The General Elections as a Process of Powerachievement in the Belgian Political System

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The aim of this election-study is not to examine the motivation of the voter as such and as only design. This research takes the view that the elections are a process of powerachievement, a process which is developed through different phases. This specific orientation is an attempt to give a more and more definite character to political science.

Political science cannot remain any longer a more or less successful piling up of sociological, psychological, juridical, geographical researches or inquiries about politics from the point of view of any discipline. Political science has to make an independent synthesis of all these contributions. The approach from the momentary analysis of the events seems one possibility for getting a specific character.

Probably, there are still other possibilities but this offers the substantial advantage that we can get an unambiguous knowledge. According to this method we have to define the different moments, as a first phase; and afterwards we can search for the decision-making within these moments. The division in moments of power gives the input and the output of the distribution of power of every momentary decision-making process. In function of this we can try to weigh the different disciplinary contributions against each other. From a multitude of processes analysed in that way, political science can reach an independent synthesis in its own theory. In this research

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one definite process of powerachievement will be analysed in this
way : the legislative elections in Belgium since 1918.

Since the independence of Belgium there have been different legal
systems applied to the legislative elections. The most important
phases are :

— from 1830 till 1893 : majority system with electorate according
  to the tribute,
— from 1893 till 1899 : majority system with universal plural
  suffrage,
— from 1900 till 1914 : proportional representation with universal
  plural suffrage,
— from 1914 till 1918 : proportional representation with universal
  singular suffrage,
— only from 1949 women are allowed to vote.

This research may enclose only one definite legal regulation of the
electoral system, if it wants to be unambiguous. Therefore, there may
be considered principally only one of the periods mentioned above.

But, because the introduction of the female suffrage, as far as it
can be verified, has brought about no considerable change in the
electoral behaviour, the period 1918-1965 can be considered as a
whole (1). During this period there have been 14 legislative elec-
tions : 1919, 1921, 1925, 1929, 1932, 1936, 1939, 1946, 1949, 1950,
1954, 1958, 1961, 1965 (2). These legislative elections, within this
period, are, as it were, always double, because both the House of
Representatives and the Senate have to be composed.

In the pattern of these legislative elections we seek for « moments ».
« Moment » points at first at a phase in the event. But it is not just
any phase ; it is a phase that is powerful, a whole in which a action
movement comes about. So, this idea contains both the meaning of
motory phenomenon and the meaning of a phase of a development.
The determination of the moments in the Belgian legislative elections
happened in two stages. Firstly we have looked for the moments,
which were considered by experience as possible moments of power,
if there was some power divided in these moments — the precise

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(1) For the femal electoral behaviour: DE SMET R., EVALENKO R., FRAEYS W.,
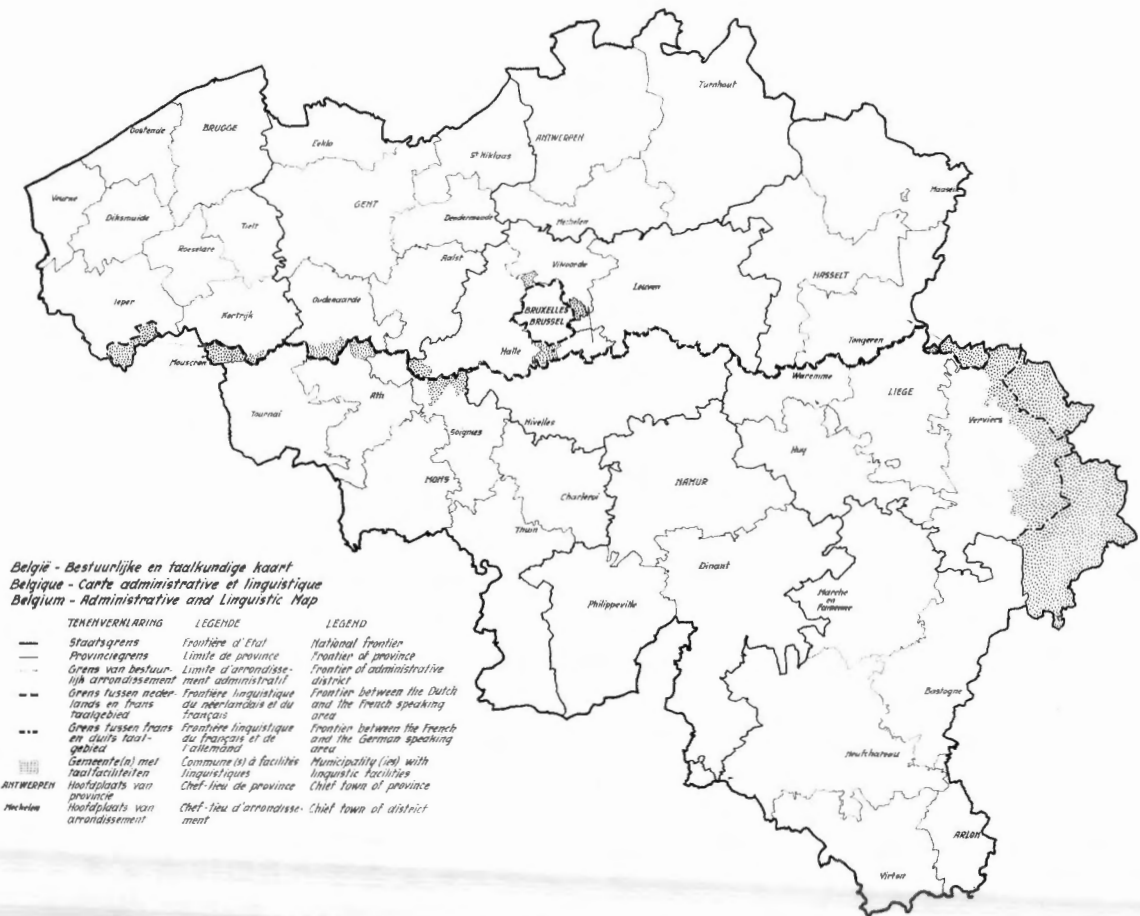« Atlas des élections belges », pp. 63-65.

(2) There have also been, within this period, 7 by-elections, which decided about
12 mandates. All these by-elections, took place between the two world wars. These
elections will not be considered further, because they all have their own story and
in general didnot bring about a big change.

volume will be found out later in the affirmative case —. Afterwards we have tried to obtain an exact determination of the number of the moments by testing elements in the Belgian political system, that turned out to be moments of power in other political systems. From this point of view we have examined : the level of the elections, the division in constituencies, the caution money, the minimum requirements, the forbidding of parties, the franchised age, the female suffrage, the compulsory and the free suffrage, the franchise of colonies, the point of time of the elections and the documentary proof of one's election. None of these elements were distinguished as an each-time-releating moment of power in the Belgian legislative elections since 1918. Especially this second stage in this investigation for the moments of power gives the researcher a rather important certainty about the completeness of the distinctive moments of power in the examined process. We have made out 5 moments in the legislative elections in Belgium : the composition of the lists, the figure of the elections, the electoral behaviour, the motivation of the party choice, and the distortion of the choice during the transformation. Within each of these moments we have to seek further for the agents (meaning the working elements) and the volume of the division of power. Therefore we looked out, within each moment for the best research-method. Indeed, for each moment it is possible to have to use a different technique or several techniques may be applied together. The research for the composition of the lists springs from an inquiry in the different arrondissemental organizations and federations of the three traditional parties, completed with the works of the CRISP about the polls (3) and from the analysis of the official statistics for candidates chosen within and outside the useful sequence. The indication of the electoral figure springs from a participating observation completed with an inquiry about the election campaign. For the study of the electoral behaviour is based on the working up of the avaible statistical data, completions from inquiry III and comparisons with foreign legislative elections. The investigation for the motivation of the voter is based from a critical evaluation of the work of De Smet and Evalenko about this subject, and from the extensive inquiry III. The distortion of the selection during the transformation was examined by a series of « test-calculations ».

The applied techniques have not given us the ultimate and defini-

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(3) F. DEBUYST, *Les mécanismes d'accès au Parlement*, pp. 163-289, in « La fonction parlementaire en Belgique: mécanismes d'accès et images », Brussel, 1967.

Belgïe - Bestuurlijke en taalkundige kaart
Belgique - Carte administrative et linguistique
Belgium - Administrative and Linguistic Map

TEKENVERKLARING	LEGENDE	LEGEND
Staatsgrens	Frontière d'Etat	National frontier
Provinciegrens	Limite de province	Frontier of province
Grens van bestuurlijk arrondissement	Limite d'arrondissement administratif	Frontier of administrative district
Grens tussen nederlands en frans taalgebied	Frontière linguistique du néerlandais et du français	Frontier between the Dutch and the French speaking area
Grens tussen frans en duits taalgebied	Frontière linguistique du français et de l'allemand	Frontier between the French and the German speaking area
Gemeente(n) met taalfaciliteiten	Commune (s) à facilités linguistiques	Municipality (ies) with linguistic facilities
ANTWERPEN Hoofdplaats van provincie	Chef-lieu de province	Chief town of province
Mechelen Hoofdplaats van arrondissement	Chef-lieu d'arrondissement	Chief town of district

tive answer for every moment but they appeared the most indicated ones, in view of the results of the science in this domain.

I. THE COMPOSITION OF THE LISTS

The proportional representation in Belgium is not organized nationally, but in arrondissements with the possibility of provincial allotment, which means there is a possibility that the proportional representation by the connection of several arrondissements happens provincially (4). The distribution of the number of seats among the several parties happens on the provincial level, but the adjudication of the seats to the candidates of the same party happens arrondissementally. So, the parties have to propose the lists of the candidates per electoral arrondissement (5). This composition of the lists is the first moment within the legislative elections in Belgium. It is an event, that, though regulated to a certain extent by the parties, differs in each party. But these statutes often are not completely lived up to, and are sometimes even completely disregarded. It is a rather intricate and still too little known event. Our aim is to try to get a more general image of the things happening in the individual arrondissements. There are three concepts that are very common in this study : poll, useful sequence and the fighting place. For us the poll is not as it is often represented, the complete event of the composition of the lists. The poll is the election by the party-members of the candidates (at least these is the useful sequence) for the party-lists at the legislative elections. All the members of the party have to be franchised, even if the participation cannot be made compulsory. So, we do not consider a so-called « poll of representatives » as a real poll. The poll is the Belgian term for a primary. The useful sequence is, in its essence, an estimation of the number of the seats that a party will gain in a definite arrondissement. In this estimation two elements are settled : the number of seats that the party possesses in that area at the moment of the estimation and an anticipation about the general election-results of the party at the next election. Because it is an estimation and because this estimation has not to be officially stated, the useful sequence cannot always be unambiguously fixed.

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(4) There are 30 electoral arrondissements for the elections for the House of Representatives and 21 electoral arrondissements for the elections for the Senate. There are nine provinces.

(5) The number of the candidates can range sharply in each district: from at the least 2 and at the most 33.

Therefore we have operationalized this definition in the sequence, that postfactum appeared effective. The useful sequence than is equal to the number of mandates that the party has obtained in the district at the real election. The fighting-place is the place, which, though not certain, can still be conquered by the party, if when declining, it is doing less bad than expected, or, when making progress, it is doing better than one could foresee. The fighting-place is the marginal, the least sure seat.

Because there are important differences among the political parties with regard to the drawing up to the lists, the composition of the lists has to be examined for each of the parties separately.

A. The Belgian Socialist Party (BSP/PSB).

The BSP makes high demands of active participation in the party upon its candidates for the party-lists (6). They do not only require a lasting membership of the party (5 years) but they also require a lasting membership of the socialist federation of trade unions and of the socialist health insurance mutuality.

Besides this they demand that a certain amount of purchase has been realized at the socialist co-operation, and that the candidate is a reader of the party-press. Some federations even make demands concerning the (eventual) spouse and children of the candidate. It is also important to note that the candidateship for the poll has to be proposed by some sections or by a rather big number of members. These conditions upon which they keep a strict hand, admit only in-breeding of very socialized elements from the own party.

These candidates are proposed to the members of the party in order that these, by prescribed elections, can choose the candidates for the real elections. Only the members of the party are franchised for these elections.

Based upon the figures for the polls of 1954, 1958, 1961 and 1965 we get the determination that the participation in the polls comes to a little more than the half of the members of the party, namely 51,3 % and that the participation of the voters of the party is very restricted, namely 5,3 %.

But also within the BSP, democracy within the party is not perfect.

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(6) The national statutes of the BSP rule the drawing up to the lists only in a very slight way. The arrondissemental federations of the party in this are very independent. Facts mentioned above are the greatest common divisor of this arrondissemental behaviour.

Also within this party there are deviations from the democratic norm : other compositors of lists appear, such as federal congresses or authorities which place some persons out of the poll.

We have intended to find the most accurate measure by starting from the chosen members of parliament and by examining how far they are appointed by the polls or by other compositors of lists. Every time we meet other compositors of lists we very shortly give the character of the decisionmaking. The composition of the lists of 1961 will be our example. The data are given in table I.

TABLE I

The composition of the lists of the BSP in 1961

Federation	With poll		Without poll		Character of the composition of the lists without poll
	House	Senate	House	Senate	
Antwerpen	7	4	1		Huysmans out of poll (as in 1954).
Mechelen			2	1	Federal Congress, conclusion approved by applause.
Brussel - Bruxelles .	12	7	1		Spaak out of poll.
Leuven	2	1			
Nivelles	2	1	1	1	Bary out of poll, Romain appointed by federal Committee
Brugge			2		Federal Congress, 160 present
Aalst			1	1	Federal Congress
Charleroi	7	3			
Liège	8	4			
Hasselt			1		Federal Congress
Tongeren-Maaseik			1		Federal Congress
Luxembourg . . .	1	1	1		No poll in Neufchâteau-Virton
Total	39	21	11	3	
	60		14		
%	81.1		18.9		Number of examined cases : 74 (on a total of 129 BSP - mandatories, thus 57.4 %).

About 80 % of the examined chosen persons were set upon the lists of candidates ranged by the polls. About 20 % of chosen people conquered their place on those lists in another way. We think that these figures are not completely representative. Surely, for 1961 we could examine 57 % of the cases and for 1965 60 %, this means an average of 58.7 %. But there is a small systematic fault in these figures, in this meaning that they underrepresent the other compositors of lists ; the polls are in some degree overrepresented in this way. It appears that the other compositors of lists within the BSP

especially are the federal congresses and the federal committees. The placing out of the polls also occurs several times, but the number of the candidates it deals with, is rather small. The oligarchisating mechanisms remain rather limited within the BSP. The pollers of the party decide for the great part of the candidates. But also here, certain processes can be established, which work against the democratic system (extensive sections that support each other, restriction of the information, default or slowing down of crystalisation of the opinion tendencies and factions, etc...). But there are still too few indications about this subject.

B. The Christian People's Party (CVP/PSC).

In contrast with the BSP the national statutes of the CVP give very clear and extensive, but incomplete norms for the composition of the lists (7) « The quality of effective candidate of the party in the useful sequence is given by a secret poll in which all the members of the party, who live in the electoral district, take part ». This is a very clear imperative : the candidates in the useful sequence on the lists, which the CVP proposes at the legislative elections have to be appointed by a real poll-election. But there is a hiatus in these rules : the electoral system that has to be used for these polls, is not specified.

There have been directives issued by the National Committee of the party for the arrondissements with regard to the poll regulations (8). The most important stipulations of these directives concern the object of the poll and the shape of the lists of candidates for the polls. According to these directives, the General Committee of the arrondissement can decide if the poll will have as its object either the indication of the candidates who will occur on the list, or moreover their classification on the list. So, the General Committee of the arrondissement can completely nullify the sequence of the candidates, fixed by the poll, by a foregoing decision. This is a great possibility for limiting the democracy within the party. Also the stipulations in the directives in respect of the shape of the lists of candidates give possibilities for limiting democratic elections within

(7) National statutes of the CVP. Accepted by the twelfth National Congress of December 7th 1956. s.l., s.d., 15 p. The version examined here of article 24 came about during the sixth Statutory Congress of Marsh 10th 1951. Before this the arrondissements could replace the poll by an inquiry within an assembly which had to be extensive and representative for the party in that arrondissement.

(8) Directives of the National Committee to the districts with regard to the poll regulations for the legislative and provincial elections. Brussels, 1956, 6 p., 3 enclosures.
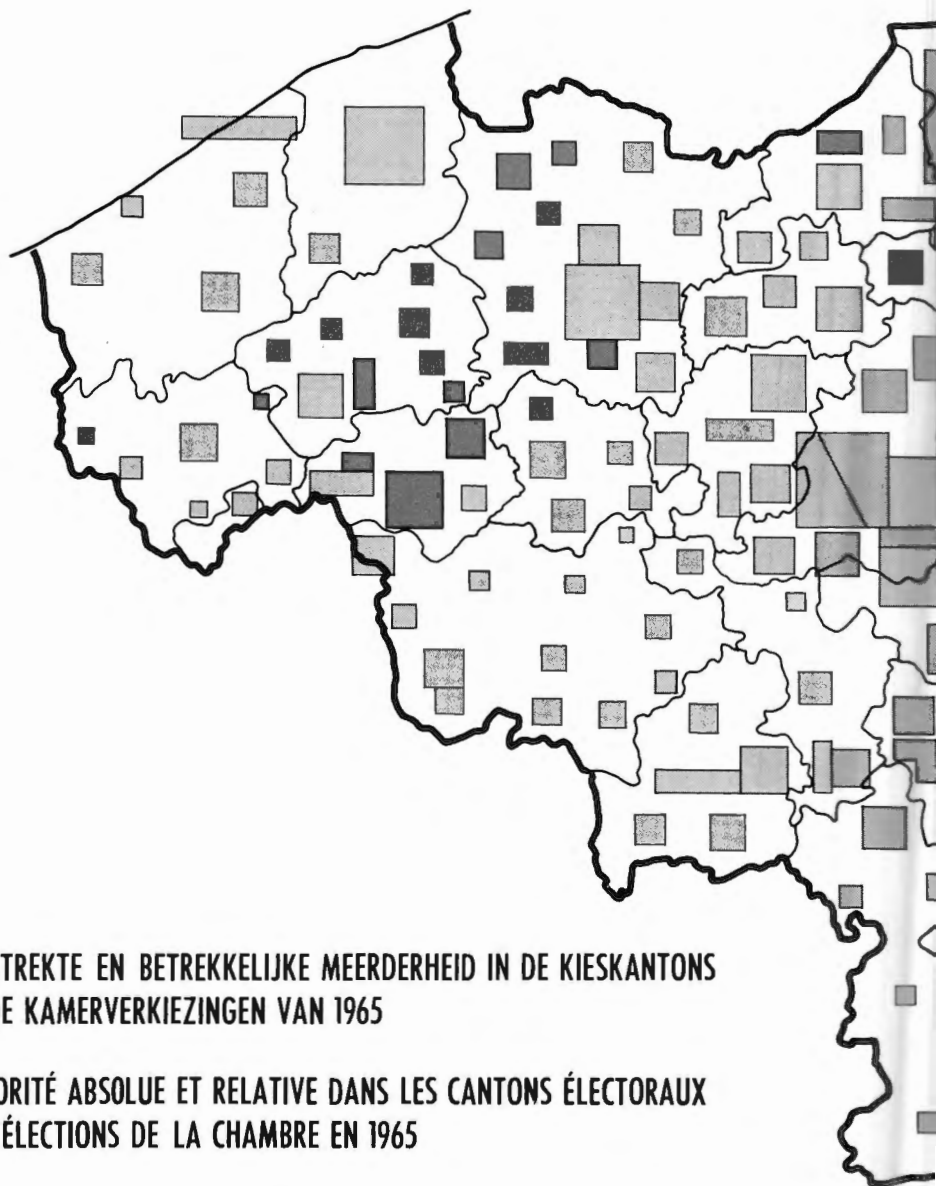
VOLSTREKTE EN BETREKKELIJKE MEERDERHEID IN DE KIESKANTONS
BIJ DE KAMERVERKIEZINGEN VAN 1965

MAJORITÉ ABSOLUE ET RELATIVE DANS LES CANTONS ÉLECTORAUX
AUX ÉLECTIONS DE LA CHAMBRE EN 1965

ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE MAJORITY IN THE ELECTORAL CANTONS
AT THE GENERAL ELECTIONS FOR THE HOUSE IN 1965

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majorité absolue P.S.C.
absolute majority

volstrekte meerderheid B.S.P.
majorité absolue P.S.B.
absolute majority

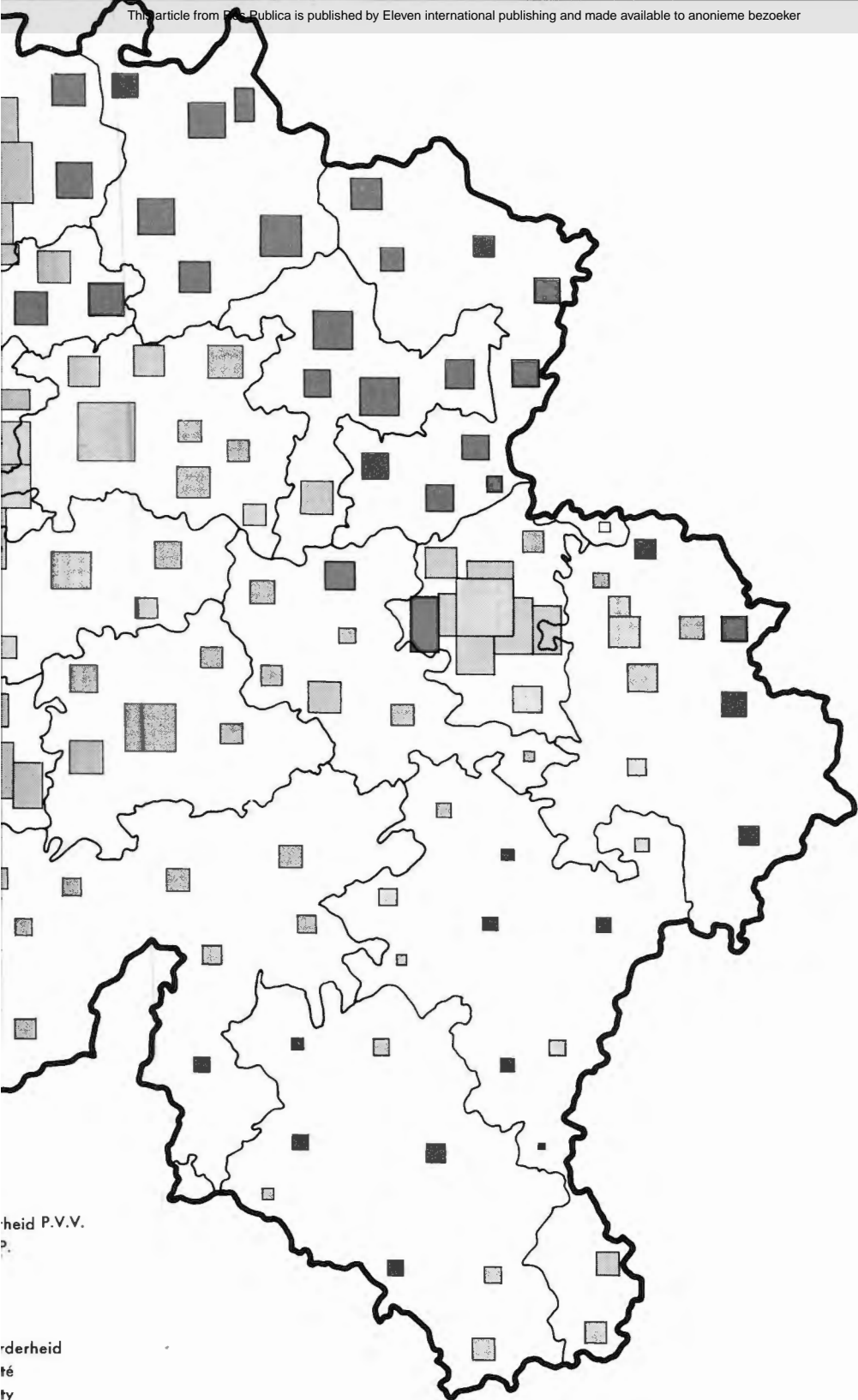betrekkelijk
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the party. Along these directives the possibility of the model-lists is introduced in the CVP-polls.

The CVP makes less higher demands upon the candidates for the poll than the BSP. Membership of the party, mostly for several years, is required. In view of the admission of every social class in the party there's no requirement with regard to the syndicate, the health insurance mutuality, the co-operation and the press. The candidatures have to be proposed mostly by three sections.

The list of candidates for the poll has to be submitted for agreement to the National Committee, which can add other candidates to the list, and exclude candidates for certain reasons.

Still more important than the nomination is the classification of the candidates in the model-list of the arrondissement, separately for the House of Representatives and for the Senate. The model-list is a proposal to regulate the candidates or a number of candidates, who are proposed to the poll-voters. This system of poll-lists is frequently applied in the CVP.

The party justifies such doing on the basis of the different classes which are taken in within the CVP and have to occupy a fair place on the lists of candidates for the legislative elections. The model-list can be mapped out by one of the board-organs of the arrondissemental party organization : the General Commitee or the Daily Administration and theoretically also the Board of Representatives. The model-list can also be drawn up by ad hoc committees such as a « Committee of Wise men » or a « Poll-committee ».

The poll-voters are given a double list on each ballot-paper : at first the model-list and besides the alphabetic list. The electors can approve of the model-list by voting for this list. If they wish an other sequence they have to record several votes on the alphabetic list in their preferential order. If the model-list obtains 50 % of the valid votes, then it is approved (its candidates and its sequence). If the model-list do not obtain 50 % of the valid votes each candidate on the model-list, according to his sequence on this list, starting from the last classified, gets once, twice, etc..., till the first, the number of the list-votes as preferential votes. These votes are added to the ones they preferentially got on the alphabetical list. The person, who in this way obtains the largest number of votes, becomes the leader of the list of candidates for the real elections. The candidate who takes second place, becomes the second on the list, etc... The measure of decision-making of the committee that draws up the model-list is big, because the model-list already includes an ordinance and because it is a suggestive inquiring. The drawing up of the

model-list by a limited committee is a strong oligarchisation of the partial functioning and a clear attempt for making the poll a formality.

The preferential system and the majority system with several names is only sporadically used for the CVP-polls. Examples are : Aalst, Brussel (till 1965), Thuin, Mons (in 1965), Verviers.

As for the BSP-polls only the members of the party are franchised for the CVP-polls. But the suffrage is mostly plural : a number of arrondissemental organizations grant an extra vote according to the years of membership and/or an extra vote to the householder with a certain number of children. This plural franchise makes it a difficult and sometimes impossible task to determine the number of the party-members participating in the poll, especially for the elections per correspondence. However, we have tried to determine the participation in the polls.

The participation of the party-members in the polls is about 12 % lower in the CVP than in the BSP. Only 39,5 % of the party-members take part in these polls.

The relation of the pollers to the party-voters is almost the same as for the BSP namely 4,7 % of the party-voters. The conclusion concerning the BSP can also be in force for the CVP : the sequence of the candidates is in the best case of democracy within the party, determined by a very small number of voters.

In order to get a shaded image of the democracy within the party at the composition of the lists in the CVP, the categories used for the BSP, were extended.

Besides the categories without poll and real poll, with preferential system or with majority system the category poll with model-list was introduced ; the latter was still divided into a poll with rejected model-list and poll with approved model-list (table II).

However there could be examined more cases for the CVP than for the BSP namely 74 % against 58 %, this sample is not completely representative for the CVP too, but in a less amount. In 1961 there were 20.4 % mandatoris classified with « pure » polls against 6.2 % in 1965. On the contrary the percentage of amended model-lists rose from 7,1 % to 20,6 %. And almost corresponding to this rise, the part of the approved of model-lists dropped from 51,0 %, to 29,9 %. The number of candidates appointed out of the poll rose from 21.1 % in 1961 to 43,3 % in 1965. So, extensive shifts can be noticed at each election. And though, there is still the possibility of certain constants in the polls. In every respect we ascertain in both the examined polls, firstly : that the polls with model-list appointed about the same number of candidates in 1961 and 1965 namely 50 to 55 %

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TABLE II

The compositions of the lists in the C.V.P. in 1961

Arrondissement	Poll PV or MS		Poll with model-list				Without poll		Character of the composition of the lists
			Amended		Approved				
	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	
Antwerpen					8	4			Approval of the model-list is not absolutely certain.
Mechelen					3	2			
Brussel - Bruxelles	9	5					1	1	Majority system, afterwards alternating of linguistic roll = favouring the francophones 2 to 1 last places asked.
Leuven							4	2	Eyskens out of poll.
Nivelles			2						Electoral systems more or less similar to the one of legislative elections.
Brugge			3			2			Failed reconciliation attempt of Lefèvre.
Veurne-Oostende-Diksmuide					3	1			
Kortrijk					4	1			Rough entering or rejection of model-list.
Gent-Eeklo					6	4			Approval of model-lists not absolutely certain. De Schrijver from 4th to 2nd place. De Paepe yields his first place to Lefèvre.
St.-Niklaas					3	1			
Aalst	3	1							Preferential system.
Charleroi					2	1			
Thuin	1	1							Preferential system.
Liège					3				Preferential system + model-list.
Hasselt			2				3	} 4	Council of Representatives.
Tongeren-Maaseik							5		Council of Representatives.
Virton							1		J. Michel yields place to D. Lamalle.
Total	13	7	5	2	34	16	14	7	
	20		7		50		21		
%	20.4		7.1		51.0		21.4		Number of examined cases : 98 (on a total of 143 CVP - MP'S thus 68,5 %).

and secondly that on the one side the pure polls together with the polls with an amended model-list and on the other hand the approved model-lists together with the appointment without poll had a constant relation in 1961 and 1965, namely about 28 and 72 %.

Assuming for the BSP that the candidates must have a keener eye for the party-members than for the voters, the tactical maxim within the CVP is still reduced to less persons. As a matter of fact the CVP-candidates ought to have more good relations to limited board organs that are responsible for the model-list, than for the party-members, even the participants in the poll. As a matter of fact the democracy in the CVP is considerably lower than in the BSP. The decision-making, the party-members denied, passes, in a proportional degree to the oligarchical organs of the party or committees ad hoc.

C. The Party for Liberty and Progress (PVV/PLP).

The national statutes of the PVV do not rule the federations of the districts to the organizations of real polls (9). On the contrary, in articles 15 and 16 of the statutes, the two possibilities : « poll and decision of a competent committee » are clearly provided (10). From this point of view the party with regard to the districtal federations is very liberal allowing much freedom. The federations have to decide.

Nobody can be a candidate for the PVV, unless he has subscribed a preliminary explanation, in which he engaged himself to accept the results of the statutorily passed-by drawing up of the lists and to commit nothing that is incompatible with the interests of the party. Neverteless article 18 provides in the possibility and the procedure that has to be followed to give notice of appeal against the drawing up of the lists.

The most important central organ, the Political Office, has, with regard to the drawing up of the lists the following competences.

Firstly the Political Office can fix the date on which the lists are to be drawn up. In the federations where they cannot come to an agreement with regard to the composition of the lists on the provided date the Political Office can act arbitrary. Secondly the candidates for the drawing up of the lists have to be proposed to the Political

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(9) The PVV was raised on the 8th of Octobre 1961. This party in substance builds further upon the Liberal Party.

(10) PVV National Statutes. Doc. 2488/N Approved by the Congress in Ostend, May 1963 s.l., s.d., 11 p., stenciled.

Office. This Office can, because of serious reasons of moral nature, in the interest of the whole party and at a majority of two thirds of the members present, refuse one or more candidates, after having heard the persons mentioned above (art. 17). Thirdly, the Political Office can, with regard to the complaints about the drawing up, confirm the decision of the Administration Committee with a majority of two thirds. The competences of the central organ do not appear extensive. The arrondissemental decision-makers have got a large liberty. The modelstatutes for the districtal federations explicitly provide : « The articles for the arrangement of the modality of the poll are left to the initiative of the federations » (11).

How does the compositions of the lists actually happen in the PVV and previously in the Liberal Party ? Two directions can be distinguished : on the one hand the composition of the lists by the poll and on the other hand a drawing up of the lists by the federal government.

It appears that the polls in the Liberal Party use one, random list with majority system. But there are only a few federations that employ a poll-system. There are only two figures available for determining the relation between the number of the party-members and the participants in the poll.

As a matter of fact this is an unstable basis to pronounce a generalized sentence ; although these figures almost conform to the similar figures of the BSP.

The figure of the party-voters who are also pollers is a more reliable one.

Just as in the BSP and the CVP this figure is very low, namely 4.8 %.

As an example of the course of the drawing up of the lists within the federal organisation, we can summon the PVV-federation Gent-Eeklo in 1965. In short, this procedure comes to this. The retiring Member of Parliament who obtains two thirds of the valid votes in the Federal Committee (155 members in 1965) is affirmed in his mandate and this in the order he held at the preceding elections. Afterwards there is a procedure following for occupying the unoccupied seats: a proposal of the Political Office, that has to consult the leaders of the lists to that end, passes through to the Federal Committee, where it either is approved or rejected. The General Assembly (the limited — with 775 members in 1965 — or the extensive assembly of all the members) is asked to give its rough con-

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(11) PVV Model-Statutes of a districtal federation. Doc. 1911, s.l., s.d., p. 5.

firmation or its rejection of the list of candidates. The point of view of the federation concerning the composition of the lists is the following : the poll at first is limited and only when big difficulties are appearing, they appeal to a more extensive poll-organism going to the general assembly of all the members. Polls and decision-making within the federal organisation are the two main directions of the drawing up of the lists with the liberals and in the PVV, although the composition within the federation does not always penetrate to te Federal Committee, let alone in one or an other way to the General Committee. It is therefore better to examine the composition of the lists in each federation. It would be best to let it happen on the pattern of the BSP and the CVP.

According to the sample, the mandatories, appointed by a poll, in which all the party-members take part, have a strong preponderance in 1961, namely 80 %, and a slight minority in 1965, nl. 48.8 %. According to the number of federations, the polls are as a matter of fact in the minority : in 1965 there were three polls with still a few places out of the poll against ten other drawings up of lists and in 1961 there were 2 federations with a poll against 5 federations without poll. According to the criterion used we can represent the PVV as being more or less democratic within the party. The volume of the sample and its selectivity make it difficult to bring out more reliable data.

Concerning the drawing up of the lists the BSP is more democratic than the Liberal Party and the PVV. But it is difficult to weigh the being more or less democratic of the party at the composition of the lists of the Liberal Party and the PVV against the CVP : for the CVP we can notice the important portion of non-amended modellists ; for the liberals a less representative sample had to be made. Taking these difficulties into account, it appears that, though the PVV-federations are not ruled by the national statutes for organizing polls, its composition of the lists is not much less democratic than the one of the CVP. A more complete documentation and more reliable data lacking there cannot be pronounced a firmer conclusion.

D. The (Flemish Nationalist) People's Union (Volksunie-VU).

In the statute of the VU is clearly mentioned that all voting in connection with the composition of the lists is secret. Hence one has great difficulties to get information about the actual happening of the composition of lists and is accordingly mainly thrown on the proposals

of the statutes. The statutes very clearly rule the composition of the lists (12).

In the VU the composition of lists happens to be completely without poll. It is an event that comes about in the board organs of the party, the first time in the arrondissemental organs the second time in the central commitee. The arrondissemental board proposes the list of candidates to the arrondissemental council, that decides at a two thirds majority. The retiring MP's, however, keep their positions. The arrondissemental council, however, can appoint another candidate with two thirds majority instead of a MP. Another possibility of amendment consists for at least five members to propose a candidate for a position they indicate. On the contrary, the arrondissemental board has a lever to pull through its decision quickly and easily discussed : it is allowed to ask the advice of the arrondissemental council not to discuss the candidates one after the other, but to treat them in only one voting.

The second stage of the composition of the lists comes about in the central committee of the party. During this second phase very thorough changes may be carried through, because the central committee is allowed to accept another list at majority of votes. The central committee, however has to take this decision within eight days after the forwarding of lists, accepted by the districtal council, to the general secretary of the party. Next to this extensive authority the central committee also appoints the candidates in these electoral districts for the Senate, in which several administrative arrondissements are united and where the arrondissemental party boards do not propose the same lists of candidates.

The secret character of the composition of lists makes it impossible to determine the focus of power or the respective power of both the focusses at the composition of lists in the VU. To what extent do the arrondissemental councellers change the proportions of the boards ? To what extent is the arrondissemental resultant changed by the central committee ? The real distribution of power cannot be determined by an outsider. Yet, statutory it is fixed that the composition of lists passes off in double and oligarchical decisions. The party-members do not take part in the composition of lists. Statutory they have no right to do so.

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(12) Statutes of the Volksunie. Brussels, 1965, 10 p.

E. The Communist Party of Belgian (KPB/PCB).

With the communists, the democracy is primordially put in the party and not in the broader context to the nation. The members of parliament of the party in both Chambers are considered by the KPB as instruments, levers in function of a « democratically » elected central committee. Democracy, according to the communists, does not pass off according to a double line : nation and party, but in party only. The communist mandatories in the Parliament are in fact no more than functionaries of the party, just as the party has some other functionaries. This shows clearly the way of appointing, the activities and the removal of the communist MP's. The KPB is on this point very clear. The functionaryship of the mandatories is clearly described in the statutes (13).

Article 40 defines : « The candidatures for the legislative elections are drawn up by the central committee, on proposal of the federations ».

There is no question of an election by the members of the party in a democratic poll. « The mandate of the communist elected belongs to the party. The central committee is allowed to claim that the elected one places his mandate at the disposal of the party », thus article 41. And in article 42 is explicitly put : The activity of the communist Members of Parliament is directed and controlled by the central committee ». Even in the reimbursement, the employee statute is shown. Article 43 tells : « The communist mandatories deposit the complete earnings that result from their mandates in the treasury of the party (...). The central committee of the party fixes the eventuel reimbursement of all mandatories ». The communist parliamentarians are employees of the party. They are, within the number of the mandates the electorate gives to the KPB, appointed by the central committee (eventually through dismissal or succession), dismissed, controlled and programmed. The democracy in the party for the composition of lists does not exist. Moreover democracy is jumped about unriggingly because the decisions of the party are more important than the ones of the citizens.

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(13) Statutes of the CP XIVth Congress, Antwerp, Easter 1963, Brussels s.d., 20 pp. The above-mentioned articles were precisely identical in 1954, after the XIthe Congress of the party in Vilvoorde, December 1954. Only the numbering of the articles is different.

F. The Importance of the Composition of Lists in the Electoral Process.

It is legally provided that the votes on the party-list at the actual elections are adjudged to the candidates, in order to gain the number of eligibility, in order of nomination (art. 170 of the electoral code). This clause has great importance with regard to the compositions of lists. This clause brings about in the first instance that the composition of lists appoints the elected candidate and not the electorate.

The order of the list of candidates is of main importance at the legislative elections. The number of candidates elected outside the useful order is very low : namely 0.5 % for the House of Representatives and 0,1 % for the Senate. Actually this means that the electorate does not appoint the mandatories, but only the number of mandates that are due to the several parties. The explanation for this situation is double. At first there is the explanation by the transfer of the list-votes in the sequence of the classification of the candidates, that very strongly consolidates the drawing up of the lists. But on the other hand the electorate has a lever at its disposal to undo this present state of affairs namely by using the personal vote instead of the vote on the party-list.

As a matter of fact, if the mass of personal votes falls out, the decree of art. 170 concerning that becomes no more effective. But up to 1965 the majority of the electorate polled votes on the party-list (cfr. further). By using less the personal vote, the electorate denies itself the power to choose the mandatories. We can not give the explanation of this denial of power, but it appears to us that an investigation with the hypothesis that the roll of the voters set by the party-oligarchies to list-votes (cfr. the propaganda concerning that), together with the little political socialization and participation would give an important measure of explanation. The voters once seeing this possibility of power, if the present data concerning this remain unaltered, the party-oligarchies can still amend the sentence of the voters concerning the selection of the candidates : discharge of mandatories, provincial and co-opted mandates for the Senate.

II. THE ELECTORAL FIGURE

Elections take place in the political system. They are a social fact, a social reality. In most research up to now the general elections have perhaps been considered too much as identical. The

researchers have too much made an abstraction of the moment in political history on which the elections take place. This moment is not an isolated one, it is a point of time in which in the present a whole past and a whole future are interwoven. This moment is given to the elector with all the range it has got from the past and all the tension towards the future. The elector is put in front of that moment and has to decide in that perspective. The electoral figure is the result at one moment of combined or opposite structures, positions, activities etc., in a word of sociological functioning. The main components of this social figure are the parties, the candidates, the issues and the electoral campaign. Often these components are intricately interwoven. In that way, the electoral campaign, as a component of the total figure, has a function for the whole.

Parties and candidates are correlative but candidates and programmes may be discongruent. The mutual relation of the components, in other words the structure of the electoral figure, is very complex and changeable. Yet the electoral figure may be considered as a whole and as a datum. It is the result of the appearance of the social entities that take part in the electoral competition.

It is the complex result of the action of the political elements towards the electoral behaviour of the elector. This social figure is performed, « vorgeprägt » to the elector. To him it is the constituting and at the same time the limiting reality of the elections.

A first component in the electoral figure is formed by the political parties.

In annexed table III is clearly shown their character and their number may differ at each election.

In different arrondissements the same party gets a partially different shape through its candidates' political projects, social background and political position, that are realized in their action. The votes cast on the individual candidates clearly indicate how differently the party is delineated in every arrondissement and election. Moreover the number of candidates in each arrondissement is different.

Certain issues may determine several subsequent elections, whereas others only constitute the electoral figure once and still other ones may slumber for a long while after their first apparition and then rise again. This is clearly illustrated in the subjoined list of the issues at the elections after the second world war :

1946 : — the royal affair,
           — collaboration, epuration and repression,
           — woman suffrage.

TABLE III

Parties at the Legislative Elections in 1950 and 1965

1950	1965
	Communist Party of Belgium (KPB) (Pekin-tendency).
	Walloon Communist Party (Pekin-tendency).
Communist Party of Belgium (KPB).	Communist Party of Belgium (KPB) (Moskow-tendency) (2 a, b, c, d).
	Walloon Front (FW).
	Walloon Party of Workers (PWT).
	Walloon Democratic Front (FDW) (2).
Belgian Socialist Party (BSP) (1).	Belgian Socialist Party (BSP).
Liberal Party (I).	Party for Liberty and Progress (PVV).
Christian People's Party.	Christian People's Party (CVP).
	(Flemish Nationalist) People's Union (Volksunie).
	Democratic Front of Francophones (FDF).
Small lists (2.523 votes altogether).	Small lists (80.911 votes altogether).
— Cosmocrats.	— List Sobry.
— Belgian Patriotic Party.	— Independents.
— List Achtergaele.	— National Party.
	— Middle Class and Independents.
	— Trotsky-communists.
	— The Socialist.
	— Kaganovemus.
	— Catholic Party.
	— National Party of Independents.
	— Social Party of Independents.
	— Protection of animals.
	— Independent Walloon Union.
	— Back to Liège.
	— National Union of Resistance.
	— Francophone Union.
	— Union of Artisans and Shopkeepers.
	— Flemish Front of Democrats.
	— Belgian Labour Party.
(1) In Limburg and Luxemburg there was a socialist-liberal coalition.	(2) in coalition with :
	a) Union of Left Socialists in Brussel-Bruxelles.
	b) PWT in Hainaut.
	c) PWT in Huy-Waremme.
	d) PWT, FW and other parties in Namur.

1949 : — the royal affair,
        — the cold war between East and West,
        — collaboration, epuration and repression,
        — 25 p.c. tax-reduction.

1950 : — the royal affair.

1954 : — outcome of the royal affair,
        — schoolissue,
        — clericalism and anti-clericalism,
        — reduction of conscription to 18 months,
        — 28.000 F workman's pension.

1958 : — school-war,
        — 12-months-conscription,
        — key-plan for economical prosperity.

1961 : — the « unity-law » and the strike in consequence of it,
        — independence and subsequent crisis in Congo.

1965 : — the « labour policy » of the Lefèvre-Spaak-government
        (fiscal reform with advance levy and junction of the
        revenue of husband and wife),
        — linguistic legislation (linguistic frontier, statute of Brussels, Voer-question),
        — revision of the constitution.

The electoral propaganda translates the electoral figure for the electors, but this translation is directed (selection from electoral platform, from issues and ideology ; only partly personal propaganda) and so becomes a component of the electoral figure. Besides the content differentiation in the election campaign there are the differences in the extent of it. The best indication for the extent of the campaign is the cost price. The difficulty herewith is to find correct and reliable data. Well-informed authorities give the following amounts for 1965 : PVV : 50 millions, CVP : 32 millions, BSP : 20 millions, Brussels federation of the BSP : 2 millions, personal campaign of Van den Boeynants (president of the CVP) : 2 millions. These amounts could not be assayed with official calculations, except the 12 millions the « Common Action » set aside for the BSP's national campaign. Consequently the digits have to be treated with some care. According to these amounts of 1965 the extent of the PVV-campaign is in the proportion of 5 to 3 for the CVP, 2 for the BSP and 0,5 for the Volksunie. The PVV-campaign was ten times as extensive as the Volksunie's and as extensive as the CVP's and the BSP's taken together.

III. THE ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR

A. The Electoral Possibilities.

The electoral possibilities of the general elections are of a much larger importance than a formalistic or juridical exposition may express. The electoral possibilities indicate the form in which the choice has to be expressed. The electors have to express their political attitude or project within the limits of these possibilities. At the legislative elections the Belgian voter, per legislative Chamber, only can vote for one party, either with a vote for the whole list or with a vote for an individual candidate (maximum one vote for a candidate-leader and one for a candidate-successor). Moreover a vote cast on an individual candidate has first of all a party meaning. Indeed it is counted as a vote for the candidate's party and goes like that in all the calculations for the distribution of the seats. Only when the seats obtained by a party are allotted the party and the personal votes get a different function.

However the voter gets two ballot-papers : one for the House of Representatives and one for the Senate. Theoretically the possibility exists that the elector may vote for two different parties. This possibility however is obstructed, if not annulled, in default of data about a split-ticket-voting when counting the electoral results, and above all by the basically identical task of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Both Chambers accomplish the same function in our political system. A government has to obtain the majority in the two Chambers. Each act has to be approved by both of them, and through identical procedures. This structural situation is interpreted by the vast majority of the voters as if it required the same voting for the Senate and for the House of Representatives. With regard to the government's significance in legislative power and to the coalition figure of the Belgian governments since 1916, determining the triple negative aspect of the electoral possibilities at the legislative elections is of great importance. In the first place there is the electorate's impossibility of appointing the government. Moreover there exists a dissimilarity between the disposition of the electoral possibilities and the form of government. Finally there is the small programmatical substance of the electoral possibilities.

In the period since 1918, Belgium has had a multiparty system in which government has always consisted of a coalition, exception made

for the homogeneous CVP governments of 1950-1954 and the Eyskens-minority-government of 1958 (14).

In spite of this necessity of party-coalition in government, the elector has got almost no means of indicating the coalition-parties. He can return a number of mandataries of the different parties to Parliament. The electors determine the parliamentary strength of the parties that so can enter into negotiations based upon that strength. If one party gets absolute majority in both Chambers, it can form a government (15). However, except for the CVP in the elections of 1950, no party has had absolute majority in both Chambers since 1919.

After all the other elections since 1919 negotiations had to be conducted to form a new coalition or to maintain the out-going coalition. Herewith the electoral results were only one element in the negotiations.

The second negative aspect of the electoral possibilities is the large dissimilarity between the disposition of the electoral possibilities and the necessity of coalition governments in Belgium. As contrasted with the parties that have to negotiate and thus to make compromises after the elections, the elector has to stand in a stern position. The elector can and must vote for only one party. His vote is interpreted as a complete support for one party. The elector can pronounce a radical verdict. The parties have to join these radical verdicts to a majority. This means that they have to come to a mutual compromise. This is one of the causes of alienation between elector and party. The « stern » voter will not always accept the « compromising » party.

The third negative aspect of the electoral possibilities is the lack of a clear programmatical substance. The political matter as a cultural system in Belgium may be chiefly divided into three systems.

The political projects may concern the sphere of religion and rationalism, maybe through educational questions, through problems about the relation between Church and State, about matrimonial legislation, about church-fabrics and churchyards, about the diplomatic recognition of certain states and regimes.

A second system deals with social-economical relations. Issues in this respect are : human labour-situations, right of strike and maintaining of order, partition of fiscality, nationalization and property of means of production, industrial planning, and also universal

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(14) The minority-government Van de Vijvere (1925) and Spaak (1946) are not considered as exceptions, as they did not get the Parliament confidence.

(15) Even then another personality than the party-president becomes prime-minister.

suffrage and the monarchical question as far as they are an instrument or a symbol of social-economical progress and regress.

The third system is the relation between Flemish (Dutch-speaking) and French-speaking people that has a concrete form among other things in the predominant position of French in independent Belgium, in the evolution of the Flemish towards equality in rights and in fact, in the conflicts about the linguistic legislation and the Dutchifying of Flanders, in collaboration and repression and in the struggle for federalism.

The parties are differently adapted to these matters. Catholic were or are the Catholic Party and the CVP. Rationalist are the socialists and the liberals (before the PVV). This is a fairly clear adaptation. The social-economically different projects can easily be adapted by the rationalists : the socialists are radical and more so the communists, the liberals are conservative. The Catholics cannot adapt themselves any more in the one CVP. The values of people, language and culture cannot be passed adequately anymore : communists, socialists, Catholics and liberals unite Dutch and French-speaking people, Flemish and Walloons. Only for the (Catholic) Flemish the radical possibility of Flemish nationalism exists.

This inadequate adaptation of the parties to the systems of value cripples the possibility of programmatical substance of the choice. Moreover, by means of this triple combination of systems a cross-pressure is executed on the elector. In the elector's motivation the reduction of the political project into one single party vote will be a basic difficulty. When the electoral figure, and more specifically the issues, draw on these three systems, the cross-pressure is pushed to extremes. And through the lack of explicitation and motivation of the choice, a programmatical substance is largely missed.

Even the order of values cannot be clearly stated in the vote.

As for the programme of legislation, and the preconceptions for solving the problems, the voter has to abdicate completely in favour of the political party. The fact that the frequency of legislative elections in Belgium is normal or modal as compared with the other democratic countries in Western Europe, does not make a big change in this situation, because *conformity* and *obligation of execution* have to be realized previously in the electoral possibilities. The electoral possibilities given at the legislative elections are restricted and rough. They can give few indications about the programme and how to realize it and about who will realize it.

B. The Party Choice.

The elector chiefly has the choice between a party and a party-personal-voting.

Whatever be the elector's intention or motivation in relation with his voting for an individual candidate, this utterance is chiefly considered as a party voting in the processes that lead to the adjudication of the seats. The most important, relevant element is the choice between the parties. By this choice the electorate determines the number of seats for each party.

In table IV the vote-percentages of the most important political parties at the elections for the House of Representatives since 1919 are indicated.

TABLE IV

Party Voting at the Elections for the House since 1919

Election	Communists	Belgian workers Party BSP	Dissident socialists	Liberals PVV	Dissident liberals	Catholics CVP	Dissident catholics	Flemish Nationalists Volksunie	Others (1)
1919	—	36.60	0.34	17.64	—	36.62	2.14	2.60	4.06
1921	0.05	34.80	0.47	17.80	0.31	37.01	4.28	3.04	2.24
1925	1.64	39.43	0.10	14.64	0.01	36.11	2.53	3.86	1.68
1929	1.94	36.02	0.34	16.55	0.05	35.37	3.15	5.94	0.64
1932	2.81	37.11	0.17	14.28	—	38.55	0.21	5.60	1.27
1936	6.06	32.10	0.42	12.40	—	27.67	1.13	7.12	13.10
1939	5.36	30.18	0.31	17.19	0.19	32.73	—	7.93	6.11
1946	12.68	32.54	0.05	9.54	—	42.53	—	—	2.66
1949	7.48	29.75	—	15.25	—	43.56	0.09	2.06	1.81
1950	4.74	35.59	—	11.94	—	47.68	0.01	—	0.04
1954	3.57	38.62	0.03	12.97	0.03	41.14	0.90	2.20	0.54
1958	1.89	37.07	—	11.87	—	46.50	—	1.98	0.69
1961	3.08	36.73	—	12.33	0.07	41.46	—	3.46	2.87
1965	5.04	28.28	1.32	21.61	—	34.45	0.37	6.85	2.08

(1) Among others : Rex in 1936 and 1939 ; UDB (Belgian Democratic Union) in 1946 ; RN (National Movement) in 1961 ; FDF in 1965.

The catholics have most adherents, immediately followed by the socialists.

These are the two big party votings. The third party are the liberals.

Yet they have much less voters than the two precedent parties. Communists and Flemish Nationalists have a restricted number of voters, but they do have a durability in political life. Up to now the other parties have no durability or have lost it.

The party voting asks other questions. A first question is : is the choice of one party and the voting for it a total negation of all the other parties ? A second question is : does the elector vote constantly for one party or doesn't he ?

In inquiry III, special attention has been drawn upon the question of how far the elector has the propensity to vote for other parties. The inquired persons were asked to imagine a new election system. They had to give to each of the five classic parties a quote from 1 to 10. The highest quote had to be directly proportionate to their propensity towards that party. The total amount of the quotes given to the different parties was of no importance.

Before giving the result certain restrictive aspects of inquiry III should be noticed. The results are a snapshot of the propensity to party vote not of the whole Belgian electorate but only of a sample of the Flemish electors in 1964. This sample has a limited deviation of the representativity by a too strong representation of the strongly participants against the scarcely participants.

TABLE V

The Propensity to Party Vote of the Flemish Electors in 1964

Judging electors	APPRECIATION (per ten)				
	KPB	BSP	CVP	PVV	Volksunie
BSP	2.14	**7.49**	3.99	2.68	2.36
CVP	1.17	3.14	**6.32**	2.99	3.22
PVV	1.56	4.01	3.67	**7.90**	2.35
Volksunie	1.21	3.09	4.73	2.65	**8.31**
Total	1.58	4.54	5.72	3.33	3.33

The first conclusion from this inquiry (see table V) concerns the tendency towards the own party. Remarkable herewith is that the CVP-voters have the less important propensity towards their own party. They support their party less than the BSP-, PVV-, or Volksunie-voters support theirs.

It is also remarkable that the largest propensity towards their own party is found in the Volksunie, a young and radical party.

Concerning the alternatives from their own party there are also notable differences. The CVP-voters have three alternatives situated nearly on the same level : Volksunie, BSP and PVV. The CVP's alternatives lie somewhat lower than the other parties' alternatives. The liberal voters seem to have only two alternatives on a level that could be characterized as attractive : the BSP and the CVP. The

Voksunie- and the BSP-voters have only one very attractive alternative, namely the CVP. Where as this result for the Volksunie comes up to expectations, this is not the case for the BSP. The Flemish socialist voters in 1964 seem to be much more attracted by the CVP than by the PVV.

The choice of one single party at the elections imperfectly expresses the propensity to party vote. The actual vote expresses which party is in best repute and this chosen party stands modally considerably higher. Yet the choice as it has to be expressed tells nothing about the propensity towards other parties.

A second question concerning the electoral behaviour is the constancy of the party voting (16).

The first question asked in connection with change and consistency of voting concerns the constancy of voting for the House of Representatives on the one side and the Senate on the other side in one same election. The external vote-shift of the elections for the House against that for the Senate on the same moment is very small: in 1958 0,75 %, in 1961 1,07 % and in 1965 0,93 %. The shift between both the elections as it can be established by the EFV is very restricted. Herewith should be asked how far there is a hidden floating vote. On account of the materially separated ballot-papers for House and Senate, no official data can be obtained about this. This knowledge should be obtained through inquiry. In inquiry III one can notice a total floating vote of 7.31 % for 1961, of 4.52 % for 1958 and of 2.96 % for 1954. These total floating vote is a bit higher than the EFV indicates, especially for 1961. Yet a double voting for House of Representatives and Senate is very restricted.

The external floating vote from election to election is rather small, except in three cases : from 1932 to 1936 (with the apparition of Rex), from 1939 to 1946 (with the second world war), and from 1961 tot 1965 (with the remarkable progress of the PVV). Besides those three cases the average EFV is equal to the EFV in the Netherlands : 6,8 % against 6,9 %.

If the three cases mentioned above are taken into account, the

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(16) Herewith the external floating vote (EFV) wil be used as index, by the formule:

$$EFV = \frac{\Sigma \, (\% \ Pi \ E_1 - \% \ Pi \ E_2)}{2}$$

where Pi indicates the different parties and E_1 and E_2 the two considered elections.
  See: MASTERS R.D., *Une méthode pour mesurer la mobilité des attitudes politiques*, in: *La revue française de science politique*, 1960, n° 3, pp. 658-672, and FRAEYS W., *Les résultats des élections législatives du 26 mars 1961*, in: *Res Publica*, 1961, n° 4, p. 398.

average EFV in Belgium increases to 9,6 %. In Western Germany the average EFV is higher than in Belgium : 11.2 %. In inquiry III the total floating vote of the electors who voted both in 1961 and in 1958, amounts to 9.42 %.

According to this investigation the total floating vote between 1961 and 1954 amounts to 3.34 %. As appears from this investigation the alteration in voting is restricted in Belgium. « Les deux grandes ten-dances politiques — la gauche et la droite — se partagent depuis 1919 les suffrages du corps électoral dans une proportion qui n'a guère varié. La gauche totalise toujours de 50 à 56 % des voix, tandis que la droite oscille entre 41 et 47 % (17). »

Fraeys in 1961 could subjoin the following remark : « Une excep-tion à cette règle avait été constatée en 1958, puisque la droite atteignait 48,48 %, réalisant ainsi son maximum historique. Les élec-tions de 1961 sont à cet égard plus « normales », puisque la gauche totalise 52,21 % et la droite 45,72 % » (18). In 1965 Fraeys very properly did not think of this left-right division anymore.

C. Personal Voting.

The elector cannot only vote for one party, he can also support one candidate of a party by voting for him personally. In table VI the extent of personal voting and its evolution is shown.

TABLE VI

Evolution of Personal Voting

Election	SENATE	HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES					
	Total	Total	Catholics	Socialists	Liberals	Flemish Natio-nalists	Commu-nists
1919	9.62	16.36	24.53	6.51	20.26	10.03	—
1929	11.45	16.55	23.27	6.54	25.45	15.62	10.29
1939	21.64	27.33	38.08	12.88	31.78	28.74	14.05
1950	15.84	20.38	26.80	10.40*	26.54*	40.50	9.68
1958	20.57	26.14	32.31	14.46*	36.78*	28.49	12.25
1961	25.39	32.99	42.05	19.06	46.76	32.57	17.42
1965	32.38	39.04	47.53	27.25	46.43	39.45	21.14

* Because of the socialist-liberal coalition in Limburg and Luxembourg these provinces have not been taken into account.

(17) DE SMET R., EVALENKO R., FRAEYS W., o.c., p. 74. Left and right are here taken in the sense of rationalistic and catholic.

(18) *Les résultats des élections législatives*, in: *Res Publica*, 1961, no 4, p. 398.

The number of personal votes is higher in the elections for the House of Representatives than in those for the Senate, namely in a fairly constant proportion of about 6 % during the whole period considered. From these data one must not just conclude that there is a larger social distance between electors and Senators than between electors and Representatives. Indeed, if one calculates the number of personal votes per candidate, this figure is about 25 % higher for the Senate than for the House. An explanation of the lower number of personal votes in the Senate in opposition to the House is to be found in the trivial fact that there are less candidates for the Senate than for the House.

Both for the House and for the Senate the number of personal votes has more than doubled from 1919 until 1965. The number of personal votes increases gradually, although the evolution is not rectilinear. From 1919 until 1929 there is only a small increase to be noticed. From 1929 until 1939 the increase is much bigger, namely 10 %.

The second world war puts an end on this evolution and in 1946 the amount of personal votes is much lower than in 1939. This amount keeps almost constant until 1950. But from 1950 a new rise appears : up to 1965 the amount of personal votes has increased with about 17 %. In spite of the rapid rise between 1929 and 1939 and between 1950 and 1965 the personal voters still are a minority as compared to the party voters. Of course in the evolution of the personal votes this majority-minority proportion quantitatively changes, but personal voters keep being a minority.

Among the political parties there are important differences in the relative number of personal votes. The party electorates use the possibility of personal voting quite differently, although there too, an evolution in the time has to be taken into account. Table VI, quite clearly, illustrates this.

It gives the amount of personal votes of the five « classic » parties.

It should be noticed that the quoted numbers relate to the elections for the House of Representatives.

In their evolution the different parties faithfully follow the general scheme given above : a slight rise between 1919 and 1929, a fast rise from 1929 until 1939, a decline until 1950 and a very fast increase from 1950.

By this faithful following of the general scheme the differences between the parties are in force during the whole period. Only the share of each party changes. The catholic and liberal electors equally use the possibility of personal voting. The Flemish-nationalist electorate uses it a little less.

However communists and socialists vote much less for individual candidates than catholics and liberals do.

By less using this possibility of personal voting the electorate deprives itself of the power of appropriating not only the partition of the mandates between the parties, but also the nomination of the mandataries. The electorate has not yet recognized, or at least not yet employed this considerable enlargement of power. The « Nur Wähler » (only-voters) do not make use of all the possibilities they are given by the political « herrschende Klasse » (leading class). Once the electorate would have completely actualized the possibility of personal voting, the leading political groups still have the disposal of other means to limit that power-shift : forced retirement of elected mandataries and allotment of provincial and co-opted mandates in the Senate.

D. The Non-Voting.

Besides partial and personal voting a third possibility exists : non-voting ; either one simply does not go to vote, or one does go but does not express a choice (abstention) or does not express one's choice according to the rules (spoiled ballot-paper). The non-voting is a rather heterogeneous gathering of behaviour, but the function it has in the elections is greatly identical.

The non-voting is not very important in Belgium. The average amount since 1921 is 12.37 % for the House and 13.79 % for the Senate. The number of absent electors is 7.06 % for House and Senate (19). The amount of abstentions and lost ballot-papers is a little lower than the amount of absent electors. The average is 5.32 % for the House and 6.72 % for the Senate.

Concerning fundamental opposition against the political system by refusing to play the game according to the rules, the renunciation of voting largely fails, because of its restricted dimension. The final function of non-voting in the present-day Belgian politics is reducing the number of decisive voters at moments when they have the possibility of decision-making.

What would be the extent of non-voting if compulsory voting was repealed ?

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(19) The number of judgements to which compulsory voting gives cause for is very small. In the total of absent electors at all elections since 1946 only 0.24 % have been accused for non-attendance; 12.43 % of these accused have been acquitted. All together only 0.20 % of the absent voters have been convicted.

In inquiry III 59.8 % of the interviewed electors declare that they would still take part in the elections, 10,4 % declare that they would sometimes take part in it, whereas 21.2 % testify never to vote anymore ; 8,6 % have no opinion. So far as the random test is representative and so far as the operationalization is adequate, it may be said that abrogation of compulsory voting would very considerably extend the non-voting.

Besides that new floaters would be created, namely sporadic participants in election. According to inquiry III this would not cause an important change in either the party vote or the personal vote, as all parties are almost equally represented in the different categories of participants.

IV. MOTIVATION OF THE VOTE

A. Social Structure of the Electorates.

A first important investigation about the motivation of the electors published in Belgium is R.E. De Smet's and R. Evalenko's « Les élections belges. Explication de la répartition géographique des suffrages » (20). It is a difficult study because the method of investigation is extremely ingenious and because a lot of results and conclusions that are not always equally shaded are given. De Smet and Evalenko examine the connection between social status and party vote by means of data about the male active population in 1947 and the electoral results of 1950 and 1954. The correlations calculated on cantonal level result in the coefficients indicated in table VII (21).

The authors conclude from these figures, partly for Wallonia : « The repartition of the votes appears in general to reflect the social structure of the population » and partly for Flanders : « It follows that the correlations based on the social situation seem to be less strict than in Wallonia. The social factor influences no doubt the Flemish voter's political behaviour, but it happens to be superposed by another element ». The authors think this other factor to be religion. See table VIII.

From these correlations the authors conclude : « The voters of the left are drawn essentially from the non-practising part of the waged and salaried class, while the social christian and liberal voters belong to several categories : employers and helpers in agriculture, industry

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(20) Brussels, 1956, 176 p. + statistic, cartographic and graphic annexe.
(21) o.c. respectively p. 81 and p. 83.

and trade, joined by a relatively important number of practising workers and employees, especially in the Flemish part of the country where the hold of religion is sufficient to counterbalance the influence of the social factor, even in the bosom of the working-class. » (22).

TABLE VII

Correlation of Party Choice and Social Structure (*).

Compared series	Coefficients of correlation	
	Walloon cantons	Flemish cantons
BSP + KPB : A	0.84	0.58
BSP + KPB : A + B	0.85	0.71
CVP : P	0.80	0.36
CVP : H	0.82	0.72
CVP : P + H	0.83	0.52
CVP : total agricultural population . . .	0.77	0.52
population under 15		
———————	0.88	0.83
total population		
CVP + LP : P	0.85	0.59
CVP + LP : H	0.81	0.83
CVP + LP : P + H	0.85	0.71
CVP + LP : total agricultural population .	0.78	0.72

* Explanation of the symbols : A : workers, B : employees, P : employers.
H : helpers, LP : the Liberal Party.

TABLE VIII.

Correlation of Party Choice and Religious Practice.

Compared series	Coefficients of correlation	
	Walloon cantons	Flemish cantons
% practising : % (CVP) 1950	0.93	0.73
(P+H) + (A+B) % practising : % (CVP) 1950	0.91	0.71
% practising : % (CVP+LP) 1950 . .	0.92	0.81
(P+H) + (A+B) % practising : % (CVP+LP) 1950 . .	0.91	0.83
(A+B) % non-practising : % (BSP+CPB) 1950 . .	0.91	0.83

The last stage in the investigation is tracing the social composition of the socialist and communist electorate. For that purpose the authors use the figures of the elections for the « work juries councils » in 1950, which allow dividing the workers and employees according to their trade-union preference. The percent of workers and employees

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(22) o.c., p. 103.

in the total population is respectively multiplied with the percent of (mainly socialist) ABVV-votes of workers and employees.

This number which according to the authors indicates the share of workers and employees voting left, is compared to the number of BSP + KPB votes of the corresponding districts.

In 1950 the difference amounts to less than 2 % in 21 of the 39 districts ; in 12 districts it stands between 2 and 4 %, and in 6 districts it amounts to more than 4 %. In 1954 there are again 21 districts with a difference of less than 2 %, 9 with a difference between 2 and 4 %, and 9 with a difference bigger than 4 %. From this the authors conclude : that the electorate of the left is drawn nearly exclusively from the social categories of waged and salaried workers » (23).

On a critical analysis of the work, inaccuracies in the used figures (not by fault of the authors however) and the fact that the work is based on the postulates that the male active population, the figures of Sunday mass attendance drafted by Collard and the results of the elections for the work jury councils are sufficiently representative for the social class, the religious practice and the political orientation of workers and employees in the electorate. The outcome of this is double. On the one hand no absolute exactitude is to be reached, taking into account the inaccuracies of the figures. This has some significance especially when the authors consider the left electorate as nearly solely composed by workers and employees. This exclusivity is, judging from the inaccuracy in the numbers, certainly too excessive. On the other hand the results of De Smet and Evalenko are conditional, as far as the postulates on which the work is based are valid. This validity has a double aspect : one cannot determine the validity and one cannot know the size of the deviation if there is one, because of the defectiveness of the statistics available. De Smet and Evalenko have been reproached their marxist vision : namely the social-economic relations would determine the political choice, in two respects : as a starting point and as a research scheme. No criticism is possible as long as this vision remains a working hypothesis. The authors however have to allow other possible realities. Among the three cultural dimensions in the political life in Belgium : the social-economic interests, religion or rationalism and linguistic and cultural community only the social structure is dealt with. The religious factor is brought forward to fill up the social structure : namely, when it

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(23) o.c., p. 114.

does not satisfy completely. An independent investigation into the meaning of religion and linguistic community or people as for the party choice is not reached. One cannot conclude either that the law of the bearing between social structure and election results supplies the basic explanation of the spatial spreading of the party electorates for the other factors as such has not been investigated.

An other remark as to the method of investigation concerns the grouping of the Liberals and the CVP. The question to what extent they form one collection becomes problematic in the light of the conclusion of the « Atlas des élections belges » : the electorate has been divided in pretty stable groups since 1919 : « left » and « right » (24). « Left » means in this case not only socialists and communists, but also the liberals. If these groups remain stable, the floating happens within the groups themselves, which means that they appeal to a certain degree to the same electorate. With the work being built as it is, the grouping of liberals and CVP means in fact the production of the negative of BSP + KPB. As a result the investigation has chiefly become an investigation into the social structure of BSP + KPB.

Inquiry III is an investigation which tries to know the motivation of the party vote by means of another research technique, namely the written inquiry (25). This inquiry supplies the possibility of giving a provisional distribution of the different social groupings all over the different party electorates in Flanders.

The division of the electorate according to the social structure brings no definite explanation of the polling behaviour. True, some groupings in their electoral composition, are nearer to some parties than to others, but the congruency of the investigated social categories and the party electorate is never complete. Neither the crystallization of the lower social classes in the BSP or KPB choice is not complete, nor the one of the middle and upper classes in the PVV. To this the special configuration according to social class of CVP as well as Volksunie of which the voters come from all classes is added. No contrast concerning linguistic and cultural community is very manifest in the party electorates in Flanders. The three traditional parties have about the same position on the Flemish-Belgian scale and only the Volksunie represents a harder Flemish position. But against this fact there is the fact that the BSP as well as the CVP

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(24) See: The Party Choice.
(25) DEWACHTER W., *De motivering van de partijdige keuze*, in: De wetgevende verkiezingen als proces van machtsverwerving in het Belgisch poltiek bestel, Antwerpen, 1967, pp. 285-342.

draw more voters from the « hard Flemish » position than the Volks-
unie. Judging from catholicity there is no clear opposition between
the CVP and the Volksunie on the one hand and the BSP and the
PVV on the other hand. Again the different categories of catholicity
according to the different parties they vote for, shows but a gradual
difference. De Smet and Evalenko have tried to explain the polling
behaviour by means of the social classes. This analysis of the
Flemish electorate by inquiry III is added to the criticism already
given. It appears from inquiry III that the conformity in social com-
position between the party electorates is bigger than their difference
in social composition. The hypothesis that the social economic basis
defines the cultural superstructure (in this case the political choice)
has to be given up in its pure form in this case. The connection bet-
ween basis and superstructure may perhaps be maintained if a link
between both structures is found. This link may be the system of
values.

B. The Hierarchy of the Values.

The separate issues do not define the party choice. Inquiry III has
tested this by means of 11 important issues of the recent Belgian poli-
tical life.

It was established for the whole of these 11 issues there was an
average conformity of 54.5 % between the voter's political option
in the question and the policy followed by his party as to these moot
points. There was an average opposition of 20.4 % and an average
number of voters of 25,2 % had no political project.

Often the different issues exercise an opposite pressure on the
voter. Because of the very limited possibilities of choice the moti-
vation has rather to be sought at a more general level of values and
interests. The investigation of inquiry III uses here the three systems of
value of Belgian politics. In inquiry III the questioned persons had
to indicate a hierarchy of values. To this hierarchy a value was
attached of 3, 2 and 1, in an order from highest to lowest estimation.
In this way the scale goes from 1.00 to 3.00. This operationalization
is surely not perfect (26).

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(26) From an ordinal scale an interval scale seems to be deduced. But it has to be
stated here that this scale is not considered as an interval scale but as an easier means
to deal with the ordinal scale, well knowing that the operationalization led but to an
ordinal scale. At further investigation also the question has to be worked out more
thoroughly.

The social-economic system of values and interests is most appreciated by the overall electorate (2,51). The second place in the hierarchy of values is taken by the philosophic system of values (1,93) and the third by the people's linguistic and cultural system (1.58). Of the questioned people an average 16.5 % indicate no hierarchy of values.

According to the data in table IX the social-economic values and interests have their role in each electorate. In the socialist and liberal electorates their importance is if not exclusive still very dominant. In the CVP electorate the religious system of values is filled up or competed by the social-economic system of values. In the Volksunie electorate there is complement or competition of the linguistic and national system of values and the social-economic system of values. We believe that with this a possibility to explain the electoral behaviour has been discovered.

TABLE IX

The Hierarchy of the Systems of Values with Flemish voters

Voters	Social-economic values	Religious values	Linguistic and people's values
BSP	2.90	1.60	1.50
CVP	2.23	2.35	1.46
PVV	2.81	1.55	1.66
Volksunie	2.22	1.66	2.09
Total	2.51	1.93	1.58

If these statements of the hierarchy of the value systems in their connection with the party choice would be affirmed by a new investigation, the politologic moment in the motivation of the party choice becomes manipulating the channels along which this hierarchy of values is supplied. Here one has to cope with the socializing institution. In this field inquiry III supplies some first indications. The socialization of the hierarchy of values was not operationalized herewith however, but the socialization of the party choice was.

A bit more than half the voters, namely 56.6 % maintain the party-preference of the family they were educated in. A bit less than half the voters, namely 43.5 % vote in 1961 for another party than the party « that the most sympathy was felt for in the family the voter was educated in ». The CVP voters (62,8 %), the socialist (55.2 %) and the Flemish nationalist voters (57.1 %) remain most true to this initial socialization. The liberal voters seem much less faithful. With

this however only 56.5 % of the voters are indicated in their sociali-
zation process.

Buset, ex-president of the BSP, considered the school system in
Belgium as a socialization institution for the party choice.

The first ascertainment that emerges from inquiry III is the big
amount of voters who went to school in the school system which is
the prolongation of the political convictions in the family. No less
than 60.0 % of the children from liberal families went to school in
the official school system ; among the socialists this percent amounts
to 62.1 %. The children from catholic families go still more to school
in their own school system ; indeed 77.0 % of these children studied
in Catholic schools. As to the Flemish nationalists this percent stands
at 60.7 % (27).

From this it follows that the family socialization is continued in
school for a great deal of the cases. Instead of original socialization
it rather concerns consolidation here.

The electoral propaganda seems to influence party choice but to a
very limited degree. But 3 % of the examined persons declare they
change their party choice under the influence of the propaganda.
Another inquiry bears this out (28).

V. THE DISTORTION OF THE CHOICE
DURING THE TRANSFORMATION

Once the voters have voted, these millions of votes have to be
transformed into a few hundred seats. This conversion is accom-
panied by a certain distortion of the voters' verdict. What is the
extent of the distortion of the choice by the transformation it under-
goes ? According to the external floating vote, the difference between
the party vote and the seats throughout all parties has been calculated.
As for the House of Representatives the difference stands at 5.26 %
in 1954, 4.76 % in 1958, 6.71 % in 1961 and 4.87 % in 1965, or on
an average for these four elections of 5.40 %. In the Senate the
difference is still more important : 7.18 % in 1954, 6.16 % in 1958,
9.13 % in 1961 and 9.41 % in 1965, or on an average of 7.97 % for
these four elections, i.e. 2.57 % more than the distortion in the House.

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(27) These percents have been calculated at a total that covers also schoolgoing in
both school systems; otherwise each percent would raise 10 %.

(28) This inquiry worked with recognition and appreciation of posters. Its results
will soon be published.

Though subject to certain changes in the extent, this distortion is considerable and the division of power was decisively settled during some elections (1950 e.g.), not by the electorate but by the way of transformation.

Calculations for the elections of 1961 and 1965 clearly show the direction of this distortion : both largest parties, CVP and BSP are fortified by this distortion more than proportionally. The smaller parties, PVV, Volksunie, and KPB are harmed in their number of seats. On calculating the average per party, for House and Senate, the KPB loses 2.5 and 4 seats, the BSP gains 3 and 3.5 seats, the CVP gains 4 and 8.5 seats, while the PVV loses 3 and 2.5 seats and the Volksunie loses 2 and 4.5 seats. The number of distorted seats appears considerable : on an average 12 seats to 176.5 in the Senate and 8 seats to a total of 212 seats in the House.

Which factors explain this distortion ? Some factors are applicable to the House as well as to the Senate : namely the D'Hondt system of division, the required quorum and the provincial allotment. The designation of provincial and co-opted senators explains principally the stronger distortion in the Senate as compared with the House of Representatives.

A. The D'Hondt Calculating Technique.

From the heated discussion of years touching the proportional representation a calculating method has grown which is nearly universally used for the proportional representation today. This calculation technique, called after its author D'Hondt is the most accurate one too, though the method does not allow perfect reduction. If compared to the calculation technique in use in Belgium for municipal elections, namely the Imperiali formula, the D'Hondt calculation technique is more accurate. According to the Imperiali formula the electoral figures are divided by 1, 1,5, 2, 2,5, 3, 3,5 etc. or by 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 etc. The Imperiali technique benefits more the big parties than the D'Hondt technique does it. By a substitution from the D'Hondt method for the Imperiali one, with national allotment, the CVP would have conquered 2 more seats in 1958, the BSP 1 seat, the liberals would have kept their 23 seats, the socialist-liberal electoral coalition would have lost 1 seat in the House, just as the KPB and the Volksunie. As the number of calculation districts increases (e.g. if the provincial allotment is applicated instead of the national allotment) however, the distortion of the choice by the Imperiali way of calcu-

lation increases in proportion to the D'Hondt calculation technique.

The D'Hondt technique aims at a more precise proportional representation. But no matter how refined, it brings about a certain incongruity between division of votes and division of seats. The advantage of the D'Hondt calculating technique is expressed by a lower average number of votes per seat than the theoretical average, which is in its turn, lower than the average number of votes per seat of the non-benefited party. The system does not award this advantage unilaterally to the big party. The small party too can have an average number of votes per seat, which is lower than the theoretical average if the number of votes for a big party is between the figures (29) :

$$\frac{\text{total number of votes}}{\text{total number of seats} + 1} \times n$$

and the figures :

$$\frac{\text{total number of votes}}{\text{total number of seats} + 1} \times n$$

$$- \frac{\text{total number of votes}}{(\text{total number of seats} + 1)\,(\text{total number of seats})} \times p$$

The big party has an advantage if its number of votes is not situated between these figures. And this possibility is bigger than that its number of votes would indeed be situated between the figures.

B. The Quorum.

The third alinea of article 176 of the electoral code stipulates : « All lists are admitted to the supplementary division, save the ones that have not got a number of votes for the House in any arrondissement, a number amounting to at least sixty six percent of the electoral divisor defined under article 174 alinea one, and for the Senate a number of votes amounting to at least thirty three percent of this divisor. It admits to this division the isolated lists that reach this figure. » (Act of March 13th 1947).

Before proceeding to the division at the provincial level of the (remaining) conferrable seats — in accordance with the provincial allotment or « list coalition » — seats are already awarded in the

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(29) n is: the number of seats, the number of seats minus one, minus two, etc. up to n = - inclusive.

p is corresponding to 1, 2, 3, 4 etc. up to the total number of seats (inclusive).

arrondissement. The conditions to participate in this arrondissemental allotment of seats are stricter than the one for the provincial allotment : for the arrondissemental division a minimal number of valid votes has to be collected in the arrondissement, which is the same as the electoral divisor. For the provincial division but a fraction of this electoral divisor in the arrondissement has to be collected (since the Act of March 13th 1947 : 66 % for the House and 33 % for the Senate). From this appears clearly that it is not the higher require-ment of the arrondissement, which bars the way, but the minimal condition to participate in the further provincial division.

The electoral divisor is a fairly constant datum. On an average of the elections in 1958, 1961 and 1965 is stands at 24461 valid votes. Yet there are important differences from one arrondissement to another. The range for the 3 elections stands at 10625 on an average.

To take part in the division of seats the parties, the dissident groups, and the lists have to reach the quorum, or 66 % of the electoral divisor in one arrondissement per province. If the elections of 1958 1961 and 1965 can be accepted as representative the con-dition for a party, dissident group or a list to participate in the divi-sion of seats per province means collecting 16444 valid votes in one of the arrondissements (with a range of 7013 however).

In absolute figures, the required quorum is the same for all arron-dissements within the range. But this required quorum is strongly different as to the number of voters in each arrondissement. Here it is shown with the extreme cases. In the electoral arrondissement of Brussels the required quorum means acquiring the support of 2.04 % of the valid voters, while in the electoral arrondissement of Neuf-château-Virton it means acquiring the support of 25.50 % of the valid voters.

Is this quorum a definitive barring of the ways to the power posi-tions in Parliament outside the 3 traditional parties, as the Sperr-klausel in the German Federal Republic, or has this quorum got but a limited barring influence : on those lists or dissident groups that are not yet known enough by the public opinion and not yet settled and accepted enough by the electorate ? The required quorum harms those parties, dissident groups and lists that do not obtain the quorum in any arrondissement of the province, but get an amount of votes throughout the province that nears the electoral divisor, being the minimal condition to obtain the last seat conferrable according to the D'Hondt way of division. The best way to skip the quorum is

concentration : obtaining as many votes as possible in one arrondisse-
ment as big as possible as to population or electorate.

Is the harming the required quorum brings in fact very large ?
And which parties are harmed by it and which benefited ? Let us have
a look at the following list of parties barred from the division of seats
for the House of Representatives by the quorum, nevertheless the
fact that these parties obtained the number of votes required to get
one or more seats according to the proportional system (table X).

TABLE X

**Harming and Advantage of Parties by the Quorum, for the Elections
of the House of Representatives**

Election	Province	Harmed party	Amount of votes (in province)	Number of lost seats	Benefited party
1958	Oost-Vlaanderen	Volksunie	30,751	1	CVP
	Hainaut	KPB	44,234	2	1 BSP 1 CVP
	Namur	Liberals	22,516	1	CVP
1961	West-Vlaanderen	Liberals	61,297	2	2 CVP
		Volksunie	24,146	1	1 BSP
	Limburg	Liberals	31,042	1	CVP
	Luxembourg	Liberals	17,828	1	CVP
	Namur	Liberals	24,220	1	BSP
1965	Limburg	Volksunie	24,453	1	CVP

The required quorum is no definitive obstacle as the German Sperr-
klausel.

Notwithstanding the quorum the KPB have always had a parlia-
mentary representation since 1925. The Flemish nationalists could
not be kept definitively out of Parliament either. It surely has not
eliminated the Liberal Party. The quorum does not eliminate, it
slows down in some cases. The required quorum, if one wants to
parry it optimally, is indeed not even the figure required by the
D'Hondt system of division to stand a real chance to get a seat. The
quorum is a selective drag. Indeed it does not slow down all small
parties and dissident groups, only the ones with more generally
spread adherents instead of a heavily localized and perhaps limited
support. The conclusions for the House are in an analogous manner
applicable to the Senate, till 1947. Since 1947 the required quorum
in the Senate is a measure in vain (30).

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(30) The only exception is the loss of a Volksunie seat in West-Vlaanderen in 1965.

C. The Provincial Allotment.

Nearly immediately after introducing the proportional represen-
tation in 1899 the Van de Walle system was proposed. This system
wanted a collection per province of the residues of votes of the
arrondissements to reach a more proportional representation. In 1919
this provincial allotment was introduced.

By this the number of times when the D'Hondt calculating tech-
nique is applied, was reduced from 30 to 9. The essential meaning
of the provincial allotment lies in the larger use of residues of votes,
by which a more proportional representation arises in the sense that
the big parties see their boni of seats from the division diminish and
the small parties see their mali of seats lessen.

In each unity where this technique is applied there are certain
deviations ; they are the smaller the more the number of seats divi-
dable increases. The deviations have the form of non-used surpluses
of votes. L. Moyersoen writes on this : « After the Van de Walle
system was put into use, a comparison was made for the four following
elections between the number of seats every party obtained with the
Van de Walle system and the number of seats the same parties would
have obtained according to the act of 1899. In 1919 the Catholic
Party so lost 10 seats, 2 in 1921, 6 in 1925 and 10 in 1929 ; the Liberal
Party conquered during the same elections respectively : 9, 1, 4 and
6 seats ; the « Frontpartij » : 2, 1, 3 and 3 seats. The other small
parties got the sole seats they ever had, thanks to the Van de Walle
system. The comparison for the elections in 1950 and 1954 reveal
a loss of three seats during each election for the CVP, of respecti-
vely 5 and 4 seats for the Socialist Party and a gain of 4 and 5 seats
for the Liberal Party, of 4 seats for the Communist Party in 1950
(to seven), of the only seat the Volksunie obtained in 1954 and of
one seat for the cartel in 1954 (to five). Without the Van de Walle
system the CVP would have obtained an absolute majority already
in 1949 with 113 instead of 105 representatives » (31).

The decision to introduce the provincial allotment has brought the
proportional representation further into realisation, but only up to
the provincial level. The provincial allotment however can show
certain peculiarities as for the division of the seats between the parties
in the arrondissements of the same province and consequently as to
the allotment of seats to persons. By the provincial allotment a random

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(31) MOYERSOEN L., *De vertegenwoordiging van het volk*, in: *Tijdschrift voor
Politiek*, 1954, no 4, p. 352.

factor is introduced to a certain degree in the allotment of seats to the candidates. In view of the electoral results in 1958 there are altogether 6 cases to the 30 arrondissements where an unjust division manifests from an arrondissemental angle. Looking from the parties' view point, in the 1965 elections there appear to be 10 deviations to 37 cases altogether. These deviations do not influence at all the number of seats allotted to the different parties on a provincial plane. They do influence the division of this provincial number throughout the several arrondissemental lists of the same party, and so the allotment to the mandatories. Through the provincial allotment chance plays a certain role in the allotment to the elected candidates.

D. The Provincial and Co-opted Senators.

In the Senate a bigger distortion of the choice than in the House is reached by the fact that elections at more stages will still enlarge the parliamentary big parties.

Since the revision of the constitution in 1893 a number of provincial Senators have been added to the directly chosen Senators. The Provincial Councils indicate a number of provincial Senators. This creates possibilities for deviations.

First the number of provincial senators is not completely proportional to the population figure : since 1921 the norm has been one per 200,000 inhabitants, but each province shall have at least three provincial senators, even if the population figure is much less, as in Luxembourg for example. These provinces and the parties forming a majority there obtain an extra in this way. Secondly a limited number of mandates is not perfectly proportional to bigger figures. Thirdly very often coalitions between two or more parties are formed during these elections in order to enlarge their common number of seats if possible.

Directly chosen Senators and provincial ones then choose together the co-opted Senators (since 1921), numbering one half of the provincial Senators. This is the third stage of the election. This third stage mostly turns out to be disadvantageous to the small parties. Indeed, there have been only six co-opted senators to a total of 287 mandates throughout the Belgian history, which did not belong to the three traditional parties : 2 Flemish nationalists, 1 rexist and 3 communists. The effectives of the catholics, socialists and liberals on the other hand were fortified with respectively 10.5 and 8.2 and 2,9 mandatories on an average per election.

This co-optation does not distort so much in a traditionally con-
ceived left-right division of the parties : left fortifies its effectives on
an average with 11.1 mandates and right with 10.5 mandates. It can
be stated however that the big parties fortify themselves thanks to
co-option. A small party has to have 7 direct and provincial seats in
the Senate to be allotted a co-opted senator judging from the present-
day number of co-opted senators to the senators they are chosen by.
The small parties which cannot reach this figure are reduced to a
still more expressed position of minority.

VI. CONCLUSION

The political democracy in Belgium is limited to a periodical
questioning of the voters about the division of power among the
various parties in Parliament.

Alfred Delcroix, who was a very good scholar of the Belgian
electoral legislation expressed this about 1920 as follows : « All powers
originate from the nation. But this fundamental principle gives the
sovereign nation but the right to delegate its powers ». The delegation
of power the citizens in Belgium have to carry out, is an obligatory
one. This delegation is limited to the division of the seats among the
several parties. This investigation has clarified who are the agents
and what is the extent of the division of power in each of the five
moments of the general elections. The voters are only co-actors and
they certainly do not decide on the total extent of the division of
power brought about by the legislative elections.

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