France has movements, not parties, and whoever becomes president will face mass discontent

Valérie Pécresse, failed to reach the 5% of vote share required for reimbursement of campaign expenditure, while the Socialist candidate and Paris mayor, Anne Hidalgo, scored an abject 1.75%. Macron, who already leads by five points, should receive more transferred votes in total than Le Pen. But a large abstention in the second round will magnify her vote share, making this election closer than before. Errors margin in these polls suggest the possibility that the two candidates might actually be evenly matched.

Whatever happens, the results from the first round as well as polls for the second show that French politics has undergone a profound transformation since 2017.

The three leading political figures are, in effect, leaders of movements rather than heads of parties.
- Macron, once a minister in the Socialist government in 2014, created a new centrist political movement (En Marche, or "Forward") less than nine months before the 2017 presidential election.
- Le Pen leads a far-right movement that has always been organised around a central leader.
- Mélenchon is a popular tribune who runs his movement as a one-man show and uses holograms to broadcast his message.

These movements function mostly as electoral machines at the service of their leaders, rather than as traditional party organisations that aggregate interests through intermediary bodies, like local communities or unions. As a result, French politics has become even more centralised and personalised. It has also become more polarised.

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