectively, probabilities are 0.98, 0.77, and 0.55). In contrast, for each right-wing ideological group, the probability of a Chirac vote always exceeds 0.92.⁵⁹ In its totality, then, ideology surpasses party in its influence on the second ballot.

The fact that ideology outweighs party on the second ballot is, at one level, unsurprising. Many of these are 'thwarted voters', whose preferred candidate did not make it to the second round.⁶⁰ Recall that from the first 1995 presidential ballot only the top two vote getters went on to the next ballot, leaving the rest of the voters (55.9 per cent) without their top candidate. Pierce notes that, among other things, such thwarted voters must decide 'between remaining loyal to their party or [left-right] tendency'.⁶¹ In his own modelling of thwarted voter decisions for the 1988 presidential contest, however, he decides not to 'compare the relative importance of left-right locations and partisan identification'.⁶² Our

⁵⁸ Michelat, 'In Search of Left and Right', p. 86.

⁵⁹ A comparable argument can be made for political families on the left, regarding the probability of a Jospin vote.

⁶⁰ Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*, p. 167.

⁶¹ Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*, p. 176.

⁶² Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*, p. 182.

goal is somewhat different, in that we do wish explicitly to compare the relative importance of party and left–right tendency among ‘thwarted voters’, and among a group we shall name ‘fulfilled voters’.

For the 1995 presidential race, we examine the ‘thwarted voters’ who identified with the parties that had no candidates making it to the second round – the Communists, the Ecologists, the UDF, the National Front. We define ‘fulfilled voters’ to be those identified with the first-round party winners – the RPR and the Socialists. Fulfilled voters, in making their second-round choice, had a home party cue in deciding for Chirac or Jospin. But thwarted voters, lacking a home party cue, might be largely influenced by their home ideology. Expressed as a hypothesis, the expectation is an interaction effect, with party registering a larger impact among fulfilled voters, as compared to thwarted voters. This interaction hypothesis is tested in Table 5, where the second-ballot model is re-estimated on these two different groups of identifiers, after appropriate coding adjustments. For column 1, the equation for fulfilled voters, there is one party identification dummy (1 = Socialist, 0 = RPR). For column 2, the equation for thwarted voters, there are three party identification dummies for the Communists, the Ecologists and the UDF, with the National Front as the baseline category.

As expected, party identification has a stonger effect among fulfilled voters, as opposed to thwarted voters. For the former, identification with the Socialists rather than the Gaullists has a highly significant impact on the probability of a vote for Chirac, lowering the predicted logit value by 6.03. In the latter, party has only one significant variable, from Communist identification, and it reduces the predicted vote logit by just 2.46. Thus, the structural influence of party identification among thwarted voters is less than half that among fulfilled voters. Support for this interaction hypothesis is reassuring but, as mentioned, unsurprising.

What does surprise, though, is the continued effect of ideology, even when party identification is controlled either strictly (as with fulfilled voters in column 1) or broadly (as with thwarted voters in column 2). The largest significant coefficient for left ideology is hardly diminished in absolute magnitude, in moving from thwarted to fulfilled voters (respectively, 4.09 to 3.46). Also, the largest significant right ideology coefficient does not drop much in such a move either (respectively, 3.00 to 2.00).

The tenacity of the ideology variable, in the face of different controls on party, suggests important things about the dynamics of second-ballot choice. Voters whose party is no longer running do not much use their standing party identification as a guide to a ‘neighbouring’, most proximate, party candidate, e.g., an Ecologist moving to Socialist candidate Jospin. Instead, these voters are prompted by ideological proximity, or distance. For instance, a leftist feels on the issues he or she is closer to Jospin (or farther away from Chirac), and so votes. Even among those whose party is still in the running, party identification is far from the whole explanation. To take an example, Jospin was supported by fellow Socialists not only because he was a Socialist but, independent of that,

TABLE 5 *A Model of the 1995 Second-Ballot Presidential Vote, Fulfilled Versus Thwarted Voters (Logistic Regression Estimates, Unstandardized Coefficients, Standard Errors in Parentheses)*

Variable	RPR and SOC identifiers only (Standard Errors)	All other party identifiers
Communist	—	— 2.46* (1.13)
Socialist	— 6.04*** (0.60)	—
Ecologist	—	— 0.39 (0.81)
UDF	—	0.50 (0.68)
RPR	—	—
National Front	—	—
Extreme left	— 2.07* (0.97)	— 9.79 (32.88)
Solid left	— 3.46*** (0.97)	— 10.17 (39.31)
Moderate left	— 1.37** (0.48)	— 4.09*** (1.12)
Moderate right	0.74 (0.63)	0.56 (0.64)
Solid right	2.00* (0.98)	3.00** (1.14)
Extreme right	0.05 (1.00)	0.42 (0.76)
Religion	— 0.09 (0.19)	— 0.34 (0.24)
Self-employed	— 0.59 (0.73)	— 0.02 (0.88)
White-collar	— 0.25 (0.42)	— 0.89 (0.62)
Economics	— 0.03 (0.14)	— 0.50** (0.18)
Constant	4.68*** (1.29)	4.77** (1.69)
Percentage correctly predicted	97.62	93.83
— 2 log likelihood	242.62	119.171
Pseudo R^2	0.86	0.73
Number of cases	1,258	324

Note: The dependent variable of second-ballot vote (1 = Chirac, 0 = Jospin); the other variables and statistics are defined as in the Note for Table 2.

because he was clearly on the left. It appears that an appreciation of ideological influence in second-ballot choice is essential, whether the voters are thwarted or fulfilled.

CONCLUSIONS

Of the rival hypotheses in Table 1, Hypothesis 1 thus receives more support. On the first round, there appears to have been a considerable amount of sincere voting. Party identification exercised a strong effect, with voters of virtually all parties exercising their first preference. On the second ballot, however, ideology came into prominence. One reason for this was the election rules themselves, which reduce the competition to two candidates. Thwarted voters, left without

their party candidate to support, had to rely heavily on ideological matching. Even among fulfilled voters, though, ideology played a significant role.

This study is not the first to emphasize the question of the relative importance of party and ideology for the French electorate. Converse and Pierce gave the issue extensive attention, as have Fleury and Lewis-Beck.⁶³ Looking at the same 1967 dataset, these two research teams came to rather different conclusions. More recently, Pierce returned to the topic with his analysis of a 1988 national electoral survey.⁶⁴ He maintained his earlier conclusion that ‘partisanship has a more direct impact on electoral choice than ideology’.⁶⁵ The study at hand does not directly overturn that conclusion, in that we do not attempt to reanalyse the 1988 data. Lamentably, the 1988 survey appears to have neither the sample nor the measurement characteristics necessary to replicate the elaborate analysis the 1995 FNES has made possible.⁶⁶ Rather than make a flawed foray into the 1988 dataset, we emphasize the clear findings that emerge from this 1995 data base.

Happily, these findings point to reconciliation rather than intensification of the debate. From our evaluation of the various coefficients estimating the impact on the vote, we see that on the first ballot party effects do surpass ideology effects. However, on the second ballot, ideology clearly has a stronger effect than party. Thus, the effect of party versus ideology appears conditional, dependent on ballot order. A caveat is that effect is also conditioned by the variable’s scope, i.e., its presence or absence. Neither ideology nor party can influence choice if the voter holds neither identification. To the extent scope is taken into account, ideological identification may play a more important role than party identification, for the mere reason that more French voters have an ideology than have a party.

Any explanation of the French voter that relies heavily on just one anchoring variable – be it party or be it ideology – will be theoretically unsound and yield strongly biased estimates. As we have come to accept ‘cohabitation’ in the French executive, with the president and the prime minister, we must accept ‘cohabitation’ of these two identifications in the French political psyche. French voters appear truly bipolar in their long-term attachments. An interesting question for future research is whether the conclusion will hold for other presidential races, and for legislative races as well.

Commenting on the 1997 National Assembly elections, Schlesinger and

⁶³ Converse and Pierce, *Political Representation in France*; Fleury and Lewis-Beck, ‘Anchoring the French Voter’.

⁶⁴ Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*.

⁶⁵ Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*, p. 138.

⁶⁶ The 1988 French presidential election survey examined by Pierce (*Choosing the Chief*) has a full sample size of 1,032, only about a quarter of the 1995 FNES. This poses the difficulty of rather small samples once multivariate analysis is undertaken. (For example, with the key first ballot vote table, $N = 574$, in Pierce (*Choosing the Chief*, p. 126).) Further, the sample does not appear representative. Its respondents exhibit a pronounced leftist bias, estimating 60.4 per cent second-round support for Mitterrand, when in fact he received 53.8 per cent (Pierce, *Choosing the Chief*, Appendix A). Equally important, the 1988 dataset does not have the extensive battery of items that the 1995 study has, in particular the new party identification measures explored here.

Schlesinger assert that ‘any analysis of their effect on the party system must emphasize above all that nothing had changed’.⁶⁷ Much the same can be said regarding the effects in the 1995 presidential election. The forces of class, religion and economics moved voters in the usual way. The dual-ballot rules conditioned the important effects of ideology and party, as they have done for all popular presidential elections of the Fifth Republic. On the first ballot, leaders of the two largest parties – the Socialists and the RPR – won. On the second ballot, the electorate divided into ideological camps of left and right. French electoral institutions, in conjunction with entrenched socio-economic factors and well-worn habits of partisan thinking, have trapped voters into a relentless pattern of reproduction. In the face of wide possibility for electoral change, there is limited variance in electoral outcome. Since virtually every French voter – 92 per cent – adheres to either an ideology or a party, the system exhibits deep stability over time. On the political surface, candidates may seem to come and go without reason, but underneath they are bound together in predictable left–right partisan coalitions.

APPENDIX: CODING PARTY IDENTIFICATION

There were 189 distinct responses to the open-ended party identification question. For a response to be counted as a valid party identification, it had to name a known extant party or political movement. The six major party groups provided almost all of these responses: Rassemblement pour la république (RPR), Ecologist, Communist, Socialist, Union pour la démocratie française (UDF), National Front. The remaining party identification responses named include the following small, splinter parties and movements, all of which were mentioned only by one respondent unless otherwise noted in the parentheses: Centre des démocrates sociaux (13), Lutte ouvrière (7), Radical (3), Republican (2), Verts (17), Social démocrate (4), Mouvement des radicaux de gauche (2), Mouvement pour la France (3), Union pour la France, Ligue communiste révolutionnaire, Centre national des indépendants, Radical-socialiste. It is worth noting that for subsequent analysis the Centre des démocrates sociaux respondents were recoded as UDF, and the Verts were coded along with the Ecologists. Invalid responses included the mention of candidate name alone, e.g., De Villiers; general political tendency only, e.g., the right; two or more parties combined, e.g., UDF and RPR; non-existent parties, e.g., Pacificist Movement; and nonsense answers, e.g., Fight for Values. In cases of doubt, *Le Monde: Dossiers and Documents* (various election issues), were consulted. Lastly, a type of ‘modified direct-translation’ technique was generally employed in the coding process, with bilingual social scientists, American and French, going back and forth until agreement was reached on any remaining doubtful classifications.

⁶⁷ Schlesinger and Schlesinger, ‘The Stability of the French Party System’, p. 138.