PART I

Party-Directed Gendered Electoral Financing

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FRANCE

Parity Sanctions and Campaign Financing in France: Increased Numbers, Little Concrete Gender Transformation

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Introduction

The 2000 constitutional reform on parity to "promote equal access of women and men to electoral mandates and elected office" and subsequent parity laws provide a particularly interesting case for testing the links between money and gendered political representation and the extent to which formal rules can change political behavior (Bailey, 1971). France's parity policy package is quite original, as it combines legal quotas and financial penalties for political parties, and has also been extended to other spheres such as large corporations and high-ranking public office (Lépinard, 2016).[1] Moreover, the parity fines given to political parties that do not field an equal number of men and women in National Assembly elections, first put into place in the 2002 elections and then subsequently increased in the 2012 and 2017 elections, present a laboratory in which to study gendered electoral financing over time and in which to answer the question: just how much money is too much money to pay to protect males' incumbent seats in the parliament?

The significant increase in women elected to parliament in the 2017 elections, from 28% to nearly 40%, furnishes a compelling scientific opportunity to see if gender equality financing matters in promoting gender equality. Indeed, a sheer numerical assessment suggests that the increase in financial penalties has finally convinced French political parties to convert themselves to gender parity. However, a more detailed qualitative assessment of the parity sanctions provides a more nuanced answer. Indeed, in the context of complex changes in the French political landscape, in the organization of legislative elections, and with new rules on holding multiple mandates, it is difficult to assess if money has been the most important factor in convincing reluctant political parties to move to parity.

Reflecting the broader aims of the book, we take seriously the economic dimension of this work on political representation and look at the impact of the parity sanctions on the gendered recruitment of parliamentarians.[2] In Gallagher and Marsh's (1988) words, we enter the "secret garden" of nominations for legislative elections to show the importance of financial constraints on the informal rationales underpinning decisions by the gatekeepers of party organizations (Bjarnegard and Kenny, 2015; Bjarnegard, 2013). We argue that the parity sanctions in the legislative arena have not completely reversed the highly gender-biased candidate selection and recruitment process; at the district level, local power relations and patterns of party relations trumped any real transformation in the highly institutionalized, gender-biased practices embedded in the political party-controlled recruitment system. We show here that the significant increase in women in the National Assembly in the 2017 elections was not *mainly* due to the parity sanctions, but rather came as a result of Emmanuel Macron's newcomer En Marche movement and its strategy of presenting outside candidates to renew French political life. While incumbents (predominantly men) usually are more likely to be nominated and elected, in this specific election cycle, newcomers, sustained by a discourse of change and modernity, had higher chances to be elected. In this specific context, Macron's choice to have 50% of its candidates be women resulted in a sea change in the composition of the French legislative assembly. While increased financial sanctions played a role in the increase in female candidates, especially for left-wing and small political parties (which have always had more female candidates), we argue that the massive increase in women's presence in the 2017 election cycle is mostly due to other factors. One of the more prominent factors was Emmanuel Macron's strategy of renewal of the political elites and his both rhetorical and concrete commitment to parity.

Hence a nuanced and multi-level analysis of the implementation of financial sanctions suggests that we must evaluate the effect of parity at different levels. We must distinguish its rhetorical adoption by parties, from its concrete mobilization as an argument by gatekeepers, selectorates, candidates, and aspiring candidates, and also from its concrete impact through money—encouraging some to comply and punishing others for resisting this new gender equality principle.

In the rest of our chapter, we first highlight the context for parity reform debates and implementation set by general campaign financing regulation and electoral reforms. Next, we tease out the relative effects of the financial sanctions as compared to other electoral reforms and to other important changes in the partisan political landscape. In order to analyze partisan elite priorities when selecting candidates, we complement this macro overview with evidence from interviews conducted after the June 2017 elections with members of national selection committees for the main political parties. In the last section of the chapter, we develop a more micro-sociological analysis of how the selection of candidates takes place in three constituencies—two in Paris (the 14th and the 17th) and one in Burgundy (the 3rd of Yonne)—and how potential candidates decide to run for office

drawing on press and campaign materials, as well as on interviews with candidates from the main political parties.[3] In the conclusion, we return to the implication of our findings for parity in France and identify some next steps for future research.

From Money to Gender Equality: A Growing State Intervention in Regulating Political Careers

The French Constitution defines two main missions for political parties: to help the formation of suffrage and, since 2000, to encourage equal access for women and men to political functions and elected positions. Political parties that abide by these rules can benefit from public financing. There is therefore a strong link between the increasing public financing of political parties in France and the strategy to use financial sanctions to promote gender equality in the lower chamber.

Since the end of the 1980s, a series of laws have been designed to regulate the financing of political parties in order to prevent corruption and shadow financing. As an outcome of these laws, political parties are heavily financed by the State and function mostly thanks to these public subsidies. Other sources of financing include a party's elected members' contributions and activists' membership fees. A 1995 law forbids any type of financing from businesses, and limits private persons' financial contributions to 7500 Euros per year.

As Table 2.2 shows, the share of public financing in the overall budget of French political parties varies by party, depending on the party's history, its organization, and ability to raise money (see Table 2.1 for the explanation of the major political parties in France). This share constitutes a majority of the funding for political parties that regularly form the government—Socialist Party (PS) or right-wing Les Républicains (LR). For minority parties, this share is less important in absolute terms, but nonetheless remains an important source of financing, especially on the far right for the National Front (FN), for which public financing constitutes more than half of its finances, and on the left for the Greens.

The formula for calculating the amount of State subsidies given to political parties is complicated. It is based on the percentage of votes received by each party's candidates in the first round of elections and the share of each party's MPs in the second round. Hence the more votes and the more elected representatives, the more funding a party will get. Party funds are monitored by an independent agency, the national commission for the campaign funds and financing for political parties, created by a 1990 law. This law was adopted in reaction to a series of campaign finance scandals with the primary goal of cleaning up electoral politics.

In this context, the 2000 law included provisions for financial penalties to encourage parties to field female candidates but contained no sanctions for getting women actually elected. In 2000, the deputies decided that reducing public funding for noncompliant parties would be sufficient to increase the proportion of women in the National Assembly. According to the first reform, when the "difference between the number of candidates of each sex . . . exceeds 2% of

TABLE 2.1 Main Political Forces in France

	Extreme Left	*Socialist (governing) Left*	*~~Ecologists~~*	*Center/Center-Right*	*Traditional (governing) Right*	*Extreme Right*
2002	PCF (French Communist Party)	PS (Socialist Party)	Les Verts (The Greens)	UDF (L'Union pour la démocratie française)	UMP (L'Union pour un mouvement populaire) fusion from the Gaullist RPR (Le Rassemblement pour la République) and part of the UDF	FN (National Front)
2007	PCF ~~(French Communist Party)~~	PS ~~(Socialist Party)~~	Les Verts ~~(The Greens)~~	MoDem (Le Mouvement démocrate), former UDF, renamed in 2007	UMP	FN ~~(National Front)~~
2012	An alliance called "Front de Gauche" with two main parties: the PCF and the Parti de Gauche (PG, a fraction of the PS)	PS ~~(Socialist Party)~~	EELV (a fusion in 2008 between the Greens and a new structure Europe Écologie) allied with the PS	MoDem	UMP	FN ~~(National Front)~~
2017	Two main competing parties: FI (France Insoumise, formerly PG, renamed in 2016) and PCF	PS ~~(Socialist Party)~~	EELV (allied with the PS)	Alliance of two parties: MoDem LREM (La République en Marche), founded by E. Macron	LR (Les Républicains, former UMP, renamed in 2015)	FN ~~(National Front)~~

Source: This table was taken from Durovic, Squarcioni, and Tiberj (2017).

TABLE 2.2 Amount of Public Aid and Deduction for Infringement of Parity Law for French Political Parties

	2013		*2018*	
	Amount of Public Aid in €	*Deduction for Infringement in* €	*Amount of Public Aid in* €	*Deduction for Infringement in* €
PS	29,877,000	1,396,000	6,431,000	0
UMP/LR	23,797,000	3,927,000	12,945,000	1,787,885
LREM	NA	NA	22,515,000	0
FN	5,630,000	86,000	5,180,000	0
UDI	2,645,000	101,000	4,099,000	0
MODEM	913,000	143,000	3,853,000	0
PCF	2,139,000	0	2,010,000	0
PG/FI	699,000	64,000	4,442,000	252,517

Sources: French Ministry of Interior, Haut Conseil à l'Egalité, and DILA (Direction de l'information légale et administrative).

the total number of candidates" the sum of the first fraction of public funding granted decreases by "a percentage equivalent to half that difference, out of the total number of candidates." A 2007 law increased the rate to 75%, which was applied in the 2012 June parliamentary elections and to 150% by a 2014 law, which was applied to the 2017 elections. So for example, in the 2017 elections if a party presented 60% men candidates and 40% women, this 20 percentage-point difference was translated into a 30% reduction in their public subsidies, a quite significant penalty.

During the parliamentary debates on parity reform in 1990–2000, the rationale for financial penalties was twofold (Bereni, 2015: 266). The first argument, a technical one, was that the two-round, first-past-the-post system used to elect deputies that made it difficult to apply quotas was more suited for a list-based proportional representation system (Lépinard, 2007: 221).[4] The second argument was feminist and asserted that political parties needed to be held financially accountable for the dominance of men in the national assembly.

The parity policy package targets elections at all levels of government. For proportional representation elections at the municipal (+ 1000), regional, and European levels, candidate lists have to respect strict parity of 50% men and 50% women. At the departmental level, an unprecedented way of appointing candidates was introduced: the "*binome paritaire*," in which there is one male and female seat for each district. In 2015, this led to the election of women to 50% of the seats on departmental councils. Alongside these authoritative measures (which did not, however, concern the presidency of these assemblies), those adopted to favor equal gender representation in the lower house of parliament were only *incentives*. And, in point of fact, the higher one looks within the traditional

hierarchy of the political game, the stronger the social and gendered selection at work (Achin and Lévêque, 2014). Following this logic, the Senate (upper house) and National Assembly (lower house) were the last male strongholds in the French political field (with 25% women in the Senate and 26.7% in the National Assembly until 2017).

Besides the financial sanctions implemented in the context of the parity laws, other public financing mechanisms must be taken into account. Indeed, public financing is directed towards political parties, but also directly towards candidates themselves, either men or women. For all elections, candidates who receive more than 5% of votes are eligible to have their campaign expenses reimbursed. There is a cap on campaign expenses in order to assure equality between men and women candidates, at least in principle and to reduce the influence of the media. Candidate campaign budgets are typically comprised of ~~the funding of small parties and big self-funding, through credit or personal wealth~~. Thus, candidates must actually put up their own money, often through bank loans, but are reimbursed if the Commission of Campaign Financing decides that they complied with the rules. Hence, despite public financing of political parties that depends on their election results, parties do not directly finance the campaigns of their candidates, who must self-fund before being reimbursed. The party might provide help via in-kind services and advice, but rarely put down money for candidates.

To what extent are these general mechanisms of public financing (apart from gendered financial sanctions), also gendered? If women tend to have a hard time getting bank loans, the fact that they have only one source of funding reduces the uncertainty and limits the formal obstacles to running as a candidate. For legislative or municipal elections, some candidates who have good local bases and are well off financially do not hesitate to throw their hat into the ring even without political party support, betting that they will receive 5% of the total vote and hence qualify for reimbursement. The risks of failing meet this cutoff or of the Commission failing to validate their request are clearly associated with social and gender factors, which influence men's and women's decisions to present themselves as candidates. This is in large part because the National Party Commission (which gives the official nominations) tends to discriminate against candidates with limited means or high financial risk.

For 30 years, the new modes of party and campaign funding have proved to have a direct impact on how representatives are elected and on their activities, as well as on party organizations and their strategies. The dominant parties have moved towards being "societies of elected officials" (Lefebvre and Sawicki, 2006) or even "cartel parties" (Katz and Mair, 1995): semi-public, professional, and centralized agencies aiming to maintain a symbiotic relationship with the State, drawing resources and legitimacy from it, and favoring collusion among themselves (Aucante et al., 2008). In this context, material and financial factors play an important role in determining the choices made by political parties (particularly in terms of dispersing candidates from different sides in the first round). This is

particularly true of the legislative elections, which serve as a reference point for calculating party funding for the whole legislative term (Lehingue, 2008).

Financial Sanctions to Reach Gender Parity: Implementing or Bending the Rules?

Studies on parity in politics have shown so far that changing the formal rules of the game is not enough to challenge the gendered rationales of political recruitment (e.g., Achin et al., 2007; Murray, Krook, and Opello, 2012). They have highlighted the mechanisms through which political parties change the meaning of parity norms and incentives at every level of the nomination process. The arsenal deployed by political actors to limit the progression of gender equality in the political space includes controlling the creation of candidate lists, generating fake dissidence, or even forcing certain female candidates to resign after they are elected. The other limitation of the law concerns its lack of impact on the presidency of assemblies, overwhelmingly still male (Achin and Lévêque, 2014). These mixed results call for a more in-depth appraisal of the impact of parity financial sanctions on the number of women elected to the lower chamber.

Bending the Rules: Big vs. Small and Right vs. Left

The adoption of the parity law and of its financial sanctions in 2000 had a tremendous impact on the number of female candidates for the National Assembly, which rose from 23% in 1997 to 38.9% in 2002, as Table 2.3 shows. However, this leap in the number of women running for elections hides a more complex reality, one in which the new rules are adopted only in principle and unevenly applied across parties. While some parties, for financial reasons, complied, others actively bent the rules. First, the proportion of women's candidacies for the National Assembly stagnated over a decade, with only 40.1% women candidates in 2012 (see column 3 in Table 2.3).

Second, while the proportion of female deputies rose from barely 10% in 1997 to 12% in 2002 (column 1 in Table 2.3), and to 27%, this last modest increase in 2012 was a side effect of the victory of left-wing parties in previously right-wing constituencies, where these left-wing parties tended to place their female candidates. Thus, in the first three rounds of legislative elections in 2002, 2007, and 2012 in the context of the new parity financial sanctions that were significantly lower at the time, the gap between the proportion of female candidates and the proportion of women actually elected as deputies indicated that parties were fielding women in non-winnable constituencies,[5] thereby respecting the requirements of the law in terms of proportion of female candidates, while undermining its very aim, which was to get more women elected (Sineau and Tiberj, 2007).

The degree to which political parties used that strategy nonetheless varies. In reality, only small parties such as the Greens, the radical left (Front de Gauche),

TABLE 2.3 Female Candidates and Deputies in % by Political Party Since 2002

Year	*2002*		*2007*		*2012*		*2017*	
Financial Penalty in %	*50*		*50*		*75*		*150*	
Political Party	*Candidates*	*Deputies*	*Candidates*	*Deputies*	*Candidates*	*Deputies*	*Candidates*	*Deputies*
PCF/FG	44	23.8	46.5	20	48.2	20	47	20
	NA		NA		NA		47	38.9
PS	36.3	16.4	45.2	25.8	43	37.5	44	41.4
EELV	49.8	No MPs	50.4	25	49.4	52.9	46	No MPs
LREM	NA		NA		NA		50	47.5
UDF/MODEM	19.6	6.8	36.9	0	28.5	0	49	44
UMP/LR	20.6	10.1	26	14.4	25.6	13.9	39	21.2
FN	48.4	0	48.8	0	49	50	49	25
Total of Candidatures	**38.9**		**41.6**		**40.1**		**42.4**	
Total of Elected MPs	**12.3**		**18.5**		**26.9**		**38.8**	

Source: Report of the *Observatoire de la parité entre les femmes et les hommes*, www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/opfh_eleleg_rapt1-250712.pdf, last accessed 21/12/2018, completed by the authors for the results of 2017 with data from the French Ministry of Interior

and the extreme right (National Front) respected the law and avoided financial penalties. In fact, those small parties were not more virtuous, they just had a better incentive to comply to avoid financial sanctions. Since 2002, these parties have fielded between 48% and 49% female candidates because most of their public funding comes from the first fraction of public funding (depending on the number of votes and to which sanctions apply), and not from the second fraction (depending on the number of candidates elected and to which sanctions do not apply). The National Front (far-right party), for example, appears to have adopted the parity motto since it has strictly complied with the parity sanction since it was first put on the books. The eight deputies actually elected in 2017 are nonetheless men, six-eighths of whom are close to Marine Le Pen: one is her partner and three are quite young, from the national level run in winnable districts. The two women deputies included Le Pen herself and Emmanuelle Ménard, the wife of the mayor of Bézier, an emblematic figure of the extreme right.

It is clear that complying to avoid sanctions can be quite profitable for small parties.[6] Since 2017, the FN has received 3 million Euros annually, the highest possible given its results in the first round and then in the second round this amount was increased in proportion to the eight deputies that were elected out of its 577 candidates—the second round fraction. The total share of funds allocated to each party over the past four legislative elections is presented in Table 2.4.

In 2012, all the parties continued to place female candidates in constituencies that were difficult to win, as shown by the discrepancy between the proportion of female candidates and the proportion of women elected in the main parties (25.6% against 13.9% for LR—Les Républicains—and 43% against 37% for the PS—Socialist Party) (see also Durovic, Squarcioni, and Tiberj, 2017). Les Républicains lost 6 million Euros of public funding between 2012 and 2017, against 700,000 Euros that the Socialist Party lost. The financial penalties for which the law provided had not, therefore, challenged the social and political rationales excluding women from the most prestigious and major political positions on the left and on the right. While the right-wing Républicains adhered to the rhetoric of parity (the party did not oppose the law or the sanctions), the party

TABLE 2.4 Campaign Money of Candidates in Euros by Funding Sources and by Gender

	Expenditures	*Revenues*	*Donations*	*Party Contribution*	*Individual Contribution*	*Total Spent*
Average Women	22,169	23,346	3068	868	17,843	12,855
erage n	29,643	31,229	4266	3131	23,160	20,280
Global Average	24,660	25,974	3468	1622	19,615	15,330

Source: We collected this data for 18 out of the 52 candidates who actually applied and received reimbursements in the three districts—six candidates in the Yonne, three candidates in the 14th in Paris, and nine candidates in the 17th district in Paris.

did not even claim to recruit new female candidates, presenting only half the number of female candidates required by law. Paying the fine seemed, in 2012, a better strategy as the party was convinced that female candidates stood less of a chance to be elected than their male incumbent counterparts. The Socialist Party adhered to the parity stipulation in theory, but not really in practice, as it fielded women mostly in non-winnable seats, thereby clearly bending the rules rather than reforming its own practices.

Legislators did not give up on the pressure of parity fines. As said before, the 2014 law doubled the share of funding deducted. However, the increase in the potential amount of the financial penalty has not had a major effect on the proportion of female candidates endorsed by French political parties in 2017. Indeed, the share of female candidates across all parties increased from 40.1% in 2012 to only 42.4% of all candidates in 2017 (see Table 2.3). While there is a notable increase for right-wing parties (the share of female candidates for Les Républicains increased from 25.6% in 2012 to 39% in 2017), these newly endorsed female candidates were, once again, mostly fielded in non-winnable constituencies as their becoming elected representatives attests: they constitute only 21% of LR's deputies. Hence the increase in the financial penalty had an effect on right-wing parties that used to be reluctant to field women as candidates, but this did not translate into more right-wing women being elected.

A New Political Player Changing the Rules of the Game?

The significant increase in women deputies in 2017 moved France from the 62nd place in world rankings to the 14th (IPU, 2017) and was a clear byproduct of the landslide victory of Emmanuel Macron's movement, *La République en Marche*. En Marche's commitment to parity is both symbolic and, to some extent, pragmatic. First, symbolically, Emmanuel Macron was keen on using gender equality and parity as a signal to distinguish his party from the older parties, and as a symbol of "modernité" (Achin and Lévêque, 2017). Wanting to capitalize on the demise of the "old" party system, Emmanuel Macron had to symbolically also break with the traditional image of a male-dominated party. Furthermore, in a context in which not being an incumbent appeared as an advantage—rather than a disadvantage—women also appeared as suitable candidates even in winnable constituencies. With 72% of seats in the Assembly held by non-incumbents, this was the highest rate of Assembly renewal of any election under the Fifth Republic. Of elected deputies, 28% were complete political newcomers, having held no elected or appointed political office prior to 2017, compared to 9% newcomers at the end of the 1970s and only 5% for the 2012 Assembly elections (Boelaert, Michon, and Ollion, 2018). In this context, being a woman, a characteristic which tends to be associated with outsiders and lack of experience in politics, became a political asset. Hence, while there was some consideration of financing by En Marche, its support of parity extended beyond mere rhetoric, that is fielding enough women not

to incur financial sanctions, to practical commitment as the new party presented as many men as women in the elections and won 314 seats, of which 149 women won (47.5%).

However, this commitment to parity in practice may not translate into concrete gender transformation in party structures and in the overall presence of women in powerful positions inside En Marche's parliamentary group[7] or inside ministerial cabinets where women in Macron's government comprise only 30% of cabinet members (against 35% during F. Hollande's presidency). Time will tell how this new massive presence of elected female deputies both in the National Assembly and inside En Marche will transform political parties' practices and the National Assembly's approach to gender discrimination and gender equality issues.

The Law on Dual Mandates: Values of Efficiency Rather Than Principles of Parity?

It is important to note that several types of norms frame the recruitment processes for electoral candidates. Some legally establish conditions of eligibility. In the face of the "crisis in representative democracy," these norms have also aimed to allow the renewal of the political class, particularly through feminization and through the way "gender has been made into a tool of the law" (Boucobza and Girard, 2014). Alongside these legal norms, political parties also implement internal procedures for appointing candidates aimed at ensuring—and showcasing—the internal democracy of each party. At play here is a form of competition between different formal rules and their interaction with informal rules of selection for each party and specific institutional configurations (Kenny and Verge, 2015).

No fewer than 12 reference texts (constitution, organic laws, laws, decrees) regulate the candidate process for legislative elections. Candidates must enjoy full civil and political rights and meet conditions of age and nationality. Other texts set out the conditions under which candidacies are valid, but also stipulate rules for electoral propaganda and campaign spending. Among the contradictory legal stipulations affecting individuals, the new law concerning holding two offices at the same time is the most pronounced. In 2017, deputies had to choose between being a deputy and holding another seat on a local executive; furthermore, they had to decide before the election, as they were required to maintain the last office they received.

In a context where voluntary departures from the National Assembly are extremely rare (Gaxie, 2003), many nationally renowned parliamentarians have abandoned the idea of running for re-election, although they have not stated this is due to the law on dual offices. Seventy-eight socialist deputies out of 292 announced they would not stand again in 2017.[8] Among the right-wing parties, several public figures such as Dominique Bussereau, Jean-François Copé, Benoist Apparu, and Pierre Lelouche have also decided not to run again.[9] Many, often

older, men, who are real "notables" in politics, have stepped down without necessarily being replaced by women.

The newly elected assembly in 2017 included 432 non-incumbents, out of a total of 577. Eighty percent of new members with no political experience were put forward by La République en Marche. Two-thirds of the assembly (327 deputies) held a second elected office at lower levels of government and 223 of these deputies had to resign from their other office, of which 135 were mayors. Thus, there are 160 deputies in the current assembly who hold a second elected office as members of city councils, which is one-fourth of all deputies. By comparison, in 2012, three-quarters of deputies held two or more offices, of which 250 were mayoral offices (*Le Monde*, June 26, 2017).

Only systematic analysis of the characteristics of the deputies not running again can reveal the interconnected effects of the dual office law and the parity law. Indeed, while legal measures constrain candidatures and frame the recruitment of politicians, each party has its own internal system for appointing candidates.

Beyond Formal Rules: Do Financial Sanctions Really Matter in Nomination Processes?

In France, candidate selection has to meet two, sometimes contradictory, logics: a logic of rewarding activism (and maintaining local leaderships), which respects the organization's political balance, and a logic about its public image, aimed at showing that the party respects democratic rules and is contributing to renewing political practices (thus avoiding accusations of playing into the hands of extremist stances). With the exception of the En Marche movement, which made candidate selection criteria into a distinctive feature, candidate selection criteria are usually ill-defined, particularly when it comes to principles of parity, which can be used both to set aside and to appoint particular candidates.[10] Indeed, this condition is taken into account to varying degrees by party statutes and internal regulations. In practice, candidates for legislative elections are mainly appointed by a central level by bodies closely tied to the leadership of each of the parties in question. The national negotiations finalizing these choices do, however, have to consider local bastions insofar as the initial choice is made at the constituency level, and bringing in an external candidate is rare and often contested.

The candidate selection committees are strategic bodies and their composition varies according to the internal political balance of each party. While there is a certain variation by party in terms of how selection committees worked for the 2017 elections, parties also share similar features: they tend to be highly centralized bodies that work in opaque ways for aspiring candidates.

The "En Marche" movement, trying to distinguish itself from politics as usual, announced the composition of its candidate selection committee to the public on February 9, 2017.[11] Jean-Paul Delevoye, a formal minister in a right-wing government, presided over it, and it included nine members, mainly women (six/nine). The movement leadership announced around a dozen nominations

for the Assembly just prior to the presidential elections; the dozen candidates were racially diverse and one was disabled, an unusual quality for a parliamentary candidate. As one aspiring candidate for the elections stated in an interview, the selection of these diversity candidates "was really a communication strategy 'look how great we are' then in subsequent nominations it was not like that at all!" In fact, despite its public claims of transparency, En Marche produced an absolute and unprecedented (except perhaps the Communist Party in the 1930s) top-down nomination procedure. As the same aspirant recounts:

> until the last minute we did not know who would be chosen as a candidate for the constituency, we were completely kept in the fog, they were unresponsive, we called them, asked them . . . then we learned, through the press, that the constituency had been "given" so to speak to the Socialist Party.
>
> *(Interview Paris, 23 June 2017)*

Hence, while En Marche did stress the importance of parity and select women based on this criterion, it also reproduced centralized procedures, keeping aspiring candidates in the dark about the outcome of decisions, which meant that they could not organize their campaigns.

In contrast, the PS and LR did not indicate their committee member names. The PS stated that its candidate selection committee included both ex officio and elected members and respected parity. However, committee deliberations tend to be highly secretive, appearing to be subject more to political partisan imperatives rather than to formally established rules. This much was evident in the uncertain circumstances of the run-up to the 2017 parliamentary elections, during which previously established procedures were put into question, first by the left-wing primaries and then by the unexpected results in the presidential election. As one leader in the Socialist Party asserted in an interview, the run-up to the 2017 parliamentary election on the heels of the shake-up of the established political parties—coupled with the new reforms on multiple offices and parity—produced an unprecedented situation of "huge improvisation":

> Honestly, I think that much of that [the election procedures prior to the parliamentary elections in 2017] was simply made up, because studies can be made of past election results and we can see what needed to be done or not. . . . Normally, it is important to honor the vote of party members. It's a basic rule. Rules must be stipulated in advance [on the percentage of candidates for the positions reserved for party allies], districts must be reserved but after-party votes must be honored.
>
> *(interview, PS candidate, November 14, 2017)*

In the LR, the committee included 83 people and respected gender parity.[12] At the FN, there were 20 people on the committee who also belonged to the party's national executive. On the right-wing, a common feature emerged: the members

of the selection committee—or at least those known to be on it—are national leaders, men of a certain age with a well-established position in the party (and in life in general). And while the names might change, the profiles do not, as illustrated by Jean-François Lamour replacing Christian Estrosi, a man with whom he shares an extraordinarily similar political career path. Both are heavyweight politicians, both are former high-level sportsmen who moved over to politics, and both have combined elected, party, ministry, local, and national positions.

According to an interview with a LR leader who was not a member of the selecting commission, but who was involved with the campaign of an incumbent, the question of parity was a display of good will toward equality rather than any serious consideration of the sanction. In the context of the elimination of right-wing candidate François Fillon from the first round of presidential elections, the aim of the commission was damage control, in particular through automatically backing sitting candidates who had a strong chance of winning. Hence candidate chances to win prevailed over their gender and over respect for the parity or concerns over public financing:

> In any case most sitting candidates received the support for the party before even they took a formal decision to run. Parity was one criterion. But the investitures took place before the presidential elections, so we did not know yet that Macron was going to win. Except for a few stalled districts, generally the investitures were given before. So I think that yes, parity was in play, because today there are penalties and all candidates for the presidential elections want to say "Yes, I presented more women, etc." But for myself, I do not think it is normal that women take the place of men who often want to do it more!
>
> *(interview, February 6, 2018)*

Candidates who had strong ties to their districts also benefitted from this incumbent advantage. In this context, in the 3rd district of Yonne, the women incumbent was endorsed by her party even though she had publicly stated for quite some time that she did not want to serve a third term and despite her support for Nicolas Sarkozy (François Fillon's competitor) in the primary:

So in 2014 I told my husband, this is the situation—because he was really sick of me holding several offices at the same time—we had no more children to take care of and he would have gone on vacation. So in 2014, I just announced I am not coming back. . . .

Q: And when you did decide you did not want to run for office, did you feel any pressure?

A: But no, I would have been presented. I said, I do not want to run.

Q: So you were presented anyway?

A: Yes in June 2016 after that, I was given the task of finding a woman.[13]

(interview)

Framed by legal mechanisms and old-party routines, the choice of nominees is first and foremost a process that controls and manages political power struggles inside each party. Far from being democratic, these processes are entrusted to prominent political actors, mainly men, who have accumulated different types of political capital—and this also goes for the parties that are most attached to demonstrating their commitment to democratic governance. These gatekeepers therefore promote politicians after their own image, which can explain in part the low progression of feminization at the most prestigious levels of the political space since 2017.

The En Marche Revolution? New "On Line" Selection

While candidates are usually subject to rules concerning minimum length of party membership or being up to date with their fees, some parties lay out more original conditions indicating a strategic desire to differentiate themselves. Thus, Emmanuel Macron's En Marche party stipulated that the profile of candidates must respond to different criteria. The official selection criteria were:[14] "renewal" (having 50% of candidates from the "civil society,"[15] that is to say without any political mandate), "right and left opening" (accepting double political membership), "parity" (having 50% of female candidates in winnable constituencies[16]), "exemplarity" (no criminal record and never having been prohibited from running for office), and "collective discipline." As a member of the Commission said, the main criteria were parity and renewal, and they were the objects of a calculated discount of which members were reminded at the beginning of every meeting.

The call for candidates from civil society, meaning in particular women, was key in the decision of many newcomer women to throw their hats into the ring.[17] As one female candidate for En Marche (14th district in Paris) explained:

> I hesitated . . . after all I had not even thought of it from the beginning . . . I had been involved from the beginning because I was in 100% agreement with Macron and then someone said, it was my En Marche local coordinator, we are going to open up our candidatures to civil society, 50% civil society, 50% women, and the fact that he said that, a Saturday morning, that gave me an initial taste . . . and then 10 days after, there was the Emmanuel Macron's speech on the web that said "I opened up candidatures and there are only 15% women, I consider this a failure. Ladies, do as I do, as I did with Brigitte, speak with your husbands, your families and get involved". After that I dove in.
>
> *(interview, Paris, June 23, 2017)*

In the same way, another aspiring candidate recalls that after receiving a first round of mainly male candidacies, En Marche posted the video of Emmanuel Macron

to encourage women to be candidates. She affirms that if she had not attended a special workshop organized by En Marche in Paris to motivate women to run for the legislative elections, she would never have imagined herself being an aspiring candidate.

The major innovation of the En Marche movement was to solicit candidatures through an online form, whereby aspirants submitted a CV and a statement of purpose, akin to a motivation letter. The National Investiture Commission of the movement would then select the candidates without any connection to the district-level candidate selection process. This new online (and still top-down) approach was more open to female candidates (especially since they were specifically targeted and incentivized to run) but the "Google form" proved as opaque as traditional nomination methods. An aspiring female candidate, who was not nominated by En Marche, stated:

> The Google form said we are at your disposal if you have questions, especially for women, that was the case for maybe eight days, they were improvising, then it exploded, they had so many applications, there was nobody anymore behind the email contact and they locked down everything. . . . I did send letters of support for my candidacy, I called people I knew on the committee . . . but I never had any feedback on my candidacy.
>
> *(interview, female candidate LREM, Paris, June 23, 2017)*

Many candidates we interviewed felt like they were being hired for a job or were trying out for a part in a movie, a far cry from classic candidate selection processes. The aspiring candidate cited above also said:

> I filed my candidature online and I was called one week before the investiture by a member of the National Commission, who asked me a load of questions . . . on my platform, in particular things that are important here . . . to see if I knew how to cope and after those questions about my level of commitment. In the context of the time needed and even the degree of my commitment to put together a team, funding, etc. and all of sudden . . . two hours after that I received a text saying I was on the shortlist with two others, then three to four days before the formal announcement of candidates,[18] May 11th, I received the formal confirmation of my candidacy saying that I was selected, but that I should not tell anyone, really anyone and I mean at the very last minute because as long as I had not heard I did not believe it would happen and I was scared . . . of a last minute candidature, like when Valls was parachuted in, a leader of the right who lands, but me with all that I had to build, with my strong civil society and newcomer profile against this old political hack, so the exact opposite . . . I was stressed out until 5:00 pm.
>
> *(interview, female candidate LREM, Paris, June 23, 2017)*

One En Marche candidate in the 18th arrondissement, an unemployed researcher formerly employed by the Ministry of Defense, who was the coordinator of a neighborhood association for residents in Paris experienced the accelerated selection process:

> I submitted my statement of purpose in five minutes on the website. Overall I said that we had resources in the 18th to carry this election and to get elected. Give us the resources. They called me that afternoon, a man with a lovely voice, and he conducted a job interview [asking questions] on your motivation, who you are, and whether you have time. In the end, I told him my rep was good, I owned my pad with a 20 year credit and that's it, that I had no investments in any company and then I talked with him about the Goutte d'Or, of my professional experience. . . . At the end of the phone call, he told me he would call back in the late afternoon. I watched a film, I ate some chips, my mother stopped by. . . . And the man called back and told me, well it's you, you are the last candidate to be selected by Emmanuel Macron, understood to be the Commission. Now you just have to win, good luck. . . . I was sitting down with my mother and I said Whoa . . . because I felt an enormous load on my shoulders. You just told me I am alone in front of 116,000 voters in the district, without a tract, a program, a team, and I have three and a half weeks.
>
> *(interview, female candidate LREM Paris, November 21, 2017)*

In the end, despite official statements about renewal, the profiles of the 7882 EM candidates differed little in terms of age and professional background. As journalists of the daily *Le Monde* reported, the candidates were slightly younger with an average age of 48.5 compared to 50 in 2012 and 51 in 2007. But the average was lower in 2002 at 48 years and 42 in 1997.[19] When it comes to social background, candidates were mostly managers and from intellectual professions. In fact, the 2017 Assembly reflects this socio-professional constant with 55% managers and higher-level intellectual professions and 1% blue collar—when in the general population 18% are in the liberal professions and 48% are in blue collar jobs. This constant was even accentuated in comparison to past legislatures with only one change in the higher liberal professions: deputies came more often from private rather than public sector jobs, both management and small business. While the proportion of deputies from public sector management decreased by 9%, the proportion of deputies who worked in small business or hand-made crafts doubled, which was unprecedented (Boelaert, Michon, and Ollion, 2018).

The significant victory of En Marche candidates, many of whom were newcomers to politics, put a brake on the autonomy of the political parties and their resistance to social renewal for at least the past 40 years (Boelaert, Michon, and Ollion, 2018). Thus, the traditional political resources needed to get elected abruptly dropped. This opening up of the political arena, however, brought in

more women, but did not bring in deputies from lower socio-professional backgrounds. Most of the women En Marche chose had significant financial resources and were not that tied into careers.

Hence the 2017 elections provided a particularly interesting picture of how financial sanction might have impacted recruitment procedures in major political parties. Despite an increase in the amount of the sanctions, business as usual seemed to prevail on the right wing of the political spectrum, with more women candidates who were mostly fielded in non-winnable seats. This ensured the dominance of men in the party and the rewarding of incumbents—a strategy that did not mean success for LR, which had a very low number of MPs. En Marche claimed a new way of doing politics, and its commitment to parity was part of this advertising package. Ripping the benefits of its presidential campaign that was focused on dismantling old politics as usual, Macron used parity to convey a powerful message about political renewal. It thus endorsed parity not only rhetorically but also in practice, in the unique context of an opening of the political space, in which it sensed that renewal might bring more political gains than incumbency. In the final analysis, more parity has not brought more democratic procedures inside parties, as the nomination process remains opaque and centralized, and has not resulted in more diverse social profiles among MPs.

Paying for Campaign Expenditures in Yonne and Paris: Hidden Gender and Social Inequalities

Beyond the politics of selectorates and gatekeepers at the national level, it is important to look at the local level to examine how selection processes operate, and what role money plays at the level of individual candidacies. A local approach to these selection processes affords a better understanding of how different types of political resources combine in political contests and which of these may prove most effective for establishing oneself in a competitive space.

We chose three contrasting constituencies for our study: the 3rd constituency in the Yonne department, and the 14th and 17th constituencies in Paris. The first two are held by the right, and the third by the left. The Parisian constituencies are also socially quite diverse: one is located in wealthy districts of the city, while the other is situated in a former working-class area that is currently undergoing gentrification. In contrast to these two urban districts, the 3rd constituency in Yonne is located in a quite rural area: the largest town in the constituency, Sens, has a population of 25,000.

The Parisian political space is particularly competitive. Given its geographic proximity to the party leadership, it represents a political space where party rationales and the influence of national decisions have the strongest sway. Our two Parisian districts are also respectively strongholds of the left and the right, and are in the hands of political barons (Claude Goasguen for LR and Daniel Vaillant for the PS). This means that the candidate selected by the party or political

family holding the constituency has every chance of being elected. Conversely, the Yonne constituency is much more politically unstable. While it was long held by the political right, it may now well move to the far right, given the electoral score of the National Front in the last (Presidential) elections. In the second round of the 2017 French presidential election, Marine Le Pen obtained 48.5% of the votes there.

We conducted interviews with aspiring candidates, candidates, and elected officials in all three constituencies. Those interviews helped us to better understand the role money plays in the candidate selection process and during the course of the campaign.

As was already mentioned, the system of public financing of elections, and in particular legislative elections, is intended to limit discrimination on the basis of social class in particular. For the 2017 elections,[20] a maximum budget was set for elections in each district.[21] The amount of campaign expenses reimbursed for each candidate who received 5% or more of the vote was calculated from this set maximum amount. In the 2012 elections, we know that 95% of candidates were reimbursed for campaign costs that came from their own funds.[22] In 2017, around 94% of candidates who were eligible for reimbursement got reimbursed.[23] Although there is no data broken down by sex, our district-level fieldwork shows that despite the principle of equality embedded in the policy instruments, in reality men and women do not equally benefit from this subsidy.

Indeed, more than ever, the national logics of the political game influence the recruitment of politicians and the local agendas at the grassroots level (Gaxie and Lehingue, 1984). The official appointment of candidates still hangs on the results of the presidential election and the alliances that can be forged before or after the vote. Except for the En Marche movement, beyond legal dispositions, rules specific to each party, and ways of respecting national political balances, local-level analysis of candidatures shows that the most decisive political resources remain the local base and activist capital. At the constituency level, the elected officials currently in place have the strongest hold and limit any renewal of politicians, even when this renewal is being actively showcased, as with En Marche.

Differential Funding of Campaigns

In general, candidates who spend the highest amount of money are not necessarily those who will win the election. However, one can see that there are major differences between female and male candidates in our three districts, as Table 2.4 shows. No matter which position, revenues or expenditures, or origin of the financial support (coming from the political party, personal contributions, or donations), one can see that women always spend less money for their campaigns than men do. On average, they have fewer revenues than men and at the same they use more of their own money in their campaigns than men do.

While women generally count a higher amount of their personal contributions than men, they also profit proportionally slightly more than men do from financial support through their political party. Yet, this support remains quite small in the overall funding. It is basically donations that produce the difference, since male candidates receive a little more from donations than female candidates do. This repartition leads us to suggest that women obtain less support from potential donors when they engage in political campaigns, or they focus less on raising private funding. Hence, women take greater risks than men with regard to their personal savings. While money does not seem to play a determining role for the electoral victory or loss of female and male candidates, the figures above show that they are not equal with regard to the source of their campaign funds.

Reflecting this dynamic, an aspiring candidate for En Marche in the 16th district of Paris said she discovered the financial implications at a workshop to encourage women to run for the legislative elections. When she learned that she would have to use her own personal money to be reimbursed after the campaign if she collected 5% of the votes (a score she would have been guaranteed to obtain if running for En Marche), she was quite shocked, as were others in the room:

> Old timers said you need 70,000 euros to campaign, other said you need 10,000 or 15,000, and then people in the audience remarked, who can leave her job for such a long time, and has this type of personal money?
>
> *(interview, female candidate LREM, Paris, November 21, 2017)*

The En Marche Google form for aspiring candidates did ask them if they could spend four-fifths of their working time to campaign, which constitutes an important financial loss. While this aspiring candidate said that she trusted the party cadres assuring her that they would find "solutions" if she did not have personal money or could not obtain a loan from a bank, the amount of money and the loss of income certainly made her pause.

In the 18th district of Paris, a candidate of En Marche laid out in detail the different funding modalities of her political campaign:

> I told the selector that I would get a loan, but in fact I did not do it, I could not do it, since I already had a mortgage for my apartment, so I requested an advance of 26,000 Euros, guaranteed by at the Crédit Coopératif on boulevard Magenta, which is the political party bank.
>
> *(interview, female candidate LREM, Paris, June 23, 2017)*

Q: You were sure to make the 5%?

A: Ah yes, I even asked myself this question! Ok, so when you wait for the approval from campaign fund [there was some stress shown] we are going to lose 2000/2500 Euros[24] because there are things we just don't know how to do. For example, if you take cab from here to do a TV commercial

> on the other side of Paris, the taxi is not covered until you leave the 18th arrondissement! I broke my phone and had to buy another—for the price of 2000 Euros, all coming out of my own pocket. The reimbursement rules are so picky and detailed you cannot imagine. Meals in some situations are 17 Euros per person, in others they are 33 Euros . . . we just don't know how to do it! My campaign treasurer is a friend [member of the En Marche's executive committee], Stéphane is a climate specialist, with an overloaded schedule and three kids and still was able to manage. . . . I was on the job market, with some unemployment benefits, in any case it had been months that I had been eating pasta, so in my head it was settled. I had a small amount of savings but not anymore. . . . On a personal level, it was also a form of personal investment and professional transition.
>
> *(interview, female candidate, LREM, November 21, 2017).*

Beyond Money: Party Resources and the Civil Society Label

In the three constituencies under study, the incumbent deputies still have an advantage when it comes to standing for re-election (Guédé and Rozenblum, 1981). If En Marche has stated it will limit the number of incumbent deputies it fields, this has been part of a deliberate strategy of setting itself apart from the norm and seizing a specific political opportunity. Elsewhere, incumbent deputies who request to stand again can do so and remain unchallenged. In the 3rd constituency in the Yonne department, the incumbent, Marie-Louise Fort (LR), was therefore selected in June 2016 as her party's candidate for the legislative elections. Having enjoyed a long local political career, her legitimacy was not challenged until she herself decided to give up her place to an "inheritor." In the 14th constituency in Paris, despite rumors he would fall back on his role as mayor of the 16th arrondissement, Claude Goasguen, now aged 72, ultimately decided to stand in a contest in which the political right was sure to win (in 2012, he was elected in the first round with more than 58% of votes, leaving the PS candidate trailing behind at 16%).

It is only in the case of "passing it down" that political competition in the district becomes stronger. In the 17th constituency in Paris, the decision by the incumbent, the 68-year-old Daniel Vaillant,[25] to first step down (having been promised a Senate post by "his party") and then to come back, opened up the struggle to inherit his nomination. In a safe left-wing constituency (he was elected with over 72% of the vote in the second round of the 2012 legislative elections), the selection of a new candidate saw many twists and turns (see Table 2.5).

The struggles over nominations and elections during the 2017 legislative campaigns reveal the curious encounter of traditional logics and mechanisms which are typical of the French political system. Those traditional logics comprise a bonus for incumbents and for locally well-implanted right-wing politicians, the traditional representatives of the bourgeoisie such as doctors, lawyers, etc. as well

TABLE 2.5 Electoral Results in % in the Three Districts Under Study

Legal District	*Incumbent*	*Candidate LR*	*Candidate LREM*	*Candidate FN*	*Candidate PS*	*Candidate FI*	*Candidate Other*	*Declared Elected*
14th District Paris	Claude Goasguen	Claude Goasguen	Valérie Bougault-Delage	Armelle Goasguen	Pierre-Alain Weill	Alexandra Mouton	Ghislain Lafont (divD)	
~~55.6~~ ~~51.49~~		~~38~~ 52.43	~~44.2~~ 47.57	3.36	2.51	2.34	3.32	Claude Goasguen
17th District Paris	Daniel Vaillant (PS)	Babette de Rozière	Béatrice Faillès	Vanessa Lancelot	Colombe Brossel	Danièle Obono	Daniel Vaillant (divG)	
~~46.15~~ ~~41.0~~		~~6.5~~	~~31~~ 49.29	~~4.5~~	~~9~~	~~17~~ ~~50.7~~	~~6.6~~	Danièle Obono
Yonne	Marie-Louise Fort (LR)	Clarisse Quentin	Michèle Crouzet	Julien Odoul	Dominique Bourreau	Isabelle Michaud	Delphine Gremy (divD)	
~~3~~ ~~45.4~~		~~15.4~~	28.65 ~~55.6~~	~~25.6~~ ~~45.4~~	5.25	~~10.3~~	~~6.3~~	Michèle Crouzet

as the importance of party members' resources in their own parties and their local networks (especially for left-wing politicians), and the renewal supported by the En Marche movement. In the end, the selected candidates and the non-selected candidates (those that did not get nominated by their parties) that we interviewed rarely mentioned financial issues or parity financials sanctions when detailing how they made their decisions to run and why their party decided to nominate them or not. For incumbents, the issue was rather which mandate to pursue and which political office to give up, given the new law that limits the numbers of mandates one can hold simultaneously. Furthermore, something all candidates had in mind—and what ultimately shaped their decision to run or not—was, first and foremost, the exceptional political conjuncture of the 2017 elections with the projected landslide victory of Emmanuel Macron and its newly formed political party.

To summarize, our micro-social analysis across the three districts has shown that, while the financial penalties of parity policies bear important consequences for the financial future of political organizations by enabling or constraining their future investments and their financial resources, those penalties have less of an impact on the selection and auto-selection of politicians than the national party strategy or than other legal mechanisms such as the restriction of dual mandates. Moreover, the formal systems of recruitment in place in political parties prove powerless when it comes to regulating the inner political power struggles influencing candidate selection in a context of strong uncertainty. The empirical fieldwork also documents how, despite formal rules about campaign financing that should benefit female candidates and limit their potential exclusions, male and female candidates are still not equal when it comes to deciding whether or not to run for elections. The analysis showcases how direct instructions from parties interweave with local power relations; and gendered relations in the constituency show that different types of capital are decisive for winning nominations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we argue that the specific context of the 2017 French presidential and legislative elections—due to its uncertainty and the radical changes affecting the party system—was likely to prove conducive to the selection of political outsiders and consequently, to more women entering parliament. Rather than fear of financial penalties, the determining factor was in fact "displaying parity" as an argument for political renewal. However, practices vary significantly across parties. Moreover, the use of parity in order to better represent political renewal gave, paradoxically, more weight to the established male leadership in both local and central candidate selection processes. This default to the existing gendered processes in a critical context testifies to the fact it is difficult for formal rules, including ones with financial implication, to modify deeply rooted patterns of political behavior and institutional (intra-party) practices.

Ultimately, the process of selecting and nominating candidates—over which political parties currently have the monopoly—is a complex phenomenon, involving legal norms, rationales, and organizational mechanisms that can only be understood in the framework of a multi-level analysis. It is important to take into account the political context, the legal rationales (the formal rules of the political game), the weight of party discourses and ideologies, the interaction between the local and the national, as well as the candidates' trajectories and own political and economic resources.

Hence, we can infer that the main reason why the share of women deputies increased dramatically in 2017 is not the increase in financial sanctions. While money talks for French legislative elections, it does not initiate the conversation. Rather, the newly adopted law that limits the number of offices one representative can hold created much more pressure to bring newcomers into the electoral arena of the National Assembly. What is more, the landslide victory of Emmanuel Macron's newly founded party, En Marche, also accounts for the large share of newly elected female deputies. As it presented itself as a newcomer breaking with old ways, En Marche used, once again, the rationale of women's presence as a sign of modernity, an argument that was also central in the 1990s in the push for the adoption of parity laws (Bereni and Lépinard, 2004).

It seems that women still represent an unending source of novelty and modernity in the political arena that outside players such as En Marche can use for their own political and electoral profit. Hence, in a very top-down and centralized fashion (quite at odds with its discourse of democratic renewal), En Marche favored newcomers to the political game, with a spectacular number of candidates with no previous political experiences and women (or both). The combination of these three factors (limit on number of positions held at the same time, outsider strategy of renewing the political personnel with civil society members, and women) led to En Marche presenting 50% female candidates, and getting an important number elected, with 47.5% female En Marche MPs, raising the overall assembly percentage of women to 39%. En Marche thus did translate rhetorical adhesion to parity into practice, in a specific political conjuncture favorable to such a bold move, bringing gender balance in the National Assembly 17 years after the parity laws and the financial sanctions were adopted. This commitment to elect women, rather than just field them as candidates or ignore them altogether, is certainly new in French politics. Whether this commitment to parity will encourage other parties in a spillover fashion that will profoundly reshape French politics remains to be seen.

The top-down strategy designed by Emmanuel Macron to frame his party as modern and outsider to the traditional political game did suppress some of the traditional resistances to women's nominations that can be observed in other political parties. Indeed, for once, the usual obstacles that women confront—political capital in parties, fewer district-level networks, less access to financial resources for campaigning—did not seem to be apparent. However, this strategy

still rested on a traditional vision of the female politicians, one that associates women with civil society and feminine difference and that favors middle- and upper-class women who display a significant amount of cultural capital and independent financial resources. In this context, gender may not be the same obstacle as it has been in the past, but class remains a significant barrier. Thus, while new recruitment logics have certainly emerged in the selection of parliamentarians, the mechanism of a relatively closed wealthy community in politics continues to exist.

Notes

1. Traditionally, measures in favor of equality between the sexes in politics tend to involve three types of mechanisms: incentives put in place internally by political parties, legal quotas or reserved seats, and, finally, actions aimed at favoring women's empowerment in civil society (Verge and De la Fuente, 2014).
2. Links between money and politics have often been studied from the point of view of morality and corrupt public life (Lascoumes and Le Haye, 2013; Mossuz-Lavau, 2010) or in terms of links between campaign funding and election results (Stratmann, 2005; Seabrook, 2010). In France, this research has focused on the effects of policy since 1988 that aims to "clean up" campaign financing by prohibiting company donations and allocating new resources to candidates as well as to party organization, electoral mobilization, and party system dynamics (Treille, 2002; Phélippeau, 2013).
3. The list of interviews conducted for this chapter is available on request. Systematic reviews of the regional press in the three constituencies were also carried out as a part of this local-level analysis.
4. Interestingly this argument did not hold in 2015; a new law applied parity to a similar election system at the level of the department and introduced gendered tandems in each constituency.
5. For more, see: www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2017/06/06/aux-elections-legislatives-les-femmes-heritent-generalement-des-circonscriptions-les-plus-ifficiles_5139407_4355770.html#IsvVStFoXpirIg0z.99
6. In the department level studies, we saw the distribution of candidates by sex. In the Yonne where the National Front receives a good portion of the votes, a young male top executive brought in from Paris was presented and won. In contrast, in Paris, where there is little support of the National Front, women candidates were presented.
7. www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2017/06/29/les-femmes-grandes-absentes-des-postes-importants-de-l-assemblee-nationale_5153073_4355770.html
8. http://lelab.europe1.fr/legislatives-au-moins-78-deputes-ps-ne-se-representent-pas-2967320
9. www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/elections/bartolone-cope-lellouche-mamere-ces-deputes-qui-passent-la-main_1902973.html
10. Marc Lafineur, a supporter of Alain Juppé, a member of the committee, and an elected official in the Maine et Loire *département* declared on June 22, 2016 to the newspaper *20 minutes*: "Arguments vary quite broadly for selecting one candidate over another: in one department, there is supposed to be two-thirds women among the candidates, but in another, that could no longer be the case." (www.20minutes.fr/politique/1870435-20160622-legislatives-2017-fin-investitures-sous-haute-tension-chez-republicains)
11. www.bfmtv.com/politique/en-marche-presente-sa-commission-d-investiture-en-vue-des-legislatives-1099331.html
12. However, according to an anonymous source, that list was never obtained and potential candidates did not know who was sitting on that commission either.

13. Her withdrawal was officially announced in January 2017 (https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/bourgogne-franche-comte/yonne/sens/yonne-marie-louise-fort-ne-sera-pas-nouveau-candidate-aux-legislatives-1184297.html)
14. www.francetvinfo.fr/politique/emmanuel-macron/legislatives-quels-sont-les-criteres-retenus-par-en-marche-pour-selectionner-ses-candidats_2181157.html
15. https://en-marche.fr/article/construire-majorite-de-projet
16. www.lesechos.fr/30/01/2017/lesechos.fr/0211749512401_macron-a-la-recherche-de-femmes-pour-les-legislatives.htm
17. This is also what happened at the local level in 2001 to implement parity: women were taken mostly outside of party ranks from civil society, which generated a number of issues (ability to make a political career, dependency on the mayor, etc.) (Lépinard, 2006). Thus the LREM recruitment strategy for the 2017 elections raises the same question: will the women without political party backing last?
18. www.lesechos.fr/30/01/2017/lesechos.fr/0211749512401_macron-a-la-recherche-de-femmes-pour-les-legislatives.htm
19. www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2017/05/24/qui-sont-les-7-882-candidats-aux-legislatives_5132898_4355770.html
20. Plafonds de dépenses LEG 2017 VDEF—France Diplomatie
21. This maximum is set from a cost base of 38,000 Euros to which is added 0,15 ct d'euros per resident in the district.
22. cnccfp_activite_2012_2013_synthese-1.pdf
23. Out of a total of 7877 candidates, 5612 were qualified for reimbursement. Of these 5612 cases, only 107 were rejected by the commission, 185 were not submitted by candidates themselves, and 59 files were submitted too late. (Simplified publication of the legislative elections accounts, 11th and 18th of June 2017: CNCCFP—Paris: *Journal officiel du 1er août*, 2018, p. 578).
24. The difference between the amount of money spent by this candidate and the reimbursement was actually 2922 euros.
25. https://www.marianne.net/politique/investitures-du-ps-daniel-vaillant-gagne-paris-alors-qu-il-n-avait-pas-le-droit-de-se.

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