

Second, revised draft  
Comments welcome

## Multiple Party Identifications

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## Abstract

This paper does three things. It explores the importance of the phenomenon: how prominent a feature of political orientations are multiple PIDs? It then tests three institutional factors that might be conducive to multiple PIDs – the format of the party system, the electoral system, and the age of a democratic polity. It finally assesses the effect of single vs. multiple PIDs on vote choice. It shows (1) that multiple party identifications are of more than marginal frequency and importance; (2) that the limited electoral experience of voters in new democracies is the best predictor of multiple PIDs; and (3) that the behavioural consequences of multiple PIDs are comparatively low.

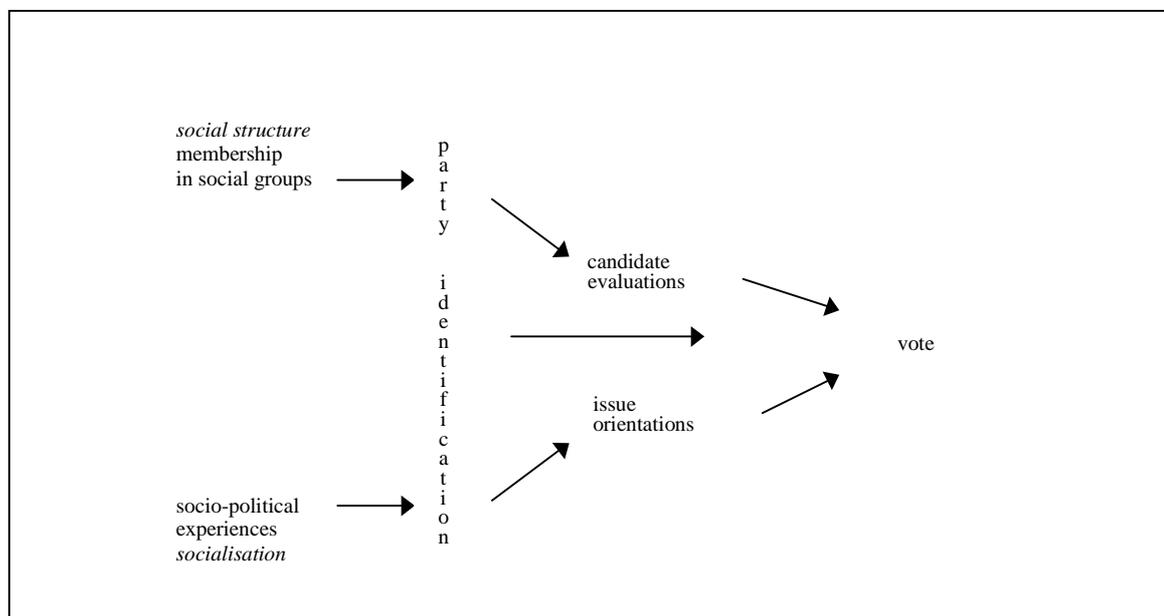
## 1. The concept of party identification

Party identification (PID) is a central concept in many models of voting behaviour. The basic and now classic notion of it goes back to the *American Voter*. There, partisanship was conceived as individuals' psychological *identification* with, or affective orientation towards, an important group object in their environment (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960: 121 ff). This "psychological party membership" was assumed to be acquired above all through primary political socialisation (i.e. parental transmission), and to crystallise into stable alignments as a consequence of growing electoral experience (i.e. repeated voting for the same party; Converse 1969, 1976).

Party identification was regarded as an exogenous variable in models of party choice, colouring attitudes about issues and candidates as they are formed and thus affecting the vote both directly and indirectly (Campbell et al. 1960:136 ff). Causally prior were only factors which originate in voters' social structural location and their socialisation experience (Figure 1).

Figure 1

The Classic Social-Psychological Model of Vote Choice



Developed in the US in the mid 1950s, concept and indicators were soon applied abroad. This led to the well-known, and continuing, debate about the meaning and general applicability of the model. Two very basic objections have been raised against it: PID in places was found to be less stable than the vote – thus violating the *stability assumption* (Thomassen 1976); and

PIDs were said to encompass more than one party – thus violating the *uniqueness assumption* (van der Eijk and Niemöller 1983).<sup>1</sup>

Revisionists have modified the stability assumption since. They showed that PID is endogenous to models of vote choice – allowing for non-recursive effects between PID and various other determinants of the vote and the vote itself (e.g. Page & Jones, 1979; Fiorina, 1981; Franklin & Jackson 1983; Franklin 1984). Party identification is now portrayed as affecting current political evaluations and the vote, and being affected by them at the same time. Much of the work establishing this revisionist view runs well in line with the rational choice paradigm and conceives changes in partisanship to result largely from cognitive processes of issue evaluation. Time-series evidence indicates, however, that issue evaluations cannot account for everything and certainly not for short-term changes in partisanship, which should rather be seen to go back to changing affective or emotional views (Whiteley 1988; also MacKuen, Erikson and Stimson 1989). Irrespective of what causes the observed dynamics in partisanship, this round of debate conveys that there is no conceptual need for partisanship to be fundamentally stable over time. It seems important to add, at this point, that the concept tends to become useless (or poorly operationalised, as the case may also be) if its indicators are usually found to be more volatile than the vote.

The proclaimed violation of the *uniqueness assumption* however has not yet been taken up in a comparative way. Van der Eijk and Niemöller (1983:338) concluded that “... the assumption that voters identify with only one party (if they do so at all) turns out to be false when subjected to an empirical test in the Netherlands” and took this as further evidence for their assertion that party identification theory was not an appropriate tool for the study of Dutch electoral behaviour, nor for electoral behaviour in European multi-party systems more generally. However, this finding was never replicated. We do not know (a) how prominent a phenomenon multiple party identifications are in different political systems. (b) We do not know what factors are conducive to it. (c) And we finally do not know much about the behavioural consequences of multiple PIDs. These are the three research questions which this paper will explore.

2.

### 2.1.1. The Dutch proposition (or: the party system format proposition)

The first and most radical is, that the original theory of party identification is flawed altogether – that people just do not identify with parties, but rather with social groups and, if it comes to politics, with ideological tendencies. In this perspective, identifications with “party” is regarded as a mere reflection of the real thing.<sup>2</sup> This is what we call the *Dutch proposition*.

If people do not really identify with parties but essentially with ideological tendencies, and if there are a variety of ideologically similar parties on offer to choose from, then it seems plausible that people when asked “identify” with more than one party. In this view it is the format of the party system that counts. The Dutch proposition therefore leads to a party system format proposition: *the greater the number of ideologically close political parties is that compete for one’s vote, the greater is one’s likelihood of holding multiple party identifications.*

### 2.1.2. The electoral systems proposition

Moving on, the second argument maintains that electoral laws have an impact on voter-party relations. The justification is rather straightforward. Proportional representation systems typically require voters to choose between parties, while plurality and mixed systems tend to require voters to choose – at least also – between individual candidates. One might conclude that pure PR systems emphasise the role and importance of political parties, while the variety of plurality systems highlight the role and importance of individual candidates. *The electoral systems proposition therefore predicts that PR systems cultivate “single” identifications with unique, concrete parties while plurality systems do not.*

Note that this second proposition in a way points in the opposite direction than the first. To the degree that proportional representation “breeds” multi-party systems (Duverger 1951, Farrell 1997), PR should – if the Dutch proposition holds true – lead to identifications with multiple parties rather than with one single party.

### 2.1.3. The electoral experience proposition

The third argument states that the age of a democratic system and, as a function of it, the electoral experience of its citizens is important. This is a variant of Converse’s (1969, 1976) proposition on the association between “time and partisan stability”. Converse considered the strength of party identification. According to him, younger people enter the adult electorate with only weak party ties. Over time these attachments grow stronger as they gain experience in voting for a party. Testing this learning theory of party identification with data from the

Civic Culture Study (Almond and Verba 1963), Converse concluded that in new democracies it takes only a few generations to stabilise partisanship (1969: 143).

We argue that the concentration of partisanship on one and just one party is an essential part of this stabilisation process. And it might even be that it is the very core of Converse's stabilisation process. In turbulent times of regime change – like the changes from communist rule to liberal democracy roughly a decade ago – people are typically strongly involved in politics and – deprived of an intimate knowledge of the new partisan actors on the political scene – might feel attracted to a number of them. The extension of partisanship – indicated by the proportion of identifiers in the citizenry at large – might therefore be quickly accomplished, and even the intensity of these new partisan attachments might be remarkably strong. If these feelings, however, are not rooted in electoral experiences, they might not turn out to be very stable.

*The electoral experience proposition holds that the longer people are dealing with a particular set of party alternatives, the more likely they are to identify with one, and just one, of the partisan options.* This implies that the age of a democratic polity – but also party system changes which alter this particular set of party alternatives – should affect multiple party identifications.

## 2.2. Likely consequences of multiple PIDs

The most important thing with (single) party identifications is that people usually vote for the party they identify with. If voters identify with more than one party, but still have only one vote, this crucial behavioural regularity is likely to be spoiled. One could object that multiple identifications must not be equally strong, and voters might vote for the object of their “main” identification more often than for parties they “also” identify with. While this might be the case, we nevertheless maintain that *single party identifications should have a stronger effect on vote choices than multiple party identifications.*

## 3. Data base and methodological considerations

### 3.1. Data base

The data base of this research is the first round of studies of the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems*. Under the auspices of ICORE<sup>3</sup>, this study has so far produced (more or less) strictly comparable representative post-election survey data for 31 nations. 14 of these 31 studies could be included in our first step of analysis which mainly confronts proportions of multiple PIDs with structural characteristics of the political systems under study.<sup>4</sup> 12 of these

14 studies could be carried on to our second analytical step in which the relative effect of single and multiple PIDs on vote choices is established.<sup>5</sup> Multiple PIDs were not measured in nine of the now available 31 CSES studies; these could not be included in this research. The CSES module was administered, finally, in eight political systems which do not, or only very recently, qualify as free democracies. As the development of party identifications is extremely sensitive to the democratic quality of the political system under study, these countries were not included in this study either (Table 1).

Table 1  
31 CSES Country Studies (First Module) Analysed And Not Analysed

analysed in first step	analysed in both steps <sup>a</sup>	not analysed because rele- vant data not secured	not analysed because not free <sup>b</sup> or free only very re- cently <sup>c</sup>
Chile	Czech Republic	Australia	Belarus <sup>c</sup>
Czech Republic	Germany	B-Flanders	Hong-Kong <sup>c</sup>
Germany	Hungary	Canada	Peru <sup>c</sup>
Hungary	South Korea	Denmark	Romania <sup>d</sup>
South Korea	Netherlands	Israel	Russia <sup>c</sup>
Lithuania	Norway	Japan	Taiwan <sup>d</sup>
Netherlands	Poland	Mexico	Thailand <sup>d</sup>
Norway	Spain	New Zealand <sup>b</sup>	Ukraine <sup>c</sup>
Poland	Sweden	UK	
Slovenia	Switzerland		
Spain	USA		
Sweden			
Switzerland			
USA			
14	11	9	8

Notes: (a) Differences between first-step and second-step countries are due to data availability. For Chile, left-right party placements and party leader rating are lacking. For Slovenia, the strength of party identifications has not been established. (b) While the CSES module was strictly followed in New Zealand, the survey was there conducted as a drop-off to be filled in as a write-in questionnaire. With respect to multiple PIDs, this variation in questionnaire administration produced non-comparable results. (c) “Partly Free” according to Freedom House country ratings. (d) “Free” according to Freedom House country ratings for less than one legislature at the time of the survey.

### 3.2. Methodological considerations

Party choice is the dependent variable in most analysis of electoral behaviour. It is both a nominal and an ipsative variable, as voters in almost all political systems are only allowed to choose one party. From a substantive point of view, this causes two major problems. First, explanatory statements about party choice imply an intra-individual comparison of parties

which, in multi-party systems, cannot be observed when only analysing actual party choice. Secondly, when analysing party choice one regularly runs into a problem that arises from (sometimes exceedingly) small numbers of respondents who voted for small parties.

### 3.2.1. Party preference as an alternative dependent variable

These problems can be solved by relying on the electoral attractiveness of, or preference for, a political party as the dependent variable. This variable is a characteristic that can be measured for all parties, irrespective of their particular traits and irrespective of the political system in which they are located. One way of doing this is asking voters directly. Respondents to the European Election Studies of 1989, 1994, and 1999, for example, have all been asked *Please tell me for each of the following how probable it is that you will ever vote for this party?*, after which they were presented with the names of the relevant (in the Sartorian sense) parties in their system. This instrument overcomes the restrictions of the more usually employed question about actual voting behaviour, which does not allow respondents to report the extent of their electoral preferences for all parties. Moreover, the 10-point scale used allows a continuous expression of these preferences, rather than a merely dichotomous one.

These “probability to vote” questions were not included in the CSES questionnaire. Fortunately, they can be substituted by another measure that is derived from the more conventional like-dislike scales. While these like-dislike scales constitute another – if less direct – approach to the electoral attractiveness of political parties, they do not, in their original form, amount to a straightforward measure of party preference. Too many other considerations have an impact on one’s liking or disliking of a party, in addition to its electoral attractiveness.

We will therefore transform these like-dislike scores into ‘party preference points’ (ppp’s). This is done by comparing for each respondent the like-dislike scores of each possible pair of relevant parties<sup>6</sup> and by attributing a preference point for the ‘winner’ of each comparison (i.e. the party with the superior like-dislike score). In the case of ties, a preference point shall be given to each of the two parties under comparison. The resulting ppp’s range from 0 to <max n>, whereby <max n> is the number of relevant parties in the system minus 1. ‘0’ is the score for the party that was defeated in each comparison and is preferred least, and <max n> is the score of the party that has been preferred over all others.

The whole approach rests on the assumption that respondents will eventually vote for the party which they prefer most; that the second-highest preference score appears as second choice, and so on. This view is well-founded. It can be shown that over 90 per cent of those who prefer one party over all others (i.e. with <max n> of ppp’s) vote for this party.<sup>7</sup> This suggests that party preference scores are reasonably accurate reflections of actual vote inten-

tions. As a consequence, by analysing the former one arrives at valid conclusions about the latter.

### 3.2.2. The simultaneous analysis of preferences towards relevant choice options in an election

These preferences would normally be represented in a data matrix as different variables, one for each party, which cannot easily be analysed simultaneously. However, the really interesting thing are determinants of party preference in general rather than those for a specific party. Analysing these preferences one by one would obscure individual-level inter-party variation, as such a design focuses exclusively on the variation between individuals. An adequate analysis of these scores requires a research design in which inter-party (intra-individual) and inter-individual variance is accounted for simultaneously. This can be realised by rearranging the original data into a so-called stacked form: viewing each preference score given by a voter as a separate case to be explained. In this way, each respondent is represented by a number of cases in the stacked data set – as many as the number of parties for which s/he gave a preference score, or for which such a score can be derived. The stacked data set can be analysed in the same way as any normal rectangular data matrix.<sup>8</sup> The dependent variable is the preference score; appropriate identifiers allow characteristics of individual respondents and of parties to be added as explanatory or control variables. The independent variables have to be defined in an appropriate manner before they can be included in the analysis, but once this has been done, the stacked data matrix allows to examine the dependent variable using familiar and straightforward methods of analysis, such as multiple OLS regression.<sup>9</sup>

## 4. Findings

These methodological considerations will only be relevant in the second part of our analysis, when we try to determine the relative effects of single vs. multiple PIDs on party preferences in eleven democracies. We start out with simpler things and first inspect the frequency and importance of the phenomenon of multiple PIDs.

### 4.1. The frequency and importance of the phenomenon

Van der Eijk and Niemöller report from their Dutch studies in the early Eighties that “multiple identifications occur frequently” (1983: 338): they found about half of all identifiers, and about one third of all voters, to admit to multiple PIDs. We can not replicate their findings. If we rely on the Dutch CSES data, there is hardly anybody in the Netherlands who identifies with more than one party (Table 2). Together with the US, the Netherlands constitute the

bottom of the frequency distribution of multiple PIDs. This discrepancy with earlier work seems to result from instrument effects.<sup>10</sup>

Table 2  
 Number of Parties Voters Identify With  
 (figures are percentages)

country	close to no party	one party	two parties	three parties	<i>more than one</i>	missing cases
Norway	16	62	12	10	22	0
Czech Republic	19	62	12	7	19	2
Hungary	37	46	12	5	17	0
Sweden	15	69	10	6	16	11

Party, but there are other Left Socialists who feel close to the Christian Peoples Party and even to the Centre Party. Identifiers of Labour “also” sympathise with Left Socialists, but also with the Christian Peoples Party and the Conservatives. And sizeable numbers of the adherents of the Conservative Party have sympathies also with the Christian Peoples Party, the Progress Party, and with Labour. What becomes apparent is that the walls which separate Norwegian political parties are not very high. Substantial proportions of partisans identify with not just the one or two parties in close ideological vicinity, but also with ideologically rather distant parties.

Table 3  
Multiple Identifications With Whom: The Case of Norway  
(figures are row percentages, and n of cases)

main identification	all identifications						n
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1 Left Socialists <sup>b</sup>	68 <sup>a</sup>	17	6	8	1	0	139
2 Labour Party <sup>c</sup>	11	68	8	3	6	4	656
3 Christian Peoples Party <sup>d</sup>	5	6	72	12	3	2	197
4 Centre Party <sup>e</sup>	8	5	15	66	4	1	149
5 Conservatives <sup>f</sup>	0	9	15	1	65	11	288
6 Progress <sup>g</sup>	1	8	4	3	13	82	170

Source: *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (1<sup>st</sup> module 1996 – 2000).. (a) Read: while 68 per cent of Left-Socialist identifiers do not identify with any other party, 17 per cent also identify with the Labour Party, and so on. (b) *Sosialistisk Venstreparti* (c) *Det Norske Arbeiderparti* (d) *Kristelig Folkeparti* (e) *Senterparti* (f) *Høyre* (g) *Fremskrittspartiet*.

#### 4.2. Are multiple PIDs more frequent in multi-party systems?

The classification of party systems according to the number of relevant parties operating in it is a demanding task (Sartori 1976) in which we do not really want to become involved here. For the purposes at hand, we will merely distinguish between two classes of party systems – one with few and another with many parties. Parties differ from one another, and some are more important than others. We therefore refrain from counting the sheer number of parties represented in national parliaments and establish instead, for each country under investigation, the “effective number of parties” (Laasko & Taagepera 1979).<sup>11</sup> The scores of our 14 countries on this index are given in Table 4.

Table 4  
 Effective Number of Parties (ENP) in the Most Recent  
 Election of Members of the National Parliament

Slovenia	6,1
Switzerland	5,8
Lithuania	5,6
Czech Republic	5,2
Chile <sup>a</sup>	5,1
Netherlands	5,1
Norway	5,1
Poland	4,5
Sweden	4,5
Hungary	4,4
Germany	3,3
Spain	2,8
S. Korea	2,8
USA	2,1

Source: calculations provided by B. Weßels on Feb 06, 2002.  
 (a) parliamentary election of 1997.

These scores range from 2 for the US to 6 for Slovenia which is a fairly broad range indeed. To arrive at two equally strong classes of party systems, we subdivide our countries into those with less than five – i.e. few – and those with more than five – i.e. many – “effective” parties. The *party system format proposition* predicts that we should find higher proportions of multiple PIDs in party systems with many effective parties. Figure 2 displays the result of an initial test.

Figure 2  
 Multiple Party Identifications  
 and the Format of Party Systems

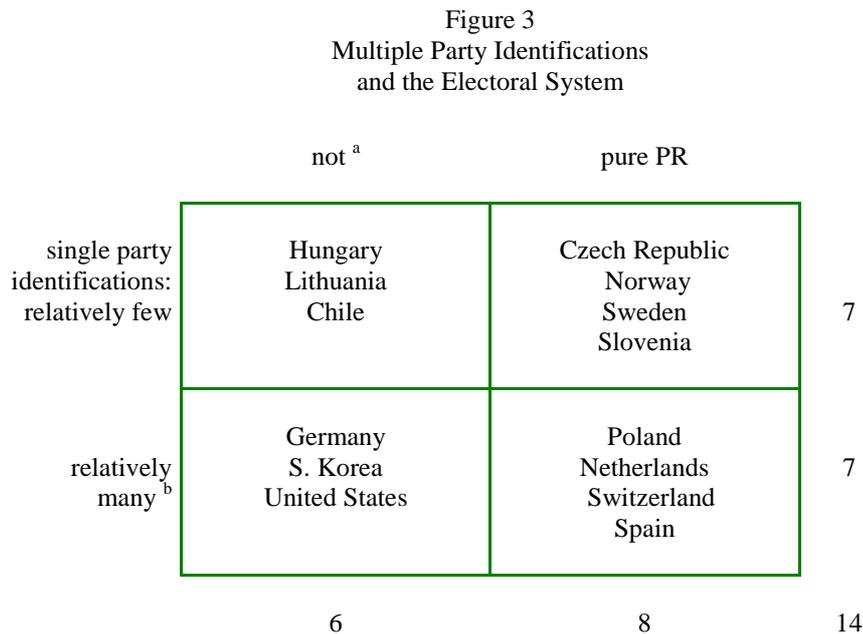
		effective parties:			
		few = less than 5		many = more than 5 <sup>a</sup>	
multiple party identifications:	few	Germany Spain S. Korea United States		Chile The Netherlands Switzerland	7
	many <sup>b</sup>	Hungary Poland Sweden		Norway Czech Republic Lithuania Slovenia	7
		7		7	14

Notes: (a) We take the median of the distribution of ENPs as a division line and define those countries with an ENP below 5 as low, and those above 5 as high. (b) We take the median of the distribution of proportions of multiple PIDs (cf. Table 1) as a division line and define those countries with 11 per cent or more as having many and those with less as having few.

Germany, Spain, S. Korea and the US are characterised both by low numbers of effective parties, and by low proportions of PIDs. Norway, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Lithuania and Slovenia, on the other hand, come up with many effective parties and elevated proportions of multiple PIDs. Taken together, eight out of 14 countries support the *party system format proposition*, while six countries – among them the Netherlands – do not follow the predicted pattern. This certainly is all but strong support for the proposition. We conclude that, while being weakly related to the frequency of multiple PIDs, the format of the party system is certainly not the driving force behind them.

#### 4.3. Are single PIDs more frequent in PR systems?

The electoral systems proposition holds that pure PR systems promote identifications with single, concrete parties while mixed and plurality systems do not. We can test this argument by relating the electoral system to the relative prevalence of single PIDs in all PIDs, i.e. by holding the overall level of partisanship constant. Figure 3 displays the result of this analytic exercise.



Notes: (a) Classification of electoral systems according to Blais & Massicotte 1997.  
 (b) We first compute the proportion of single PIDs in all PIDs, then take the median of this distribution of relative proportions as a division line and classify countries with 84 per cent single PIDs in all PIDs or more as having relatively many and countries with less as having relatively few.

We find that the concentration of partisanship on one single party (which is what “the relative prevalence of single PIDs” actually means) does not depend on the electoral system, at least not according to our admittedly crude measurement. Seven countries – Hungary, Lithuania,

and Chile on the one hand, and Poland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Spain on the other – support the proposition while seven others contradict it. Whereas electoral systems are known for their important effects on all sorts of things – like the translation of votes into seats, the level of electoral participation, etc – they seem to leave the development of partisanship unaffected.

4.4. Are multiple PIDs more frequent in new democracies?

It is Converse’s argument that partisanship takes time to stabilise. Time in this context is mostly a shorthand for electoral experience. The quality of electoral experience is important here: the more often people vote in free and fair elections, the greater their likelihood to develop party identification. And the more often they vote for one particular party, the stronger their attachment with it will grow. Political conjunctures and particular events also put their imprints on the partisanship of specific generations, but life cycle effects caused by growing electoral experience prevail by far (Converse 1969, 1976; also Cassel 1999). We have argued, that the concentration of partisanship on a single, specific party is an important aspect of this stabilisation process – if it is not the very core of it. If this holds true, we should find more multiple PIDs in new democracies than in older ones. Figure 4 shows that there is something to this argument.

Figure 4  
Multiple Party Identifications  
and the Age of Democratic Party Systems

	old democracy	new <sup>a</sup>	
multiple party identifications: few	Chile Germany Netherlands Spain Switzerland United States	S. Korea	7
many <sup>b</sup>	Sweden Norway	Czech Republic Hungary Lithuania Poland Slovenia	7
	9	6	14

Notes: (a) “New” democracies are established after the breakdown of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, while “old” democracies operate for a longer period of time. (b) We take the median of the range of proportions of multiple PIDs (cf. Table 1) as a division line and define those countries with 11 per cent or more as having many and those with less as having few.

According to Converse (1969) and his focus on the stabilisation of partisanship, democracies grow old pretty fast. We therefore classify only the post-communist systems of Central and Eastern Europe and South Korea as “new democracies”, and confront them with all the rest of our 13 country studies (including Chile and Spain which, arguably, are not yet that old democracies)<sup>12</sup>. All five of so defined “new democracies” are characterised by “many” multiple PIDs. On the other hand, seven in nine old democracies are characterised by “few” multiple PIDs while there are “many” in two. The deviant cases are Norway and Sweden. All in all, the electoral experience proposition is supported by twelve of our 14 country studies; it does not hold for two of them.

Having got that far, one of course wonders about the deviant cases. Why is it that partisanship in the new democracy of South Korea is highly concentrated, while it is so strangely dispersed the old Scandinavian democracies of Norway and Sweden? With respect to South Korea, one obvious answer is that democracy in this country is not really new. Ever since US occupation in the years after WW2, the politics of South Korea were torn between military rule and liberal democracy. This means that the basic structure of the partisan alternatives is deeply engraved in the public recognition, and South Korean partisanship could develop over many years. However, political oppositions are only recently decided through the verdict of the electorate which probably explains why the current level of partisanship is rather modest (Nohlen 2001).

As far as Norway and Sweden are concerned, things are different. Democracy in Scandinavia has a long and strong tradition of consensual politics (e.g. Pappi & Schmitt 1994). Consensual democracies are characterised by the fact that opposition parties are usually involved in the definition of governmental policies, and by their high legitimacy (e.g. Luebbert 1986). It seems to make sense, under those circumstances, that partisanship is less “exclusive” even in an old democracy than it is elsewhere. But if we accept this ancillary explanation, we immediately run into problems with The Netherlands and Switzerland which are commonly known to be at least as consensual than Sweden and Norway are. So the true answer is that we do not know why multiple PIDs are rather numerous in Sweden and Norway.

All in all, however, we still maintain that electoral experiences are the key predictors of multiple PIDs. The less experienced an electorate is, the more frequent are multiple party identifications.

#### 4.5. Multiple PIDs as determinants of party preference and vote choice

We finally turn to the question of behavioural consequences of multiple vs. single PIDs. Are multiple PIDs less effective determinants of party choice than single PIDs? To be able to answer this question one needs to predict party choice of respondents with single and multiple PIDs separately and to compare the findings. The simultaneous analysis of preferences towards relevant parties (described above) is a suitable strategy to do this. It allows us to code multiple PIDs of respondents in their respective “party stacks”<sup>13</sup> and to analyse cases – i.e., party evaluations – of respondents with multiple PIDs and cases – party evaluations – of respondents with single PIDs separately (while contrasting in each case these party evaluations to those of respondents with no PID).

Within this larger analytic design, we follow two more specific strategies for determining relative effects of PIDs. One is derived from the causal order as presumed by the traditional social-psychological model of vote choice (Figure 1). Stepwise regressions are performed with party preference as the dependent variable; social-structural factors are entered first, and their explanatory power is determined; party identifications are entered second, and the proportion of additional variance explained is determined; short-term effects on the vote – that is: party leader evaluations and issue orientations<sup>14</sup> – are entered third, and again the proportion of additional variance explained is determined (together with the proportion of variance explained overall). In addition to this  $\Delta R^2$  – strategy, concurrent multiple regressions are run both for single and multiple PIDs in each country (with a close eye on tolerance scores to prevent multi-collinearity problems). The results of both sets of analyses are displayed in Tables 5 and 6.

These tables suggest a number of conclusions not all of which are relevant in the context of the present paper. If we concentrate on our research question and start with the  $\Delta R^2$  – strategy, we find our expectations clearly confirmed: single PIDs unmistakably have a greater impact on party preferences (and ultimately on the vote) than multiple PIDs have. This is true on average, but also in every single country study analysed here. Differences are more than marginal; they amount on average to almost ten per cent of variance additionally explained. Furthermore, we find short term factors somewhat more important for the explanation of party preferences (and the vote) of multiple identifiers, and social structural factors somewhat less important for them. This finding suggests that multiple identifiers are less well integrated in their social environment than single identifiers, and more affected by the ups and downs of day-to-day politics, by electoral campaigns, and by political leaders. It is again suggested by average figures, but it holds in every single country study analysed.

If we look at  $\beta$ 's rather than  $\Delta R^2$ 's, we find the relative weight of *both* social structure and short term factors somewhat increased among multiple identifiers. This results from the concurrent (rather than stepwise) multiple regression technique in which a weaker multiple PID

effect raises not only the weight of short-term factors but also that of social-structural traits. The main result however does fully coincide with that of the prior analysis: the relative impact of multiple PIDs on party preferences and the vote is clearly inferior to that of single identifications.

Table 5  
The Effect of Single vs. Multiple PID's, Part I  
(figures are R square changes if not indicated otherwise)

predictors	single PID against none					multiple PIDs against none				
	<i>first:</i> social struc- ture <sup>a</sup>	<i>then:</i> party identi- fication	<i>then:</i> short- term effects <sup>b</sup>	ex- plained variance	n of cases <sup>c</sup>	<i>first:</i> social struc- ture	<i>then:</i> party identi- fication	<i>then:</i> short- term effects	ex- plained variance	n of cases
countries <sup>d</sup>										
Spain	10	19	15	44	2646	06	02	20	28	2206
USA	13	19	10	42	2948	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	14	16	20	50	4095	10	07	25	42	3826
Czech Republic	22	13	18	55	5986	21	07	22	50	5817
Norway	19	13	19	52	10416	17	08	21	47	10250
The Netherlands	14	12	11	37	7342	12	00	14	26	6334
Hungary	23	11	17	52	4749	21	07	19	47	4718
Poland	11	11	13	35	6740	08	05	15	28	6329
Switzerland	08	11	09	28	7057	02	02	11	20	6332
S. Korea	16	11	8	35	4870	13	00	9	22	4163
Germany	25	10	09	44	7544	23	04	11	37	6979
mean	15	13	13	42		13	04	15	32	

Source: *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (1<sup>st</sup> module 1996 – 2000).

*Notes:* Unweighted data are analysed – except for the German case where East-West proportionality was established. The dependent variable is party preference (rather than actual vote choice). A stepwise OLS regression is performed with social structure entering first, party identification second, and short term effects third. (a) The effect of social structural factors on party preferences is the predicted preference on the basis of the age and gender of respondents, their union membership, religiosity (church attendance, atheism), education (primary, college), and the immediate living environment (village, town). Atheism has not been established in the Swiss study and could not be included there. A race dummy has been introduced as an additional predictor in the US analysis. For the Korean analysis, all social-structural factors are included which are significantly related to the preference for one of the relevant parties. (b) Short term effects are issue orientations (measured as left-right distance to party) and evaluations of the party leader. Left-right placements of political parties have not been established in the US. Thus, for the US, short term effects are restricted to party leader effects. Party leader evaluations have not been established for all relevant parties in Switzerland – the party leader of the Green party is missing; short-term effects for the Swiss study are therefore restricted to issue orientations (left-right distances). (c) The unit of analysis is party evaluations of respondents rather than respondents themselves; the corresponding technique of stacked data analysis is explained in the text. (d) 3 of the 14 studies analysed before could not be included in the multivariate analyses due to incomplete data: these are those from Lithuania (direction of party identification not fully established), Slovenia (no strength of party identification established), and Chile (no short term factors – party leader ratings and left-right self- and party-placements – established).

Table 6  
The Effect of Single vs. Multiple PID's, Part II  
(figures are betas if not indicated otherwise)

predictors	single PID against none				multiple PIDs against none			
	social structure <sup>a</sup>	party identification	l-r distance <sup>b</sup>	party leaders <sup>c</sup>	social structure	party identification	l-r distance	party leaders
countries <sup>d</sup>								
USA	.15	.29	na	.37	-	-	-	-
Switzerland	.17	.28	-.31	na	.18	.12	-.34	na
S. Korea	.21	.26	-.05	.29	.24	.03	-.05	.31
The Netherlands	.18	.24	-.17	.30	.21	.04	-.18	.32
Norway	.20	.23	-.22	.37	.21	.14	-.23	.39
Sweden	.17	.23	-.35	.26	.18	.14	-.36	.28
Poland	.16	.21	-.20	.28	.17	.12	-.21	.29
Spain	.10	.21	-.15	.39	.13	ns	-.14	.41
Germany	.31	.20	-.09	.30	.34	.10	-.10	.31
Hungary	.23	.17	-.11	.44	.23	.09	-.12	.45
Czech Republic	.20	.16	-.12	.47	.21	.07	-.13	.49
mean	.19	.22	-.19	.35	.21	.07	-.20	.32

Source: *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (1<sup>st</sup> module 1996 – 2000).

Notes: ns = not significant below  $p=.05$ . na = not applied (not applicable in the case of Taiwan). Unweighted data are analysed – except for the German case where East-West proportionality was secured. The dependent variable is party preference (rather than actual vote choice). Results are standardised coefficients from a multiple OLS regression. (a) The effect of social structural factors on party preferences is the predicted preference on the basis of the age and gender of respondents, their union membership, church attendance (never, frequent), education (primary, college), and the immediate living environment (village, town). Atheism has not been established in the Swiss study. A race dummy has been introduced as an additional predictor in the US analysis. For the Korean analysis, all social-structural factors are included which are significantly related to the preference for one of the relevant parties. (b) Left-right distance is the distance which the respondents perceive between themselves and the party under study. Left-right placements of political parties have not been established in the US study. (c) Party leader evaluations have not been established for all relevant parties in Switzerland and the variable was not used in the respective analysis. (d) 3 of the 14 studies analysed before could not be included in the multivariate analyses due to incomplete data: these are those from Lithuania (direction of party identification not fully established), Slovenia (strength of party identification not established), and Chile (no short-term factors established).

By way of closing this paragraph, we note that the relative importance of party leaders for the shaping of party preferences and the vote is tremendous. On average, and by far, evaluations of political leaders yield the single strongest effect on party preferences in both sets of concurrent regressions.<sup>15</sup>

## 5. Summary

What we have come to call the *Dutch proposition* states that people do not identify with political parties but with what they stand for – e.g., social groups and, in the sphere of politics,

ideological tendencies. In this view, identifications with political parties are a mere reflection of the real thing. As a consequence of this, people may hold multiple party identifications if an ideological tendency is represented by multiple political parties.

Analysing 14 country studies of the first module of the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems*, we have established here that multiple party identifications are indeed a relevant aspect of partisanship. Noteworthy proportions of national electorates identify with more than one political party.

The sources for these multiple PIDs, however, are not found to accord with the *Dutch proposition*. The *format of party systems proposition*, which is more or less a sequel of it, cannot explain where we happen to find many and where we find only few multiple identifiers. The same goes for the *electoral systems proposition*. What is important is time and electoral experience – much as Philip Converse has taught us some thirty years ago. The longer people are dealing with a given set of partisan alternatives, and the more often they vote for a particular party, the closer their attachment with this party becomes. It is therefore that multiple identifiers are much more frequent in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe than in the older democracies under study. A noteworthy exception from this are the consensual democracies of Scandinavia which are also characterised by numerous multiple identifiers.

If it comes to the behavioural consequences of party identification, we find that multiple identifications are much weaker predictors of party preferences and party choice than identifications with one concrete party. The first round of studies of the CSES thus seems to demonstrate that it is political parties, not ideological tendencies, with which people identify.

## 6. Notes

<sup>1</sup> Note that the two assumptions are logically independent of one another. Multiple PIDs can be perfectly stable, single ones highly volatile, and vice versa.

<sup>2</sup> The Dutch proposition actually proposes that people do not identify with political parties but with what these parties stand for, and that if multiple parties stand for the same thing – whatever it may be – than people tend to ‘identify’ with multiple parties. Cees van der Eijk made me aware of this.

<sup>3</sup> ICORE is the acronym of the *International Committee for Research into Elections and Representative Democracy*. ICORE is the „club“ of established National Election Studies which involves now 15 member studies worldwide.

<sup>4</sup> Wherever appropriate weighting factors were provided we use, in this first “descriptive” step, weighted data sets to improve the representativity of the samples.

<sup>5</sup> The analysis of stacked data matrices is based on unweighed data.

<sup>6</sup> In the framework of the present study a party is „relevant“ if it managed to win, in the election under study, five or more percent of the valid vote. All other parties are disregarded, lumped together in an “other party” category, etc. Only evaluations of and preferences towards relevant parties are considered in the stacked data analysis.

<sup>7</sup> This leaves room for tactical voters who vote for a second preference in order not to spoil their vote altogether. This seems to be a rather prominent feature of British voting behaviour (e.g. Fisher 2000), but tactical voting is certainly not restricted to plurality systems.

<sup>8</sup> Note that the stacking of the data matrix is likely to produce correlated standard errors which might render conventional estimates of statistical significance inappropriate. In cases where such concerns are to be taken more seriously than in this analysis with its “robust” solutions, an appropriate alternative estimation of the significance of effects is the calculation of panel-corrected standard errors.

<sup>9</sup> The pioneer study for this approach is Van der Eijk, Franklin, et al. (1996). Also instructive are Openhuis (1995), Schmitt (1998, 2000, 2001), Tillie (1995), and van der Eijk, Franklin and van der Brug (1999).

<sup>10</sup> While the CSES (module I) provides ample space for the coding of respondents’ spontaneous mentions of more than one party to which they might feel close, it does deliberately not ask directly for multiple PIDs -- we wanted to avoid suggesting to respondents that those might exist. By contrast, the Dutch study asked respondents, in the course of the overall nine questions constituting the PID questionnaire, „Are there any other parties to which you feel attracted?“ We believe that the latter way of establishing multiple PIDs activates an affirmative response set and thereby leads to an over-estimation of the phenomenon. For full question wordings, cf. the CSES PID questionnaire in the appendix of this paper, and van der Eijk and Niemöller (1983:335) for the Dutch study.

Note that the Dutch NES 1998 which carried the CSES (module I) study did not follow the CSES operationalisation of the strength of party identifications. With regard to the directional component of PID measures, however, the Dutch CSES study scrupulously applied the master questionnaire; and multiple PIDs are determined on the basis of this directional component. Kees Aarts from the University of Twente provided valuable information on this question.

Our interpretation of the 1983 Dutch findings as a methodological artifact seems to be confirmed by the New Zealand branch of CSES (module I) study. There, the survey was administered as a drop-off questionnaire and filled in by the respondents themselves after the main interview. This leads to an interview situation which is about as “suggestive” as the 1983 Dutch face-to-face study was. It does not come as a surprise, then, that the New Zealand CSES findings are similar to the 1983 Dutch findings: 45 percent without PID, 31 percent holding one, 22 percent holding two, and 2 percent holding three PIDs.

<sup>11</sup> If  $v_j$  is the share of vote of the  $j$ th party, then the effective number of parties is  $(\sum v_j^2)^{-1}$ .

<sup>12</sup> The classification of Chile as an “old” democracy in particular might come as a surprise. According to Freedom House, Chile is classified as free “only” since 1990. However, the structure of the party system and public electoral experiences of free and fair elections date back at least to the pre-authoritarian period of mass democracy between 1932-72.

<sup>13</sup> While the CSES (Module I) questionnaire establishes up to three directions of partisanship, the strength component of party identification – even in the case of multiple PIDs – is only measured for the one party which R feels closest to. To overcome this shortage of information, we assume that the strength of attachment with a possible second or third party is minimal.

<sup>14</sup> In the framework of the CSES (module I) study, issue effects can be operationalised as left-right distances between self and party. Party competence evaluations which are mightier predictors of party choice were not part of the common questionnaire of the module.

<sup>15</sup> A nine nation study on the "Political Leaders and Democratic Elections" is currently exploring the phenomenon in diachronic and cross-nationally comparative analysis. Data base is an integrated data-file combining the findings of the series of national election studies from Australia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the UK, and the US.

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## Appendix

### CSES MODULE 1 QUESTIONNAIRE: The Party Identification Questions

**SHORT VERSION OF Q3: TO BE USED IN POLITIES WHERE NO PARTY BLOCKS (OR ELECTION ALLIANCES) FORMED**

**SQ3. Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?**

- 1 YES  
5 NO → Skip to SQ3C  
8 Don't know → Skip to SQ3C

**SQ3a. Which PARTY is that? (RECORD ALL PARTIES, response categories range from 0-96)**

First PARTY mentioned: \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF ONLY ONE PARTY IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO SQ3e*

Second PARTY (if volunteered): \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF MORE THAN ONE PARTY IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO SQ3b*

Third PARTY (if volunteered): \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF MORE THAN ONE PARTY IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO SQ3b*

98 Don't know → Skip to SQ3c

**SQ3b. Which party do you feel closest to?**

Party identified: \_\_\_\_\_ → Skip to SQ3e

97 No party identified → Skip to SQ4

**SQ3c. Do you feel yourself a little closer to one of the political parties than the others?**

- 1 YES  
5 NO → Skip to Q4  
8 Don't know → Skip to Q4

**SQ3d. Which party is that?**

Party identified: \_\_\_\_\_

**SQ3e. Do you feel very close to this party, somewhat close, or not very close?**

- 1 VERY CLOSE → Skip to Q4  
2 SOMEWHAT CLOSE → Skip to Q4  
3 NOT VERY CLOSE → Skip to Q4  
8 Don't know → Skip to Q4

**LONG VERSION OF Q3: TO BE USED IN POLITIES WHERE AT LEAST ONE PARTY BLOCK (OR ELECTORAL ALLIANCE) FORMED**

**LQ3. Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?**

- 1 YES
- 5 NO → Skip to LQ3c
- 8 Don't know → Skip to LQ3c

**LQ3a. Which PARTY is that? (RECORD ALL PARTIES, response categories range from 0-96)**

First PARTY mentioned: \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF ONLY ONE PARTY BLOCK IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO LQ3a1*  
*IF ONLY ONE PARTY (WITHIN A BLOCK) IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO LQ3e*

Second PARTY (if volunteered): \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF MORE THAN ONE PARTY IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO LQ3b*

Third PARTY (if volunteered): \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF MORE THAN ONE PARTY IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO LQ3b*

98 Don't know, no party mentioned → Skip to LQ3c

**LQ3a(1). Which party in [NAME OF BLOCK] do you feel closest to?**

First PARTY mentioned: \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF ONLY ONE PARTY BLOCK IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO LQ3e*

Second PARTY (if volunteered): \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF MORE THAN ONE PARTY IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO LQ3b*

Third PARTY (if volunteered): \_\_\_\_\_  
*IF MORE THAN ONE PARTY IS MENTIONED → SKIP TO LQ3b*

98 Don't know → Skip to LQ3c

**LQ3b. Which party do you feel closest to?**

Party identified: \_\_\_\_\_ → Skip to LQ3e

97 No party identified

**LQ3c. Do you feel yourself a little closer to one of the political parties than the others?**

- 1 YES
- 5 NO → Skip to Q4
- 8 Don't know → Skip to Q4

**LQ3d. Which party is that?**

Party identified: \_\_\_\_\_

**LQ3e. Do you feel very close to this (party/party block), somewhat close, or not very close?**

- 1 VERY CLOSE
- 2 SOMEWHAT CLOSE
- 3 NOT VERY CLOSE
- 8 Don't know