

# Duverger's Hypothesis Revisited

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Since Maurice Duverger formulated his famous hypothesis that the majority system with second-ballot and proportional representation favour multi-partism more than five decades ago, no serious effort has ever been made to criticize and revise this hypothesis. No body has ever asked the question: why two different electoral systems, the majority system and the PR system lead to the same type of party system? The problem with Duverger's Hypothesis lies mainly in his classification of party systems. Because he failed to distinguish two distinct types of multi-party systems, he could not see the different political effects of the two different electoral systems. This essay tries to criticize Duverger's classification of party systems and revise the Duverger's Hypothesis into two propositions: (1) The Proportional representation system tends to lead to polarized multi-party system; and (2) The majority system with second-ballot tends to lead to moderate multi-party

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system. The essay uses the comparison between the Fourth Republic and the Fifth Republic in France for empirical verification of these two propositions.

**Keywords:** Duverger's Law, Duverger's Hypothesis, polarized multi-party system, moderate multi-party system, centrifugal competition, centripetal competition.

## I. Introduction

Maurice Duverger presented his famous “Duverger’s Law” at a conference at the University of Bordeaux in 1945 as a “threefold sociological law.” (Duverger, 1946: 21-32)

When *Les Partis Politiques*, Duverger’s seminal book on political parties, was first published in 1951, he stated his theory of electoral systems in two separate sentences:

*The simple-majority single-ballot system (plurality system) favours the two-party system.*

*The simple-majority system (majority system) with second ballot and proportional representation favour multi-partism.*

Immediately following the first sentence, he wrote: “Of all the hypotheses in this book, this approaches perhaps a true sociological law.” (Duverger, 1954: 217 & 239) Thus, the first proposition has been referred to as the “Duverger’s Law,” while the second proposition as the “Duverger’s Hypothesis” by many scholars. As one of a very few generalizations that have been elevated to “law” status in the field of political science, the Duverger’s Law has been tested, criticized, and revised by many political scientists. To account for the counterexample of Canada, Douglas Rae revised Duverger’s Law in 1971 as the following sentence:

Plurality formulae are always associated with two-party competition except where strong local minority parties exist. (Rae, 1971: 95)

To further account for another Indian exception and incorporate Rae’s revision, William Riker proposed a new formulation in 1982:

Plurality election rules bring about and maintain two-party competition except in countries where third parties nationally are continually one of two parties locally, and one party among several is almost always the Condorcet winner in elections. (Riker, 1982: 761)

In contrast, the Duverger's Hypothesis has received less attention. A few empirical testings have been done and numerous counterexamples have been pointed out. The criticism has been focused on the assumed "multiplying effect" of the majority system and the PR system. Giovanni Sartori even argued that the pure PR system is a no-effect electoral system as far as the number of parties is concerned. (Riker, 1982: 655-659; Sartori, 1986: 58) But, no serious effort has ever been made to revise the Duverger's Hypothesis. No body has ever asked the questions: Why two similar electoral systems, the plurality system and the majority system (under both systems the electorate vote for individual candidates) lead to two different types of party system? Why two different electoral systems, the majority system and the PR system (under the PR system the electorate vote for parties) lead to the same type of party system? In an essay entitled "Duverger's Law: Forty Years Later" written by Duverger himself, he tried to reformulate his hypothesis:

Proportional representation tends to lead to the formulation of many independent parties, the two-ballot majority system tends to lead to the formulation of many parties that are allied with each other. (Duverger, 1986: 70)

However, this is not much of a revision and it did not answer the above-mentioned two questions. This article tries to revise the Duverger's Hypothesis into the following two propositions:

- (1) The proportional representation system (the PR system) tends to lead to polarized multi-party system.
- (2) The majority system with second-ballot tends to lead to moderate multi-party system.

I will use the comparison between the electoral system and party system during the Fourth Republic and the Fifth Republic in France as main cases for empirical verification of my propositions. Other cases such as the party system in Taiwan may be given as examples to illustrate some of my viewpoints.

## II. The Problems with Duverger's Hypothesis and Classification

The problems with the Duverger's Hypothesis lies mainly in his classification of party systems. Because he failed to distinguish polarized multi-party system from moderate multi-party system as two distinct types of party systems, he could not see the different political consequences resulted from the PR and the majority with second-ballot systems. In deed, there are many problems with Duverger's classification of party systems.

Duverger classified party systems into three types: one-party, two-party, and multiparty systems, by counting the number of parties in a party system — whether one, two, or more than two. The beauty of this classification is simplicity. Therefore, it is enormously influential and leads to much confusion. Duverger told us to count the number of parties without giving us counting rules. If we count the Kuomintang (the Nationalist Party) and the Democratic Progressive Party, we have a two-party system in Taiwan. If we also count the People First Party, the New Party and the Taiwan Independence Party, we have a multiparty system in Taiwan. In fact, the party system in Taiwan is neither a two-party nor a multiparty system. It is not a one-party system either. Thus, Duverger's classification is not inclusive and highly inadequate. It obscures rather than illuminates the relationship between electoral systems and party systems.

A party system is a system (whole) made up of parties (parts). One-party system, a system (whole) with only one party (part), is a misnomer, a misconception, and an antithesis of party system. One-party system is better renamed as a non-competitive party system or a party-state system where a part views itself as the whole and eliminates the distinction between party and state. In a one-party system, even if an election is held, it is an election without competition and choice. This kind of election is meaningless and undemocratic. Democracy is party politics which means politics between and among

parties, not politics within one party. A competitive party system is a necessary condition for democracy. We can not agree with Duverger's conception of one-party democracy. (Duverger, 1965: 287) Competitive and non-competitive party systems must be clearly and unequivocally demarcated and separated. One-party system should be excluded from the classification of party system which by nature must be competitive. Thus, only two classes-two party system and multiparty system are left in Duverger's classification which makes it even more inadequate and problematic.

According to the criteria of ideological intensity, coercive-extractive-mobilizational capability, outer-group and sub-group autonomy, and arbitrariness, one-party system should be further classified into three different types: the totalitarian, authoritarian, and pragmatic single parties. (Sartori, 1976: 227) If we do not distinguish totalitarian party from authoritarian party, we can not differentiate totalitarian regime from one-party authoritarian regime. I would argue that because the Nationalist Party had gradually transformed from an authoritarian party into a pragmatic party so that the democratic transition in Taiwan could proceed smoothly without violence and breakdown of the regime. However, this is a topic for another study and not our main concern here. Our main concern here is with the classification of competitive party systems.

Competition is a structure and a legal-institutional arrangement in which parties can be freely and legally formed and compete with each other on an equal basis. Competition presupposes equal opportunity but not equal result.

The result of competition, the growth and decline of parties, and the type of party system are decided indirectly by the electorate. A competitive party system has the potentiality for rotation of power in each election, but turnover needs not actually happen every time. A major party may win consistently the majority of votes and seats in the parliament and continue to govern alone. As long as it is a fair competition and the free choice of the electorate, it is a competitive and democratic system. Taiwan, since legalizing the formation of political parties in 1989, has established a competitive party

system, but since then the Kuomintang had won the majority of seats in the legislature for three consecutive legislative elections and had remained the ruling party in Taiwan up until May 2000. Giovanni Sartori calls this kind of party system a predominant party system. (Sartori, 1976: 192-201) Duverger does not have this type of party system in his classification, thus leaves several concrete cases out of his classifying scheme.

The numerical criterion is very important in classifying party systems. It does matter how many are the parties in a party system. The number of parties indicate an important feature of the political system-the extent to which political power is fractionalized. However, counting the number of parties or measuring the index of fractionalization is not enough. To classify party systems we need more than one criterion. The institutional arrangement of a democracy is operationalized by party politics. To understand party politics and sort out different types, the formation of government and the rotation of power must be taken into consideration.

The major characteristic of a multi-party system is not that it has more than two parties but that it has no majority party: no party can govern alone, the government is formed by two or more than two parties-a coalition government. On the contrary, two-party system and predominant party system share one same distinct feature, i.e., one-party government. Now, we must ask what criterion distinguishes two-party system from predominant party system. In a two-party system, one party governs alone, but not indefinitely. If the same party wins the majority and remains the ruling party for more than three elections consecutively, we have a predominant, not a two-party, system. The two-party system must have alternation or rotation in power between the two major parties. Taiwan has two major parties (the third parties can be discounted as far as governing alone is concerned)- the Kuomintang and the Democratic Progressive Party. The two-major parties even match Douglas Rae's definition of two-party systems: "those in which the first party holds less than 70% of the legislative seats, and the first two parties together hold at least 90% of the seats." (Rae, 1971: 93) However, as long as

governmental turnover had not actually occurred, Taiwan remained a predominant, not a two-party, system until May 2000. Here the author also disagrees with Sartori, two-party system must have actual occurrence of alternation rather than just credible expectation of alternation, otherwise we cannot distinguish it from predominant party system. (Sartori, 1976: 16)

According to our strict definition, two-party systems are very rare, the same can be said as regard to predominant party systems. Therefore, a lot of countries fall under the category of multi-party systems. Within so many multi-party systems there are two distinctively different types: moderate multi-party system on the one hand and polarized multi-party system on the other. These two types of multi-party systems share only one characteristic: no party in both systems is in a position to govern alone; a coalition government of two or more parties must be formed. (The constitutional conventions are different in Nordic countries where one-party minority government is common with multipartism.) Aside from this, all the other characteristics of these two multi-party systems are different and some characteristics are even contradictory. That is why we have to further classify them into two types and only by doing so can we fully understand the different political effects of the majority with second-ballot system and the PR system.

Moderate multi-party systems usually encompass from three to five relevant parties, while polarized multi-party systems often consist of six to eight relevant parties. Actually, the demarcation point between the two types is between five and six parties. However, the number of parties is not that important. The important point that has to be emphasized is that the parties to be counted must be “relevant”, i.e., we must discard the parties that lack “governing or coalition potential”, unless they have “blackmail potential” that affects the tactics and direction of inter-party competition. The number of parties matters, but without counting rules we cannot get hold of what matters. Duverger did not give us such counting rules. (Sartori, 1976: 121-125)

Polarized multi-party system is a center-based system. The metrical center of political spectrum is occupied by one party or a group of parties. In fact, the coalition government is usually formed by the parties positioned in the center. The government in the center must face two oppositions, both from the left and from the right. The bilateral oppositions are counter oppositions in the sense that the two opposing parties at the extreme left and right are closer, in ideological distance, to the governing parties than to one another. They can not join forces and propose themselves as an alternative government. Actually, they are almost permanent oppositions and are not governing-oriented. Thus, the system is characterized by triangular in stead of bipolar interaction. The coalition government in the center is highly unstable and exhibiting characteristics of a peripheral turnover which consists of permanent governing parties that frequently change partners in the neighborhood-the center-left and /or the center-right parties.

Moderate multi-party system tends to resemble and imitate the mechanics and characteristics of two-party system. *Vis-à-vis* the properties of two-party system, the major distinguishing trait of moderate multi-party system is coalition government. But the structure of moderate multi-party system remains bipolar (instead of triangular) and the opposition remains unilateral (instead of bilateral). Moderate multi-party system is characterized by alternative coalitions-one on the right and the other on the left. The center of the system is unoccupied. Moderate multi-party system lacks relevant anti-system parties either at the extreme right or the extreme left. All relevant parties in the system are governing oriented, that is, available for cabinet coalitions. And the coalitions are usually quite stable and the cabinets seldom break down and reshuffled.

In addition to how government is formed and political power is rotated, ideology is another criterion needed for the classification of party system. Multi-party system is a fragmented political system, but the fragmentation of the system can reflect either a situation of segmentation, polyethnicity and/or multiconfession, or a situation of

polarization, i.e. of ideological distance. If a polity is fragmented and polarized, it belongs to the type of polarized multi-party system. If a polity is fragmented but not polarized, it must be classified as moderate multi-party system.

Polarized multi-party system is characterized by the presence of relevant anti-system parties both at the extreme right and the extreme left. Anti-system parties usually express an alien or extraneous ideology and try to undermine the legitimacy of the regime they oppose. The bilateral oppositions are literally two poles apart, thus indicating a polity confronted with a maximal ideological distance. Since the metrical center of the system is occupied, the central area of the system is out of competition. The very existence of a center party (or parties) discourages centrality and is conducive to center-fleeing or centrifugal competition. Polarized multi-party system contains parties that disagree not only on policies but also on principles and fundamentals. The parties fight one another with ideological arguments and vie with one another in terms of ideological mentality. Thus the system is also characterized by immoderate or extremist politics.

On the other hand, moderate multi-party system lacks relevant anti-system parties. All relevant parties are governing-oriented, accept the legitimacy of the political system and abide by its rules. The system is characterized by ideological proximity, a minimal spread of political opinion and minimal ideological distance. Since the center is unoccupied and most of the citizens are located in the center of political spectrum, between two alternative coalitions, the system is characterized by centripetal competition. Not only that the system has a small ideological distance among its relevant parties, but also the distance seems to be getting smaller all the time. Needless to say that the politics in a moderate multi-party system is much more moderate and stable.

As the above analyses clearly show that many attributes of the two multi-party systems are different, some are even contradictory. We have to classify them into two types. Duverger's classification of party system is inadequate because he has only one

criterion—the number of parties. The formation of government, the rotation of power, ideological distance, and the direction of competition have to be taken into account when classifying party system. Further more, in many respects moderate multi-party system resembles and imitates two-party system. Except the distinguishing single-party government for two-party system and coalition government for moderate multi-party system, all other attributes – minimal ideological distance, centripetal competition, etc. are almost the same. (Sartori, 1976: 178-179)

Although Duverger did not call his hypothesis (that the majority system with second-ballot and the proportional representation favour multi-party system) a law, sometimes he did assert it as a law. After giving some illustrations, he concluded that “almost all countries with a second-ballot are also countries with a multi-party system” and “that proportional representation always coincides with a multi-party system.” He also asserted several times that “the multiplying effect of PR is undeniable.” (Duverger, 1965: 240, 245, 251) Although Duverger admitted that the two-ballot system has a less marked scattering effect than PR, he also argued that since both systems tend to produce multi-partism, the comparison between the two is of much less interest. In sum, he asserted that the effects of both systems upon the number of parties differ not appreciably, it is rather the internal organization which is changed; the personal and flexible structure (of the second-ballot) yields to a rigid one (of PR). (Duverger, 1965: 242-243) All of these points need to be revisited and clarified.

### **III. The Different Political Effects of the PR System and the Majority with Second-Ballot System**

A scientific law postulates a cause-effect relationship between two things (in this case, electoral systems and party systems) and the cause must be the one and only necessary and sufficient condition of the effect. But social science laws can only be

probabilistic associations and can not be a deterministic one. Social science deals with social phenomena resulted from human behavior that is too complicated to pin down a single factor. Electoral system may be the main factor, but other factors, such as national character, constitutional structure, social (religious or ethnic) cleavages, etc. may also have effects on party systems. Sometimes, other intervening factors are so strong that electoral system can not exert its influence as it is supposed to be.

There are many counterexamples or exceptions to Duverger's hypothesis. Both the majority system and the PR system are not necessary condition for multi-party system, for example, Canada maintains multi-party system while adopting plurality system. Even though the PR system has stronger effects, it is not a sufficient condition for the development of multi-party system, Austria has maintained both proportional representation and a two-party system since the end of World War II. Since the majority system with second-ballot and the PR system are not one and only necessary and sufficient condition for multi-party system, the relationship is a probabilistic and not a causal one. Thus, Duverger's hypothesis does not live up to the law status.

Duverger offered two theoretical reasons for the plurality system to lead to two-party system: (1) a "mechanical effect" of overrepresenting winning parties and underrepresenting losing parties and (2) a "psychological effect" of voters not wishing to waste their votes on losers. The plurality system is the most disproportional or the least proportional electoral system. The plurality system gives great advantage to large parties and at the same time it is at great disadvantage to small parties. Using plurality system, parties with a larger proportion of votes get an even larger proportion of seats (overrepresentation) and parties with a small proportion of votes get an even smaller proportion of seats (underrepresentation). The effect is called mechanical because when the plurality system is adopted, it will automatically and inevitably lead to this effect. (Lijphart, 1984: 159)

The psychological effect derives from a view of voters as rational actors; that is

expected utility maximizers. As Anthony Downs argues that a voter casts his or her vote as a part of a selection process, not as an expression of preference. Hence even if a voter prefers party A, if it has no chance of winning, the voter is “wasting” his vote on A. The relevant choice in this case is between B and C. Since a candidate deemed with no chance of winning usually is a candidate of third parties or minor parties. Thus, psychological effect reinforces mechanical effect, and the rational or sophisticated voting behavior works for large parties and against small parties. (Downs, 1957: 48)

Under the plurality system, to win a seat a candidate must come in first past the post, that is, defeat all the other candidates in the same district. Thus, the system offer small parties a great incentive to form a coalition and nominate a single candidate. In the long run, the coalition of third parties may merge into one party. Therefore, the plurality system does have a reductive effect on the number of parties in a party system. On the other hand, the plurality system also gives politicians great disincentive for the division of an existing party and the formation of new parties. After an existing party split into two parties, even if the sum of the total votes the two parties get remains the same as before, the total number of seats will be reduced due to disproportionality and underrepresentation. Furthermore, it is rare for the candidate of a new party to defeat all the other candidates and come in first past post. When you have no prospect to win a seat in the parliament, what is the point to form a new party. In the past only the British Labour Party defeated the disproportionality of the system and became one of the two major parties in England, that is because Labour Party was a large party since the beginning of its formation.

The principal goal of the PR system is to achieve proportional representation-allocation of seats in exact proportion to the votes each party receives. The pure PR system, in extreme opposition to the plurality system, is the most proportional electoral system. In the PR system the larger parties enjoy no overrepresentation and the smaller parties suffer no underrepresentation. It is the fairest electoral system in that it neither

favors larger parties nor discriminate against small parties. In comparison with other electoral systems, the PR system is most advantageous to the small parties. Therefore, all small parties in a multi-party system favor the PR system. That is to say the causal direction may be reversed, it is not the PR system that causes multi-party system but rather it is the multi-party system that causes the PR system. But either way the association or correlation between the PR system and multi-party system is quite obvious.

There is no psychological effect or sophisticated voting resulted from the PR system. In the PR system voters are allowed the freedom to express their first preference. There is no need to worry about the chance of preferred candidate in winning or loosing and to transfer vote. However, since, PR is supposed to mirror “in proportion”, it does not have the “multiplying effect” alleged by Duverger. In fact, pure PR is a no-effect electoral system. Pure PR does not have any incentive for parties to form coalition or merge, nor does it have any disincentive to discourage splitting of exiting parties or forming of new parties. The introduction of PR does not give politicians incentive to form new parties, it simply remove the disincentive. If there is any surge of new parties, we are witnessing not the multiplying effect of PR, but the side effects resulting from the removal of obstacles. (Grofman & Lijphart, 1986: 58)

If PR has no multiplying effect, neither does the majority with second-ballot system. Actually, the majority system has a reductive effect, although the degree of reduction of the majority system is less a little than that of the plurality system because the degree of disproportionality of the majority system is less a little than that of the plurality system. (Although at the district level, the disproportionality of both systems must be the same, because both are single-member district system.) In the majority system larger parties also enjoy overrepresentation and smaller parties also suffer underrepresentation, only that the gap between the percentage of votes and seats is smaller.

When we calculate the disproportionality of the majority system we count the percentage of votes of each party at the first ballot and the percentage of seats of each

party after the second ballot. At the first ballot each party nominates its candidates with no need to form coalition with other parties and the voters vote their first preference with no need to consider sophisticated voting. At the second ballot, parties often have great incentive to form coalition, especially when the gap between vote percentage of the first and the second candidates is quite small. At the second ballot a candidate with the second most votes at the first ballot may ultimately win at the second ballot provided the supporters of eliminated candidates vote for the runner-up. At the second ballot, if a voter's first preference has been eliminated, he or she is forced to make a choice between the two remaining candidates receiving the first and the second most votes at first ballot. A party's bargaining chip during the negotiation for coalition depends on the vote percentage the party receives at the first ballot. Extreme ideological parties that can not form coalition with other parties and minor parties with very small vote percentage will not be considered for the formation of coalition and may be eliminated by the majority with second-ballot system. Thus, under the majority system the number of relevant parties is fewer than that under the PR system. Even in terms of the number of parties, the majority system is quite different from the PR system.

Since parties have no incentive to form coalition at the first ballot, diversity of opinions can be expressed and multi-party system maintained. Since parties with the second, third, even the fourth vote percentage can still have coalition potential and some political influence, the disincentive for the splitting of existing parties and the formation of new parties is less than the plurality system. Because at the second ballot only two candidates are left to compete with each other, thus in each electoral district two coalitions may be formed around the two candidates. Finally at the national level two alternative coalition blocs are formed, one on the right and the other on the left of the political spectrum. One coalition bloc wins the election and becomes the ruling bloc, the other coalition bloc will be the opposition. Thus, we have unilateral opposition instead of bilateral oppositions. The coalition blocs are formed through consecutive elections and

quite stable. However, parties within a coalition bloc still nominate their own candidates and compete against each other at the first ballot, the two coalition blocs will not merge into two major parties.

So much has been discussed regarding the number of parties, however, the most important difference in the political effects between the majority system and the PR system rests not in the number of parties, neither does it rest on the internal organization and structure of parties. It is true that the internal organization and structure of parties is more personal and flexible in the majority system and more impersonal and rigid in the PR system. In each single-member district under majority system each party usually nominates only one candidate. It is a candidate-centered campaign. Individual candidate competes against each other. The electorate vote for individual candidate. It is natural that in the majority system the election is “personalized” and the power within parties is “decentralized”. However, the degree of “personalization” and “decentralization” of the majority system is less than the plurality system because between the first ballot and the second ballot the major players in forming coalitions are parties, not individual candidates.

In the pure PR system, the whole nation is an electoral district and each party nominate a list of candidates (usually the same number as the total seats in the parliament, although most PR nations have multiple districts and open list now.). People vote for a party’s list, not for individual candidate. The voters give each party a percentage of votes which is translated “in proportion” to percentage and number of seats each party gets. The people give each party a quota and can not decide who is to become their representative. The parties present the lists and decide the order of names on the list. In the pure PR system parties, not individual candidates, compete against each other. Actually, the candidates in pure PR system do not campaign for themselves. If they do campaign, they have to campaign for their parties. Once they are elected, they are party representatives, not representative of any constituency. Thus, it is only natural that the

pure PR system is the most “impersonalized” and “centralized” system.

In the pure PR system parties, not individual candidates, campaign against each other. The electorate votes for a party not a person, an individual candidate. In such an electoral system, the determinant of voting behavior is neither personality voting nor policy voting, but position voting related to party image. Parties under such system must communicate to mass electorates an appropriate image, a vague policy package or an ideological stand condensed in or rendered by, one word or slogan, such as “unification” or “independence”. All the parties fight one another with ideological arguments and vie with one another in terms of ideological mentality. The polity and the society is ideologized, especially during the election period. Parties disagree not only on policies but more importantly on principles and fundamentals. The ideological intensity of various parties is strong and the ideological temperature high, as though they had an ideological fever.

When parties are competing with ideology, they have to differentiate or distinguish from each other in terms of ideological stand. They have to keep a certain distance from each other, especially from the neighboring parties. Parties are to be perceived and justified and voted for accordingly in their separateness and distinctiveness. The PR system is especially suited for ideological parties, particularly extreme ideological parties. Although the metrical center of the spectrum is occupied and the coalition government is center-based, there is a centrifugal drive, a persistent loss of votes to one or both of the extreme ends. The spectrum of political opinion is highly polarized. It's bilateral extreme parties (bilateral oppositions) are literally two poles apart, the distance covers a very large ideological space. Ideological distance, polarization, and centrifugal competition are the most important political effect of the PR system.

In the majority with second-ballot system several candidates nominated each by a party compete against each other in a single-member district at first ballot. A candidate must have majority of votes in order to win. The prevalent determinant of voting behavior

is personality voting. Policy voting, a voting choice determined by issues and reacting to the policy stands of parties, is relatively rare. Position voting related to party images is the voting behavior of strong party identifiers that are very few among the mass electorates. Under the majority system, in order to win the majority of votes, a candidate and the party he or she belongs to can not project an extreme ideological stand because the majority of voters are not extreme ideologically. Candidates compete with personality images and public policies, not ideological arguments or slogans. The politics will be more pragmatic and moderate; ideological temperature and intensity will be low in the polity.

If we perceive all relevant parties' positions as a political spectrum, a party's position on the political spectrum can move leftward or rightward. This position maneuverings are done for the main purpose of attracting new voters. But the maneuvering has its limitation, it can not be overdone so as not to disturb the party's identifiers. In the majority system, at the second-ballot parties must form coalitions. These coalitions can only be formed by the parties in the proximity along the spectrum. Voters must choose between the first two vote getters if their first preference has been eliminated at the first ballot. Like parties, voters have their positions along the spectrum. Each voter moves, or is willing to move, along the spectrum, only up to a point of no-transfer. Likewise, parties in their coalition maneuverings encounter also a no-coalition point. (Sartori, 1976: 343) In their coalition maneuverings, in order to persuade voters to transfer votes parties must revise their policy package and adjust their position images. In short, to form a coalition parties must move closer together and shorten their ideological distance. In the long run, the parties on the left will form a coalition and the parties on the right will form another coalition. When two alternative coalition blocs are finally formed, the center of the spectrum will be vacant. Since the majority of the electorates, the independent or floating voters are center located, the two alternative coalitions will both move toward the center. Thus, in contrast with the PR

system, ideological proximity, moderation, and centripetal competition are the most important political effects of the majority with second-ballot system. In conclusion, the PR system and the majority system lead to completely different political effects, the former leads to polarized multi-party system and the latter leads to moderate multi-party system.

#### IV. The French Fourth Republic: the PR System and the Polarized Multi-Party System

During the Fourth Republic (1946~1958) France adopted the so-called true proportional representation to elect its members of the National Assembly. (Campbell, 1965: 103) The party system in France during the Fourth Republic was a typical polarized multi-party system. The electoral system and the party system had a close relationship with each other. Although the PR system adopted since 1945 in the election for the First National Constituent Assembly was not a pure PR system since mainland France was divided roughly into one province one electoral district (seven populous provinces were further divided into two or more districts), the proportionality was quite high and the disproportionality (both over-representation and under-representation) was quite low. Proportionality depends upon the magnitude of electoral district, the larger the magnitude the more proportional and the less disproportional. (See Chart 1-5)

**Chart 1 1945 Election for the First National Constituent Assembly**

	number of votes	Percentage of votes	number of seats	Percentage of seats
PCF	5,005,336	26.1	148	28.4
Socialist	4,561,411	23.8	134	25.7
MRP	4,780,338	24.9	141	27.0
Radical	2,131,763	11.1	35	6.7

Conservation	2,545,845	13.3	62	11.9
Others	165,106	0.9	2	0.4
Total	19,189,799	100	522	100

Source: Mackie & Rose, 1991: 148-151

**Chart 2 1946 Election for the Second National Constituent Assembly**

	number of votes	Percentage of votes	number of seats	Percentage of seats
PCF	5,199,111	26.2	146	28.0
Socialist	4,187,818	21.1	115	22.0
MRP	5,589,059	28.1	160	30.7
Radical	2,295,119	11.5	39	7.5
Conservation	2,539,845	12.8	62	11.9
Others	69,789	0.4	0	0.0
Total	19,880,741	100	522	100

Source: Mackie & Rose, 1991: 148-151

**Chart 3 1946 Election for the First National Assembly**

	number of votes	Percentage of votes	number of seats	Percentage of seats
PCF	5,489,288	28.6	166	30.5
Socialist	3,434,954	17.9	90	16.5
MRP	5,058,307	26.3	158	29.0
Radical	2,381,385	12.4	55	10.1
Conservation	2,465,526	12.8	70	12.9
RPF	312,635	1.6	5	0.9
Others	63,976	0.3	0	0.0
Total	19,203,071	100	544	100

Source: Mackie & Rose, 1991: 148-151

**Chart 4 1951 Election for the Second National Assembly**

	number of votes	Percentage of votes	number of seats	Percentage of seats
PCF	5,056,605	26.7	97	17.8
Socialist	2,744,842	14.5	94	17.3
MRP	2,369,778	12.5	82	15.1
Radical	1,887,583	10.0	77	14.2
Conservation	2,656,995	14.0	87	16.0
RPF	4,125,492	21.8	107	19.7
Others	125,739	0.6	0	0.0
Total	19,129,064	100	544	100

Source: Mackie & Rose, 1991: 148-151

**Chart 5 1956 Election for the Third National Assembly**

	number of votes	Percentage of votes	number of seats	Percentage of seats
PCF	5,514,403	25.9	147	27.0
Socialist	3,247,431	15.2	88	16.2
MRP	2,366,321	11.1	71	13.1
Radical	3,227,484	15.2	73	13.4
Conservation	3,257,782	15.3	95	17.5
RPF	842,351	4.0	16	2.9
UDCA	2,483,813	11.7	51	9.4
Others	359,349	1.7	23	0.40.5
Total	21,490,886	100	544	100

Source: Mackie & Rose, 1991: 148-151

The PR system is advantageous to the existence of minor parties, thus favors

multi-party system. Throughout the Fourth Republic France had five to seven relevant parties and no party had ever had the majority of seats in the National Assembly. In fact, except the Communist Party in 1946, no party ever had more than 30% of votes and seats, thus parties had to form and maintain a coalition government all the time. Except in the 1951 election which allowed and encouraged party alliance (*apparentement*), the electoral system provided no incentive for parties to form coalition during the election period. Parties that fought vehemently during the election period had to form coalition government after the election, no wonder the coalition governments were highly unstable. Throughout the Fourth Republic, 25 cabinets (coalition governments) were formed, in average a cabinet lasted less than half year.

Under the PR system, the electorates vote for a party list, not an individual candidate. Candidates can not campaign for themselves, they have to campaign for their parties. Parties campaign against each other with ideological appeals. Parties fight especially strong against nearby parties. They have to stress the differences between themselves and nearby parties. Political cleavages are widened and ideological distance lengthened between parties. The electoral system especially favors extreme parties. The French Communist Party (PCF) on the extreme left and the Rally of the French People (RPF) on the extreme right were the major beneficiaries of the electoral system. The union for the Defense of the Merchants and Artisans (UDCA), another extreme right party led by Pierre Poujade was able to get 51 seats on a single anti-tax appeal in 1956 election thanks to this electoral system.

Except for the temporary government (Oct. 1945~May 1947) formed by the PCF, the Socialist Party and the Popular Republican Movement (MRP), the subsequent governments were formed by the Third Force of Socialists, MRP, and Radicals, and/or center-right parties. The PCF and RPF, though sometimes being the first or second largest party, were excluded from the coalition government due to their extreme ideological stand. The Radicals, usually the fourth party, though having only a few seats in the

National Assembly, was usually a main partner of the coalition governments. The PCF on the extreme left and the RPF on the extreme right could not join forces against the government in the center because their ideology was two-poles apart. Thus the government faced with bilateral oppositions and the polity was characterized by triangular interactions. There was a centrifugal drive, a persistent loss of votes in the center to the right and left. The political spectrum covers a large ideological space and the distance between parties seemed to become larger all the time.

## V. The French Fifth Republic: the Majority with Second-Ballot System and the Moderate Multi-Party System

In 1958 the Fifth Republic began when France adopted a new constitution and changed her constitutional system from parliamentary system into semi-presidential system. Since then French president has real political power and is no longer just a figurehead. Therefore, when we discuss the relationship between electoral system and party system in France since the Fifth Republic was established, we have to take also the presidential elections into consideration in addition to the elections for the National Assembly. Since 1958 French adopted mainly the majority with second-ballot system for both presidential and parliamentary elections, except in the 1985 election for the National Assembly the system was reversed to the PR system. At the first ballot only if a candidate wins the majority of votes (more than 50%) and the votes over 1/4 of the eligible voters (that is the turn out rate must be over 50%) is elected. If no body wins at the first ballot, for presidential election only the first and second most vote getters will enter competition at the second ballot. For the parliamentary elections, if no body wins the majority of votes and the votes of over 1/4 eligible voters, in order to enter the second ballot a candidate must win votes over a threshold: 5% in 1958, 10% after 1967, 12.5% after 1976. At

second ballot the candidate that has the most votes wins the election. Although in parliamentary elections, there may be three or four candidates who pass the threshold and have the right to participate in the second ballot, usually the third and the fourth candidates will give up the candidacy. Thus, most districts will have only two candidates competing at the second ballot and the winner usually will have the majority of votes.

The majority with second-ballot system, in contrast with the PR system, is quite disproportional, although its disproportionality is a little less than the plurality system. The number of relevant parties is reduced from 5-6 at the beginning of the Fifth Republic to 4~5. In 1958 there were 10 party caucuses in the National Assembly, each caucus had at least 10 parliamentarians. In 1978 there were only four party caucuses left in the National Assembly: the French Communist Party (PCF), the Socialist Party (PS), the Gaullists, and the Union for French Democracy (UDF). It is apparent that the majority system not only does not have multiplying effect but has some reductive effect. The large parties usually enjoy overrepresentation; for example, in 1968 the Gaullists got 38.0% of votes but had 60.0% of seats, in 1981 the Socialist Party had 36.6% of votes but got 56.5% of seats. The small party usually suffers under-representation, especially when they do not join a coalition bloc. The National Front (FN) could not join any coalition due to its extreme ideological stand, in 1988 it got 9.8% of votes and 0.2% of seats, in 1993 it got 9.2% of votes and 0.0% of seats and in 1997 it got 14.9% of votes and 0.2% of seats (only one seat). (See Chart 6)

**Chart 6 The Disproportionality of the Majority System in the Elections  
for the National Assembly during the Fifth Republic**

		1958	1962	1967	1968	1973	1978	1981	1988	1993	1997
SFIO/PS	Percentage of votes	15.5	12.4	18.9	16.5	19.1	22.8	36.6	36.6	18.5	23.3
	Percentage of seats	9.5	13.7	25.1	12.1	18.8	21.5	56.5	46.8	11.6	41.9
PCF	Percentage of votes	18.9	21.9	22.5	20.0	21.4	20.6	16.1	11.2	12.4	9.9
	Percentage of seats	2.2	8.8	15.3	7.0	15.4	18.1	9.2	4.3	4.2	6.6
Gaullists	Percentage of votes	20.6	33.7	33.0	38.0	26.0	22.8	21.2	19.1	20.4	15.7
	Percentage of seats	42.6	49.5	40.6	60.0	37.6	30.0	16.9	22.2	41.9	23.2
RI/PR	Percentage of votes	---	2.3	5.5	8.4	7.2	---	---	---	---	---
	Percentage of seats	---	3.8	8.7	13.6	11.4	---	---	---	---	---
CD	Percentage of votes	---	---	14.1	10.5	---	---	---	---	---	---
	Percentage of seats	---	---	8.1	5.5	---	---	---	---	---	---
CDP	Percentage of votes	---	---	---	---	3.8	---	---	---	---	---
	Percentage of seats	---	---	---	---	4.4	---	---	---	---	---
FN	Percentage of votes	---	---	---	---	---	0.3	0.2	9.8	9.2	14.9
	Percentage of seats	---	---	---	---	---	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2
UDF	Percentage of votes	---	---	---	---	---	22.0	18.9	15.8	19.8	14.2
	Percentage of seats	---	---	---	---	---	26.2	12.4	23.4	35.9	18.7

Source: Mackie & Rose, 1991: 148-155

1986 Election result is excluded because PR system was adopted Data after 1991 are collected from various sources

The constitutional system was changed from the parliamentary system in the Fourth Republic into the semi-presidential system in the Fifth Republic. The president has real political power, no longer just a figure head. The Fifth Republic has two executive heads-the president and the premier. The president is directly elected with the majority

system which gives the president strong popular mandate. At the second ballot only two candidates are left to compete with each other, the third and the fourth candidates (and their parties) have to choose and support one of them. Sometimes, in order to prevent the major opposing party from winning, you have to support the party and candidate that is closer to you in ideological stand. Thus, two coalition blocs, one on the right and the other on the left, are formed naturally. Two parties in a coalition usually will nominate their own candidates to join the election at the first ballot, at the second ballot one of them will be eliminated (a coalition has never won both the first and the second place in one election). Then, at the second ballot, a coalition will support one candidate, it is a competition between two coalition blocs. In 1974, 1981, and 1995, the candidate in the second place at the first ballot finally won the election at the second ballot.

Although in the election for the National Assembly, the candidates who win votes exceeding the threshold (5% in 1958, 10% after 1969, and 12.5% after 1976) at the first ballot have the right to participate in the second ballot. In order to win more seats, two coalition blocs usually will persuade their candidates who are on the third or fourth place to withdraw from the campaign and concentrate their strength to support just one candidate, therefore, at the second ballot most districts (84% in 1967, 85% in 1968, 84% in 1973, 96% in 1978, and 309 out of 310 districts in 1981) have only two candidates supported by two coalition blocs competing with each other. (Wright, 1989: 163) Thus the elections for National Assembly reinforce the presidential election in the formation of bipolar coalitions or alternative coalitions. The electorates have had to choose one candidate of one coalition between the two, there is no other choice. There is no relevant party exist in the center (between the two coalitions) or beyond the two blocs (extreme parties on the extreme right or left, due to inability to join either coalition, will soon become irrelevant). As a result of the parliamentary election one coalition usually wins the majority of seats in the National Assembly and becomes the ruling coalition, the other coalition becomes the opposition, unilateral opposition. In case different coalition wins

the presidency and the majority of seats in the National Assembly, then the majority leader will assume the premiership and form the cabinet. But because the president has real political power, not a figurehead, the president's party and coalition does not become the opposition. In this case, two coalitions will cohabitate and rule the country together. Such cohabitation has occurred three times: 1986-1988, 1993-1995, and 1997. (See Chart 7)

**Chart 7 The Presidents and Premiers of the Fifth Republic**

Time	President	Party Affiliation	Time	Premier	Party Affliction
1958	Charles de Gaulle	Gaullists	1958	Michel Debre	Gaullists
			1962	Georges Pompidou	Gaullists
			1968	Maurice Couve De Murville	Gaullists
1965	Charles de Gaulle	Gaullists			
1969	Georges Pompidou	Gaullists	1969	Jacques Chaban-Delmas	Gaullists
			1972	Pierre Messner	Gaullists
1974	Valery Giscard d'Estaing	PR	1974	Jacques Chirac	Gaullists
			1976	Raymond Barre	UDF
1981	Francois Mitterrand	PS	1981	Pierre Mauroy	PS
			1984	Laurent Fabius	PS
			1986	Jacques Chirac	Gaullists
1988	Francois Mitterrand	PS	1988	Michel Rocard	PS
			1991	Edith Cresson	PS
			1992	Pierre Beregovy	PS
			1993	Edouard Balladur	Gaullists
1995	Jacques Chirac	Gaullists	1995	Alain Juppe	Gaullists
			1997	Loinel Jospin	PS

In the majority with second-ballot system ideological intensity of parties will be weakened and ideological distance between parties will be shortened. The majority system is candidate-oriented electoral system, personality image is the main political appeal, not ideological stand. In a single-member district a candidate actually must win

the majority of votes at the second ballot to win the election, no candidate will appeal to minority voters with extreme ideology. After the first ballot is over, parties will enter negotiations for the formation of coalition. Parties with similar or close ideological stand will be easier to negotiate and form coalition and the voters will be easier to transfer votes. The negotiation and formation of coalition will further bring parties together. In fact, if a coalition wants to support one same candidate at the second ballot, it must put forward one same platform. Because parties of a coalition have cooperated during the election and their ideological proximity, the coalition government formed after the election is quite stable. The government changes hand from one coalition to another only when rotation of power occurs after a parliamentary election, during the interval between elections the cabinet is seldom reshuffled. (See chart 7) Because no relevant party exists in the center (between the two coalitions) and the majority of voters are in the center of political spectrum, thus both of the two coalitions must move toward the center, the trend toward centripetal competition is quite apparent. The three periods of cohabitation further strengthen the trend to centripetal competition because in order to cohabit the two coalitions have to compromise and move closer together.

The majority with second-ballot system is most disadvantageous toward anti-system parties or extreme ideological parties and it lessens ideological intensity of these parties (Fischella, 1984: 181-189). In 1958 election for the National Assembly because the change of electoral system from PR to the majority system, although the Communist Party got 18.9% of the votes, it got only 10 seats (2.2%). In 1962 national convention, the party under the leadership of Maurice Thorez began to discuss the revision of party platform, ideology and organization, the percentage of seats rose to 8.8% in the same year. In 1964 national convention, under the leadership of Waldeck Rochet, the party began its movement toward “rejuvenation” and “democratization” and started to form coalition with other left-wing parties, especially the Socialist Party. The party abandoned the doctrine of “the dictatorship of the proletariat” and adopted “the parliamentary line”,

and began to distance from the Soviet Union. (Wilson, 1990: 158) In 1965 presidential election, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party signed a “Common Program for Government” and formed a coalition bloc. (Ehrmann & Schain, 1992: 241) Since 1972 the Communist party adopted “Eurocommunism” and asserted independence from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In 1981, four Communists joined the cabinet and formed a coalition government with the Socialist party. Thus, the French Communist Party gradually lost its characteristics as an anti-system party. (Wilson, 1990: 158)

The National Front, an extreme right-wing party, was established in 1972 by Jean-Marie Le Pen. In 1986 parliamentary election, because the electoral system was changed to PR system, the National Front got 9.8% of the votes and 35 seats (6.3%). In 1988 and afterward the electoral system was changed back to the majority system, though the vote percentage has been almost the same, but the National Front has had only one or no seat. Because its extreme ideological stand, the National Front can not join even the right-wing coalition. (See Chart 8)

**Chart 8 Disproportionality for the Communist Party and the National Front**

Time	The Communist Party		The National Front	
	Percentage of votes	Percentage of seats	Percentage of votes	Percentage of seats
1958	18.9	2.2	---	---
1962	21.9	8.8	---	---
1967	22.5	15.3	---	---
1968	20.0	7.0	---	---
1973	21.4	15.4	---	---
1978	20.6	18.1	0.3	0.0
1981	16.1	9.2	0.2	0.0
1986	9.7	5.8	9.8	6.3
1988	11.2	4.3	9.8	0.2
1993	9.2	4.2	12.4	0.0
1997	9.9	6.6	14.9	0.2

## VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, the party system in the Fifth Republic is completely different from the party system in the Fourth Republic. Although both of them are multi-party systems, because they are so categorically different, they have to be classified into two different types. The polarized multiparty system in the Fourth Republic has changed into a moderate multi-party system in the Fifth Republic. The constitutional system and other factors may have played a little part, but the change of electoral system from PR system to the majority with second-ballot system in the Fifth Republic is the main factor affecting the change in the party system. The majority with second-ballot system and the PR system have very different, even opposite effects, the former tends to lead to moderate multi-party system and the latter tends to lead to polarized multi-party system. If we have not classified multi-party system into two different types, we can not see clearly the different political effects of the PR and the majority system.

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# 杜弗傑假設的再檢視與修正

吳文程\*

自從杜弗傑提出其著名的「杜弗傑假設」：絕對多數兩輪投票制與比例代表制促成多黨制，五十多年來沒有人認真嚴肅地加以批判與修正。沒有人真正問過這個問題：為什麼兩種截然不同的選舉制度會導致相同的政黨體系？杜弗傑假設的問題主要是出在他對政黨體制的分類，因為他未將兩種極為不同的多黨制分開，因此他看不到兩種不同選舉制度所造成的不同政治效果。這篇論文試圖對杜弗傑的類型概念（一黨制、二黨制、多黨制）做深入的批判，並將杜弗傑假設修正為（一）絕對多數兩輪投票制傾向溫和多黨制；（二）比例代表制傾向極端多黨制。本論文以法國第四共和與第五共和之比較為例，來驗證此一修正。

關鍵字：杜弗傑定律、杜弗傑假設、溫和多黨制、極端多黨制、向心競爭、離心競爭

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