The Alliance Vote: An Application of the Three-Cultures Hypothesis[1]

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The Alliance received 18 per cent of the vote in the 1993 general election and so long as it retains its present leader, few would predict a worse result at the next election. Under MMP, this would give it about 24 seats out of 120. The Alliance is easily the most successful of the red-green parties that have emerged as a response to growing environmental awareness and as a reaction against the flirtation of established Labour and Social Democratic parties with free-market policies.

This paper had two sources of inspiration. The first was a suspicion that the red-green appeal of the Alliance would give its vote a quite different configuration from that of Labour, the traditional party of the centre-left. The lens chosen for viewing these differences is the three-cultures hypothesis, fashioned for the purpose of differentiating the Labour and National votes, which divides New Zealand's parliamentary seats into the main urban centres, the provincial centres, and the rural or quasi-rural constituencies.

The second was a desire to capitalise on the fact that the red and green components of the Alliance, the NewLabour and Green parties respectively, stood separately in the 1990 election. This allows us to go beyond brute description to analysis. For example, rather than simply averaging the Alliance vote in urban and rural seats, we can determine whether the 1990 NewLabour vote or the 1990 Green vote

was the better predictor of the Alliance vote in urban and rural seats in 1993. It is a natural extension to ascertain whether NewLabour or Green was the better predictor in electorates classified by other criteria, that is, marginal versus non-marginal, and seats in which the Alliance faced strong competition from New Zealand First versus seats in which it did not.

These concerns impose a number of tasks: a statement of the three-cultures hypothesis; a description of the 1993 Alliance vote within that context; and an analysis of NewLabour and Green as predictors.

The Three-Cultures Hypothesis

Robert Chapman gave the three-cultures hypothesis definitive statement in his analysis of the 1960 general election, and it has been widely used since then. The core of the hypothesis concerns political culture: it assumes that urban and rural New Zealand have different psychologies, arising from life experiences which have engendered different attitudes to social and political questions.[2] The four main centres are grouped together at one pole as fully urban in culture, rural and small town seats at the other pole, and seats dominated by provincial centres and large towns in between. The Maori seats are set aside as a special case. Class creates divisions within these categories; for example, within the main centres, Labour dominates the poorer seats, National the less numerous blue ribbon seats, with mixed-class seats a battleground.[3] Nonetheless the general antipathy of the rural ethos for Labour is strong enough to generate a persistent pattern: Labour does far better in the main centres than in rural, quasi-

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[2]   Robert Chapman, 'The General Result', in R. M. Chapman, W. K. Jackson, and A. V. Mitchell, *New Zealand Politics in Action: The 1960 General Election* (London, 1962), pp. 235-6.

[3]   Chapman, 'The General Result', pp. 241-5; Robert Chapman, 'The Response to Labour and the Question of Parallelism of Opinion, 1928-1960', in Robert Chapman and Keith Sinclair (eds.), *Studies of a Small Democracy* (Auckland, 1963), pp. 224-32 and 247-50; Robert Chapman, *Marginals '72* (Auckland, 1972), pp. 12-13.

rural, and small town seats, with the provincial centre and large town seats in between. Therefore, the provincial centres plus the mixed-class city seats have proved decisive in determining the outcome of elections.

Chapman does not use the three cultures to generate a self-sufficient explanation of voting behaviour. Rather they function like a set of Cartesian co-ordinates against which more specific causal factors are plotted. His analysis of the 1981 general election notes that National's 'Think Big' growth strategy projects were located so as to promise benefits for fully seven of 21 provincial centres. He uses the three cultures as the key to understanding the impact of the 1981 Springbok Tour. In rural areas, strong identification with rugby helped National resist the Social Credit challenge, abetted by an easing of credit. In the provincial centres, identification almost as potent helped National hold crucial marginal seats. In the main centres, thanks to anti-tour sentiment, there was no such impediment to Labour's capture of mixed-class marginals. In sum, the three-cultures hypothesis, fleshed out with specific factors, explained a most atypical result: rather than a uniform swing, the swing to Labour was mainly urban and the political cleavage between city and all else was unusually deep.[4]

Other political analysts vary in their use of the three-cultures hypothesis. Bean stresses its importance and shows that comparing main centres with everything else favours Labour in New Zealand even more than it does in Australia.[5] Johnston uses the main centres, provincial centres, and rural seats to structure his study of the interaction between marginality and government investment from 1957 to 1972.[6] He emphasises the class dimension of the urban versus

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[4]   Robert Chapman, 'New Zealand Defers Decision', *Comment*, New Series No. 16 (1982), pp. 11-19.

[5]   C. S. Bean, 'Regional Variations in Political Party Support in Australia and New Zealand', *The Australian Journal of Politics and History,* Vol. 37 (1991), pp. 422-4.

[6]   R. J. Johnston, 'The Electoral Base to Public Policy: Some Introductory Explorations', in R. J. Johnston (ed.), *People, Places, and Votes* (Armidale, NSW, Australia, 1977), pp. 137-48.

rural cleavage and this becomes more and more prominent in his analyses of recent elections.[7] Vowles and Aimer note how the Labour association with workers, and the National association with employers and farmers, differentiate electorates within the urban and rural categories. Likewise, Levine and Roberts' aggregate analyses of the 1990 and 1993 elections distinguish between the main centres, provincial cities, mixed seats, and rural seats in accounting for variations in support for the political parties contesting the election.[8] Jackson argues that the rural-small town ethos fosters pragmatism throughout New Zealand society, even in larger urban centres.[9] Levine and Robinson list the urban versus rural factor as only one among 10 that influence voting behaviour.[10] Robinson also criticises what he calls Chapman's 'economic determinism', arguing that it obscures family and peer group influences.[11] The three-cultures hypothesis has had some influence, not very great, on political journalists.[12]

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[7] R. J. Johnston, 'The 1987 New Zealand General Election: Changing Policies = Changing Geographies?', *British Review of New Zealand Studies,* No. 1 (1988), pp. 33-40; R. J. Johnston and R. Honey, 'The 1987 General Election in New Zealand: The Demise of Electoral Cleavages?', *Political Geography Quarterly,* Vol. 7 (1988), pp. 364-7; R. J. Johnston, 'Electoral Geography', in Martin Holland (ed.), *Electoral Behaviour in New Zealand* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 28-35.

[8] Jack Vowles and Peter Aimer, *Voters' Vengeance* (Auckland, 1993), pp. 29-32; Stephen Levine and Nigel S. Roberts, 'The New Zealand General Election of 1990', *Political Science*, Vol. 43 (1991), p. 11; and Stephen Levine and Nigel S. Roberts, 'The New Zealand General Election and Electoral Referendum of 1993', *Political Science*, Vol. 46 (1994), p. 56.

[9] Keith Jackson, *New Zealand: Politics of Change* (Wellington, 1973), p. 15.

[10] Stephen Levine and Alan Robinson, *The New Zealand Voter* (Wellington, 1976), pp. 131-41.

[11] A. D. Robinson, 'Why Did Labour Lose?', *Political Science,* Vol. 15 (1963), pp. 48-54.

[12] Ian Templeton and Keith Eunson, *Election '69* (Wellington, 1969), pp. 105-6 and 144-5; Tony Simpson, 'Huey Long's Other Island: Style in New Zealand Politics' in Stephen Levine (ed.), *New Zealand Politics: A Reader* (Melbourne, 1975), p. 157.

Whatever their differences,[13] all analysts recognise certain basic categories that differentiate the Labour versus National vote: Labour performs best in the main centres, much worse in rural areas and small towns, with the provincial centres in between; recently Labour has done worse in Auckland than in the other main centres, thanks to the large number of mixed-class or affluent electorates that have emerged in Auckland's suburbs; Labour does worse in the North Island than in the South Island.[14] National is of course the mirror-image of Labour. These categories furnish us with a useful criterion. If the Alliance vote follows the Labour pattern, or the National pattern, the three-cultures hypothesis may transcend its origins and apply with equal force to it. If not, there is a *prima facie* case for an alternative or at least for deeper analysis. Following other scholars, I have adopted a generous rural category, one inclusive of electorates dominated by small towns and electorates with considerable urban spill-over.

The Labour Versus National Categories

Table 1 shows that the Alliance vote does not follow the *Labour* pattern. The rural areas are not a source of weakness but rather are average performers. The main centres are barely more favourable than the rural areas, unless Sydenham is included, and even then they show an advantage of only 1.54 per cent. The provincial centres do not fall

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13   Analysts differ when classifying the South Island city of Dunedin, some regarding it still as one of the four main centres (with Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch) with others relegating it to the status of a provincial centre. As the North Island city of Hamilton now has more residents than Dunedin, there would appear to be several possibilities: to take the historical view, which would leave Dunedin apart from the provincial centres, or to reason from size, which would link Dunedin and Hamilton either as main or provincial centres.

14   Bean, 'Regional Variation in Political Party Support', pp. 418-23 and 429-33 (Tables 1, 3, and 4); Chapman, 'The Response to Labour and the Question of Parallelism', p. 243; Johnston, 'Electoral Geography', p. 35; Alan D. Robinson, 'Class Voting in New Zealand: A Comment on Alford's Comparison of Class Voting in the Anglo-American Political Systems', in Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (New York, 1967), pp. 98-9.

Table 1: The Alliance Vote
Do the National Vs Labour Categories Work?[a]

Main Centres	%	Provincial Centres	%
Dunedin (3)	22.11	Bay of Plenty (3)	18.35
Auckland-Urban (14)	20.65	West North Island (4)	16.58
Auckland-Suburban (12)	20.00	South Island (3)	14.55
Christchurch (7)	16.43	East North Island (3)	13.82
Wellington-Hutt (9)	13.75	Waikato & North (3)	12.79
Ave. Main Centres (45)	18.54	Ave. Prov. Centres (16)	15.30
Ave. Elsewhere (49)	17.02	Ave. Elsewhere (78)	18.25
Difference	+1.52	Difference	-2.95

Rural Areas	%	Other Comparisons	%
Bay of Plenty (4)	22.74	Main Centres (45)	18.54
Waikato & North (7)	19.67	Rural Areas (33)	17.85
East North Island (4)	17.64	Difference	+0.69[b]
West North Island (7)	17.58		
Otago-Southland (4)	16.00	Auckland (26)	20.35
Canterbury (4)	15.16	Other Main Centres (19)	16.06
Sounds-West Coast (3)	14.16	Difference	+4.29[c]
Ave. Rural Areas (33)	17.85	North Island (70)	18.23
Ave. Elsewhere (61)	17.69	South Island (24)	16.34
Difference	+0.16	Difference	+1.89[d]
		Ave. for all 94 seats	17.75

[a] Alliance percentages have been calculated out of the total vote including informals. The Maori seats and Sydenham have been excluded. The bracketed numbers next to each regional category provide the number of electorates.

[b] If Sydenham is included, the difference rises to +1.54.

[c] If Sydenham is included, the difference falls to +2.22.

[d] If Sydenham is included, the difference falls to +0.24.

in between but are a modest source of weakness, with the Alliance vote almost 3 per cent below its average elsewhere. If anything there is a shadow of the *National* pattern, with Auckland being 4 per cent more favourable than the other main centres and the North Island almost 2 per cent more favourable than the South Island. However, these differences are small, and including Sydenham halves the Auckland advantage and eliminates the North Island advantage. In 1990, the third parties collectively had an almost identical vote in Labour and National seats.[15] These were primarily the parties the Alliance attempted to merge—NewLabour, Green, Democrats, and Mana Motuhake—and the fact that the Alliance vote bridges the Labour versus National cleavage suggests the merger was successful. The uniformity of the Alliance vote also distinguishes it from other third parties, such as Social Credit with its strong regional base, or left splinter parties which if anything exaggerate the Labour pattern.[16]

Whether to exclude Sydenham (which is held by Alliance Leader and former Labour Party President Jim Anderton) from comparisons poses a difficult problem. Undoubtedly, some of Anderton's enormous personal following has no particular locus, that is, it would have emerged as easily in Wellington as Christchurch. Therefore, excluding Sydenham gives a truer comparison between Christchurch and elsewhere. I suspect it makes sense to exclude it from other comparisons as well, but the notes to Table 1 and other Tables offer the reader a choice. The exclusion of the four Maori seats, in addition to Sydenham, puts the number of electorates included at 94 rather than 99.

Table 1 allows some differences within its main categories to be noted. The Alliance vote was far higher in Dunedin and Auckland than in Wellington-Hutt, with Christchurch in between. As we would by now anticipate, the Labour core of Auckland (12 seats out of 14) was no more favourable for the Alliance than the National surround

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15   Johnston, 'Electoral Geography', p. 43.
16   Chapman, 'The Response to Labour and the Question of Parallelism', pp. 234-5 and 238-41.

(11 seats out of 12). Although the provincial centres were collectively an area of weakness for the Alliance, Rotorua, the Manawatu, and Nelson were exceptions. The rural seats collectively were average performers for the Alliance, although the Waikato and points north, the Bay of Plenty and the Coromandel were areas of strength, while the South Island rural seats were weak (with the exception of Rangiora).

Marginality and New Zealand First

Like all third parties under first-past-the-post, the Alliance suffered in marginal seats and since these were distributed unevenly between geographic categories, they could distort comparisons. In 1993, New Zealand First competed with the Alliance for disillusioned voters and since its vote was highly localised, it too could distort comparisons. Therefore, I will suggest criteria and methods designed to measure these factors and allow us to compensate for their effects.

Criteria of Marginality

The literature reveals three criteria of marginality, each adapted to a different purpose, and I will propose a fourth designed for the purpose of this analysis. First there is the *explanatory criterion* of a scholar who wishes to identify seats which have a characteristic of marginality that persists over time. In 1962, Chapman isolated 10 provincial centre and 11 city seats which, over a period of decades, rarely gave the winning candidate more than 58 per cent of the two-party vote once third party challenges were taken into account. As he says, 'once a marginal, always a marginal', and by focusing on such seats we can discover the psycho-social factors that differentiate the Labour and National vote.[17]

Second, there is *swing,* which helps the public use opinion polls to predict the result of an election. For elections from 1975 to the present, pre-election pendulums have shown which seats would shift given a

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17   Chapman, 'The General Result', pp. 238-50 (Tables IV and VI); Chapman, *Marginals '72,* pp. 4-7.

uniform swing from National to Labour or the reverse. The swing needed is half the margin of victory (on a two-party basis) in the last election, that is, a seat held by 10 per cent changes hands with a swing of 5 per cent from one party to the other. Seats are classed as marginal if they are vulnerable to swings of 5 per cent or less, fairly safe if vulnerable to swings between 5 and 10 per cent, and safe if they would require a swing in excess of 10 per cent. These values are justified by results from 18 elections over 60 years: only three saw swings over 5 per cent and the largest swing was just under 10 per cent.[18]

Third, there is the *strategic criterion* of a party targeting seats it can realistically expect to win during a particular campaign. For example, Mitchell tells us that in 1960, National classified as marginal those electorates with a Labour majority of 2,000 votes or less, as well as those with a National majority of 1,000 votes or less.[19]

I rejected all of these in favour of a fourth criterion I will call a *psychological criterion.* Its purpose is to diagnose a certain state of mind, that is, isolate electorates whose voters are most likely to feel uncertain about who will win the seat. In 1993, those electorates would have been most affected by the 'wasted-vote' psychology: a reluctance to vote Alliance because someone believes his or her vote just might count in a close contest between Labour and National. To diagnose that state of mind, I made two assumptions: that voters would be aware of a shift back to Labour since the 1990 election; and that they would remember the recent history of their seat, at least its fate at the last election. That is, voters would remember if Labour had lost the

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[18]   See, for example, Nigel S. Roberts, 'The New Zealand General Election of 1972', in Stephen Levine (ed.), *New Zealand Politics: A Reader* (Melbourne, 1975), pp. 110-13; Malcolm Mackerras and Nigel S. Roberts, 'The Utility of Swing in the Analysis of General Elections in New Zealand', *Landfall*, Vol. 29 (1975), p. 66; Alan McRobie and Nigel S. Roberts, *Election '78* (Dunedin, 1978), pp. 56-9 and 152-4; and Colin James and Alan McRobie, *Turning Point: The 1993 Election and Beyond* (Wellington, 1993), p. 235.

[19]   Austin Mitchell, 'Party Organization and the Election', in R. M. Chapman, W. K. Jackson, and A. V. Mitchell, *New Zealand Politics in Action* (London, 1962), p. 87.

seat in 1990, recall that that had been a bad year for Labour, and conclude that it might be recaptured in a year showing a trend back to Labour. Also assumed was that they would remember if Labour had just scraped home in the seat in 1990, and wonder if it was not at risk despite the trend.

The seats Labour lost in 1990 went National by a majority of less than 11 per cent. As for the seats Labour barely held in 1990, I defined these as having a Labour majority of less than 2 per cent. This suggested putting my base point at the 1990 Labour vote plus 4.5 per cent and using a swing of 6.5 per cent around that base. Finally, I classified Wellington-Karori as marginal despite a Labour majority of 3 per cent. It not only had substantial boundary changes but also acquired a new name, one unfamiliar to the voters it inherited from the old seats of Wellington Central and Ohariu.[20] These seemed good reasons to assume voter uncertainty about its fate. In sum, the wasted-vote psychology criterion isolated 22 seats.[21]

New Zealand First and Method

As we have seen, the Alliance vote shows a certain pattern: relative uniformity between main centres and rural areas, but significant differences within those categories, for example, Auckland far stronger than Wellington-Hutt, Bay of Plenty rurals far stronger than South Island rurals. What would the Alliance pattern have looked like if New Zealand First had not contested the 1993 election? The question may not be academic in that New Zealand First has been on the wane in opinion polls since the 1993 election. No methodology can simulate a party's non-existence but we must come as close to that ideal as we can. Any method must compare the average Alliance vote in seats with a strong New Zealand First challenge against the average in

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[20]   James and McRobie, *Turning Point,* p. 283.

[21]   These seats are labelled marginal in an Appendix (which gives the data needed to calculate the values used in the Tables) available from the author, from whom further information about methodology, as well as the relationship between different predictors of variance and the Alliance vote, can also be obtained.

seats without. That said, we confront several methodological choices, the first, between comparing nationwide or within areas. This choice is dictated by the highly localised character of the New Zealand First vote, which was concentrated in four regions: north of Auckland, Auckland itself, the Waikato, and the Bay of Plenty. Three of those four regions are also bastions of Alliance support. To compare nationwide would be to use strong Alliance areas to measure the negative effect on the Alliance vote of a strong New Zealand First challenge. Clearly this would underestimate that effect.

Second, when comparing within areas, how should the New Zealand First vote be dichotomised? Analysis shows that comparing electorates with a New Zealand First candidate against electorates with no candidate gives a weak contrast. For example, within Auckland, electorates with no New Zealand First candidate are randomly distributed when seats are ranked from highest Alliance vote to lowest. The real contrast emerges when comparing Alliance candidates with a strong New Zealand First opponent, one who received 10 per cent of the vote or more, against Alliance candidates with a weak opponent or none.

Third, when you find Alliance vote differentials between strong and weak New Zealand First seats, area by area, how do you deal with between-area discrepancies? For example, within urban Auckland, the Alliance vote was 6.37 per cent lower in strong New Zealand First seats than the average in the remainder; within suburban Auckland, the differential was only 1.21 per cent. It might seem appropriate to adjust each seat within an area by using that area's peculiar differential. That is, within urban Auckland, 6.37 per cent would be added to the Alliance vote in each strong New Zealand First seat; within suburban Auckland, 1.21 per cent would be added. However, following this procedure gives an adjusted Alliance vote for each area mathematically equivalent to simply using the average for all seats with a weak New Zealand First candidate or none! It amounts to simply discarding all strong New Zealand First seats. Whatever the merits of this method in the abstract, it makes

comparisons between categories impossible. For example, New Zealand First scored above 10 per cent in every seat North of Auckland and virtually every seat in Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. Discarding strong New Zealand First seats would depopulate these categories and they would be lost to comparative analysis.

Therefore, I took the within-area differentials, averaged them to get an overall value, and added that value to the Alliance vote in strong New Zealand First seats within each and every area. The mechanics of the method will become plain with Table 2. Does it allow us to compare the Alliance vote between areas as it would have been without New Zealand First? The only comparisons between categories that pose a problem are those involving Auckland urban or Auckland suburban or both. The method assumes that the impact of strong New Zealand First candidates was similar in all areas, and consequently that the discrepancy between the Auckland urban differential of 6.37 per cent and the average overall value (and likewise the discrepancy between the Auckland suburban differential of 1.21 per cent and the overall value) reflect a real difference in Alliance support. Or to be more specific, it is assumed that New Zealand First happened to mount a strong campaign in electorates that varied from area to area in terms of underlying Alliance support, so that between-area differences persisted even *after* New Zealand First had its impact. Such an assumption is, strictly speaking, contradictory to the overall method, whose thrust is to use rather than ignore differences. Our only solace is that no method of allowing for confounding variables in social science fails to generate such contradictions, although we have become adept at concealing them behind mathematical facades. Here, in my opinion, the choice is between measuring the impact of New Zealand First by the method adopted, or not doing so at all.

I also used the various within-area differentials to get an overall value for the effect of marginality on Alliance candidates. This time the method is on safer ground. Marginal seats are overrepresented in weak Alliance areas. Therefore, averaging the Alliance vote in marginals versus non-marginals without regard to area would

overestimate marginality's negative impact. Once again, averaging within each area produces discrepancies between areas; for example, Auckland urban shows only a 0.42 per cent deficit for marginals while every other area shows about 4 per cent. However, the assumption that the wasted-vote psychology had a roughly similar impact everywhere is plausible. No area had any marginal seats in which the Alliance candidate could have been perceived as a possible winner: which means that no area had an inoculation against the wasted-vote psychology. Consequently the discrepancy between Auckland urban and other areas, insofar as its deficit diverges from the overall value, is assumed to reflect a real difference in Alliance support. The marginals in Auckland urban just happened to be unusually good Alliance seats.

Table 2: Effect on Alliance Vote of Either Marginality or a Strong New Zealand First Opponent (10% or more)

| | N Z First | | |
	10%+	Nil & 0-10%	Difference
Auckland - Urban	16.10 (4)	22.47 (10)	-6.37
Auckland - Suburban	19.40 (6)	20.61 (6)	-1.21
Provincial Centres	12.12 (5)	16.75 (11)	-4.63
Rural: North Is, South of Waipa-Matamata-Kaimai	15.20 (4)	18.28 (9)	-3.08 -3.82 Ave

| | Marginality | | |
	M	Non-M	Difference
Auckland - Urban	20.35 (4)	20.77 (10)	-0.42
Provincial Centres	12.59 (7)	17.42 (9)	-4.83
Wellington/Christchurch	12.78 (7)	16.59 (9)	-3.81
Rural: East NI, West NI, and Sounds-West Coast	13.07 (3)	17.90 (11)	-4.83 -3.47 Ave

Table 2 gives 3.82 per cent as the deficit Alliance candidates suffered from a strong New Zealand First opponent, and 3.47 per cent as the deficit Alliance candidates suffered from marginality. We can now return to our Labour versus National categories and assess whether these factors caused the Alliance vote to deviate from the Labour pattern. If so, the uniqueness of the Alliance pattern would be suspect: it would not reflect the Alliance's true underlying support, but rather support distorted by factors peculiar to a third party competing with another third party under first-past-the-post.

The Labour versus National Categories Revisited

Table 3 compensates every category by adding 3.47 per cent to the Alliance vote in each of its marginal seats. Comparing Table 3 and Table 1, it is apparent that marginality played no significant role in causing the Alliance vote to deviate from the Labour pattern. The Alliance advantage in the main centres over rural areas has risen from 0.69 per cent to 1.29 per cent, or from 1.54 per cent to 2.12 per cent with Sydenham included. However, this is trifling compared to the Labour pattern. The deficit of the provincial centres has actually fallen from almost 3 per cent to about 2 per cent. Resembling National more than Labour, the Alliance has an advantage in Auckland over other main centres which remains at almost 4 per cent, and an advantage in the North Island over the South Island which remains at about 2 per cent. Once again, these deviations towards the National pattern are small and including Sydenham reduces them by more than half.

Concerning differences within the primary categories, after compensating for marginals, the pecking order of the main centres is unaltered, but Auckland urban has become a better second to Dunedin, and Wellington-Hutt a more respectable tailender. Bay of Plenty and the South Island have lost ground on the other provincial centres, and collectively the provincial centres now show surprising little variation by area. The rural areas are little changed with all the South Island still below all the North Island.

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Table 3: The Alliance Vote After Compensation for Marginal Seats

Main Centres	%	Provincial Centres	%
Dunedin (3)	22.11	Bay of Plenty (3)	18.35
Auckland-Urban (14)	21.64	West North Island (4)	18.31
Auckland-Suburban (12)	20.29	East North Island (3)	16.14
Christchurch (7)	17.42	South Island (3)	15.71
Wellington-Hutt (9)	15.68	Waikato & North (3)	15.10
Ave. Main Centres (45)	19.46	Ave. Prov. Centres (16)	16.82
Ave. Elsewhere (49)	17.73	Ave. Elsewhere (78)	18.92
Difference	+1.73	Difference	-2.10

Rural Areas	%	Other Comparisons	%
Bay of Plenty (4)	22.74	Main Centres (45)	19.46
Waikato & North (7)	19.67	Rural Areas (33)	18.17
West North Island (7)	18.57	Difference	+1.29[a]
East North Island (7)	17.64		
Otago-Southland (4)	16.00	Auckland (26)	21.02
Sounds-West Coast (3)	15.32	Other Main Centres (19)	17.33
Canterbury (4)	15.16	Difference	+3.69[b]
Ave. Rural Areas (33)	18.17	North Island (70)	19.13
Ave Elsewhere (61)	18.77	South Island (24)	16.92
Difference	-0.60	Difference	+2.21[c]
		Ave. for all 94 seats	18.56

a   If Sydenham is included, the difference rises to +2.12.
b   If Sydenham is included, the difference falls to +1.68.
c   If Sydenham is included, the difference falls to +0.59.

Table 4: The Alliance Vote After Compensation for Both Marginal Seats and Strong New Zealand First Opponents (10% or more)

Main Centres	%	Provincial Centres	%
Auckland-Urban (14)	22.73	Bay of Plenty (3)	20.90
Auckland-Suburban (12)	22.20	West North Island (4)	19.27
Dunedin (3)	22.11	Waikato & North (3)	17.65
Christchurch (7)	17.42	East North Island (3)	16.14
Wellington-Hutt (9)	15.68	South Island (3)	15.71
Ave. Main Centres (45)	20.31	Ave. Prov. Centres (16)	18.02
Ave. Elsewhere (49)	19.05	Ave. Elsewhere (78)	19.99
Difference	+1.26	Difference	-1.97

Rural Areas	%	Other Comparisons	%
Bay of Plenty (4)	25.60	Main Centres (45)	20.31
Waikato & North (7)	23.49	Rural Areas (33)	19.56
West North Island (7)	19.66	Difference	+0.75[a]
East North Island (4)	17.64		
Otago-Southland (4)	16.00	Auckland (26)	24.49
Sounds-West Coast (3)	15.32	Other Main Centres (19)	17.33
Canterbury (4)	15.16	Difference	5.16[b]
Ave. Rural Areas (33)	19.56	North Island (70)	20.60
Ave. Elsewhere (61)	19.71	South Island (24)	16.92
Difference	-0.15	Difference	+3.68[c]
		Ave. for all 94 seats:	19.66

[a]   If Sydenham is included, the difference rises to +1.56.
[b]   If Sydenham is included, the difference falls to +3.15.
[c]   If Sydenham is included, the difference falls to +2.06.

Table 4 compensates every category by adding not only 3.47 per cent to the Alliance vote in each marginal seat, but also 3.82 per cent in each seat with a strong New Zealand First opponent. Comparing

Table 4 with Tables 1 and 3, the Alliance advantage in the main centres over the rural areas is down to 0.75 per cent or 1.56 per cent with Sydenham included. This is to say that the slightly increased gap caused by allowing for marginality has been virtually erased by allowing for New Zealand First. There is simply no doubt that the Alliance vote differs from the Labour pattern in terms of the three-cultures hypothesis: it lacks any significant gap between the main centres and rural areas. Moreover, the deficit in the provincial centres has dropped a bit further to just under 2 per cent.

On the lesser points of comparison, allowing for New Zealand First in addition to allowing for marginality has raised the Alliance advantage in Auckland over the other main centres to 5.16 per cent; even when Sydenham is included, it stands at 3.15 per cent. Together these signal a significant gap for a party averaging about 18 per cent of the vote, a significant deviation away from Labour towards the National pattern. It may have been caused by something ephemeral, namely the popularity of the Alliance local body campaign in Auckland in 1992. (Public opinion polls taken during 1995 do not show Auckland as an area of strength.) The Alliance advantage in the North Island over the South Island, another National trait, has risen to 3.68 per cent or 2 per cent with Sydenham included. These are less impressive and of course partly reflect the Auckland advantage.

Within the main centres, compensating for New Zealand First over and above compensating for marginality has caused only one change: Auckland urban and suburban have edged just ahead of Dunedin at the top and all three open up a large gap on Wellington. Within the provincial centres, the South Island has lost more ground and now emerges as a clear tailender. The Bay of Plenty has regained its advantage over all other areas. Within the rural seats, the North Island advantage over the South Island is now easily the largest exception to the general uniformity of the Alliance vote.

The values used to compensate, 3.47 per cent for a marginal and 3.82 per cent for a strong New Zealand First opponent, were derived to adjust comparisons *within* the Alliance vote. The Alliance vote as

a whole might be less affected because the wasted-vote psychology would be weaker in non-marginals than in the 22 marginals. On the other hand, the differential between the two obscures whatever bed-rock potency that psychology possessed for voters in general. Comparing strong and weak New Zealand First seats, the Alliance gains about 0.4 per cent for every one per cent drop in the New Zealand First vote. If 40 per cent of the total New Zealand First vote is allocated to the Alliance, it profits by 3.36 per cent from the absence of that party (8.4 x 0.4 = 3.36). However, New Zealand First shattered the unity of voters alienated by both Labour and National and this may have had a larger negative effect on the Alliance vote.

Whatever the impact of marginality and New Zealand First, the evidence shows that those factors cannot explain away our central contention: the Alliance vote really does transcend the Labour versus National cleavage. Must we then conclude that the three-cultures hypothesis has no applicability to the Alliance vote?

NewLabour and Green As Predictors

Among the parties that merged to form the Alliance, NewLabour and the Greens supplied most of the voter support. Since these parties ran separately in 1990, it was possible to determine whether one, or the other, or a combination of both, was the best predictor of the 1993 Alliance vote. For obvious reasons, the analysis was made not only in terms of the nationwide Alliance vote but also between and within the categories of the three-cultures hypothesis, that is, the main centres, the provincial centres, and the rural areas.

The analysis focuses on 67 seats. Thirty-two were eliminated because there was no Green candidate in 1990, or because of a factor that rendered the seat atypical, primarily because of a candidate (Anderton, New Zealand First leader Winston Peters, etc.) or a party (Democrat or Social Credit) whose influence was so strong as to blur a NewLabour versus Green comparison. All NewLabour and Green percentages from 1990 were adjusted to fit the 1993 boundaries. The question that arises is which equation using the 1990 vote best predicts

the 1993 Alliance vote (that is, which equation predicts percentages from seat to seat that best match actual Alliance percentages) and whether the best equation used only the 1990 NewLabour vote, or only the 1990 Green vote, or a combination of both.

Table 5 shows that the three-cultures hypothesis has re-emerged with a vengeance. For most of the main centres, Wellington-Hutt, Christchurch, and Dunedin, whether taken collectively or individually, NewLabour was the sole predictor. As far as political culture goes, Dunedin behaves like Wellington and Christchurch. For the rural areas, Green was the sole predictor. For the central North Island rurals, the only rural area with enough seats to allow analysis, the equation using Green only explains almost all the Alliance variance. An equation including NewLabour explains no more variance, when adjustment is made for the artefact that an extra variable always 'increases' variance explained, and in that equation Green is still the dominant predictor. For the provincial centres, the equation had to include both NewLabour and Green to maximise predictive potency. The equation with Rotorua set aside is to be preferred because the Alliance vote was so atypically high there, for a provincial centre, as to produce a bizarre equation.

In other words, the relative uniformity of the Alliance vote across the three-cultures categories conceals the fact that those categories dissect the Alliance vote into two components with almost surgical precision: main centres NewLabour; rural areas Green; provincial centres, a mix of urban and rural ethos, both.

In 1993, however, some Alliance candidates were members of the NewLabour Party and others members of the Green Party. If voters knew the party membership of their candidate, might this not affect whether NewLabour or Green emerged as the better predictor? To test this, equations were generated for the 27 seats (out of the 67 seats nationwide) whose 1993 candidates were NewLabour, and for the 22 seats whose 1993 candidates were Green. Both parties actually lost ground (against the other) as predictors for those seats in which they had a monopoly of candidates, although the loss was small. The same

Table 5: Did the 1990 NewLabour Vote or Green Vote or Both Best Predict the 1993 Alliance Vote?

	Equations	Predictor	Alliance Vote (%)	Alliance 93 by Equation 90	National 93 by National 90	Labour 93 by Labour 90
				% of Variance Explained		
Auckland (24)	0.426 + 1.448 (NL) + 1.134 (G)	BOTH	20.48	46.3	80.7	88.9
Urban (13)	- 4.255 + 1.539 (NL) + 1.608 (G)	BOTH	21.34	55.2	75.4	82.4
Suburban (11)	8.731 + 1.067 (NL) + 0.534 (G)	BOTH	19.46	32.5	68.8	78.0
Other Main Centres (15)	12.268 + 0.707 (NL)	NL (G negative)	16.61	20.5	80.0	83.9
Wellington-Hutt (8)	8.212 + 1.095 (NL)	NL (G NIL)	13.79	52.6	81.0	77.1
Christchurch (4)	11.263 + 0.750 (NL)	NL (G negative)	18.14	68.3	99.7	94.1
Dunedin (3)	1.306 + 4.216 (NL)	NL (G NIL)	22.11	100.0	4.2	93.8
Provincial Centres (10)	- 24.045 + 4.197 (NL) + 3.117 (G)	BOTH	16.14	69.5	34.8	82.0
All But Rotorua (9)	- 8.255 + 2.689 (NL) + 1.694 (G)	BOTH	14.43	56.5	32.4	80.3
Rotorua (1)	Isolated as a special case		31.51			
Rural Areas (18)	7.024 + 1.158 (G)	G (NL negative)	18.00	62.2	34.4	77.1
Central North Island (6)*	4.543 + 1.470 (G)	G (NL positive)	20.89	87.0	52.9	82.2
Other Rural (12)	Too few contiguous seats to make analysis possible		16.56			
ALL 67 SEATS	4.112 + 0.951 (NL) + 1.019 (G)	BOTH	18.30	37.6	67.7	88.2

* Six contiguous electorates: Raglan, Hauraki, Matakana, Tawawera, Waikaremoana, and Hawkes Bay.

trend, small loss or no difference, held for all other categories in which there were sufficient seats for analysis: within Auckland, within the other main centres, within the provincial centres, and within rural areas. This accords with the impression of the candidates themselves which was that few voters were aware of any candidate's party membership.

What kind of political reality lies behind the mathematics of Table 5? I will use Dunedin to suggest a scenario. Dunedin shows NewLabour giving an almost perfect prediction of the Alliance vote seat by seat.[22] What may have happened is this. Assume that about half of the NewLabour and Green voters of 1990 transferred their allegiance to the Alliance: that would mean that the three Alliance candidates each inherited between 2 and 3 per cent from NewLabour and between 3 and 5 per cent from the Greens. Since each received a 1993 total vote of from 19 to 24 per cent, they picked up 14 to 16 per cent from new Alliance voters. Clearly the new voters swamped the inherited vote, and these new voters distributed themselves between the three seats precisely as did the NewLabour voters of 1990. Indeed, the match is so perfect that it can be described like this: the 1990 NewLabour voters simulate a one-fifth random sample of the 1993 Alliance voters, a sample taken three years in advance.

This scenario poses the hypothesis that the new Alliance voters were responding to issues identified with NewLabour, issues like unemployment, welfare state, progressive taxation, rather than dangers of growth, energy conservation, environmental decay. However, the only way to be certain would be to go out with a list of issues and have those voters prioritise the ones that influenced their decision. In other words, while the mathematics can pose reasonable hypotheses, it cannot verify them: that must be done in the field.

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22   By way of contrast, Green gives an almost perfect prediction for three contiguous rural seats just south of Auckland, namely, Franklin, Raglan and Hauraki. There is a prima facie case that Dunedin and these rural seats represent extremes in New Zealand's political culture. It would be fascinating to see what survey data would show.

The three-cultures hypothesis applies to the Alliance vote, but there is one glaring exception: Auckland defies an otherwise coherent pattern. Unlike the other main centres, its best equation eschews NewLabour alone as a predictor in favour of both NewLabour and Green, with the two components given almost equal weight. There seemed an obvious solution. I thought that the Labour-orientated core of Auckland (11 Labour seats out of 13) would be like the other main centres, and that the National-orientated surround of Auckland (10 National seats out of 11) would be the source of the Green component. And yet, Table 5 shows that when the city is divided, the Green component is actually greater within urban rather than suburban Auckland. The greening of Auckland is pervasive and signals an idiosyncratic urban culture, at least as far as the Alliance vote is concerned, worthy of further investigation. As for Alliance performance nationwide, there is no doubt that both NewLabour and Green play an essential role: both are needed to ensure a reasonable performance in every area of the country.

Marginality and New Zealand First Revisited

Tables 6 and 7 extend the analysis by examining the effects of marginality and New Zealand First on NewLabour and Green as predictors. Table 6 shows that marginality had a strong effect on whether the 1990 NewLabour or Green vote explained a larger percentage of the 1993 Alliance vote. Nationwide the impact is dramatic: going from non-marginal seats to marginal, the NewLabour share of variance rises from far below Green to double Green. The significance of this would be undermined if marginal seats were concentrated in areas where NewLabour was the dominant predictor of the Alliance vote. Therefore, the Wellington-Hutt marginals were eliminated so that marginal seats would be evenly balanced between areas of NewLabour and Green dominance. The Auckland area had enough seats for analysis and posed no problem because NewLabour and Green are virtually equal as explanatory variables. Going from Auckland non-marginals to marginals, NewLabour rises from parity

Table 6: The Alliance Vote—Marginality Enhanced the Variance Explained By the 1990 NewLabour Vote

	% of Variance Explained			
	NewLabour	**Green**	**Other**	**NL/G Correlation**
All Seats (67)	12.23	25.36	62.41	- 0.15
Non-Marginal (49)	7.40	27.81	64.79	- 0.25
Marginal (13)[a]	40.64	17.80	41.56	+0.56
All Auckland (24)	24.41	21.92	53.67	- 0.33
Non-Marginal (19)	21.83	27.67	50.50	- 0.39
Marginal (5)	77.10	—	22.90	—

[a]   Wellington-Hutt marginals were excluded so that marginal seats would be evenly balanced between NewLabour and Green areas.

with Green to become the sole explanatory factor. It appears that when the wasted-vote psychology reduced the Alliance vote to its core, that core tended to be NewLabour more than Green. The most committed Alliance voters may have been motivated by economic rather than environmental concerns.

Table 7 shows that strong New Zealand First candidates virtually eliminated the 1990 NewLabour vote as a factor explanatory of the 1993 Alliance vote. In Auckland, going from weak New Zealand First seats to strong ones, a large NewLabour factor (over 40 per cent of variance explained) disappears and a more modest Green factor (over 20 per cent) holds steady. This does not solve the puzzle of Green being a better predictor in Auckland urban than Auckland suburban. New Zealand First had only four strong seats in the former as compared to six in the latter. Nationwide a modest NewLabour factor almost disappears with Green steady. The nationwide analysis excludes strong New Zealand First rural seats, so that its strong seats would be evenly balanced between areas of NewLabour and Green dominance. It

Table 7: The Alliance Vote—Strong New Zealand First Candidates (10% or more) Reduced the Variance Explained by the 1990 NewLabour Vote

| | % of Variance Explained | | | |
	NewLabour	Green	Other	NL/G Correlation
All Seats (67)	12.23	25.36	62.41	- 0.15
NZ First Nil & 0-10% (50)	15.80	21.37	62.83	+0.01
NZ First 10%+ (10)[a]	2.95	27.36	69.69	- 0.49
All Auckland (24)	24.41	21.92	53.67	- 0.33
NZ First Nil & 0-10% (16)	40.42	22.27	37.31	- 0.17
NZ First 10%+ (8)	—	21.30	78.70	—

[a] Strong New Zealand First rural seats were excluded so that their strong seats would be evenly balanced between NewLabour and Green areas.

appears that Winston Peters did well in projecting concern for the economic plight of groups like the elderly, thus lowering support among NewLabour-type voters, but that he did poorly in projecting an environmentally-friendly image, thus leaving Alliance support among Green-type voters largely intact.

Conclusions

The main conclusions can be stated succinctly. The Alliance vote transcends the geographic categories of the three-cultures hypothesis. However, when partitioned into its NewLabour and Green components, the Alliance vote testifies to the vitality and contemporary relevance of that hypothesis. Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin resemble one another in terms of political culture. Auckland, however, appears to have an idiosyncratic political culture for a main centre, at least as far as a red-green party is concerned, and that puzzle must be solved by future research. Indeed, all of the above would be better called hypotheses than conclusions and tested against survey data.

As for the future of the Alliance, both its red and green adherents look essential to its widespread appeal. If so, the two must be convinced that theirs is not just a marriage of convenience but a union whose partners complement and reinforce one another. There is ideological glue at hand: that the market cannot really protect the environment, and that people must enjoy basic economic security to develop a Green psychology. There are also ideological tensions: economic growth versus pressure on resources. Finally, for the Alliance to be successful, its ideology will have to permeate the psychology of a sizeable portion of the public, so that they become true Alliance voters—people who think of the Alliance as their natural political home and habitually give it their vote.