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Is Populism a side-effect of the Europeanization of Political competition?

Anti-EU Parties & the People
An analysis of Populism in French Euromanifestos

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Introduction

The central point of analysis addressed in this study is the exploration of the link between the Europeanization of the national political space and populism. This analysis is conducted through the assessment of the possible connection between parties’ anti-European Union position and the use of a populist argumentation. The main hypothesis we propose to test is that the opening of a European political space and the Europeanization of parties through the eruption of European issues in the national electoral space creates an auspicious arena for populist speech, themes and perhaps ideology. In turn, this can be used as a resource for populist communication in anti-EU parties\(^1\), especially the right-wing “Front National”. In light of this, are anti-EU positions and the use of populist discourse parallel features or interdependent attitudes? This study aims to put forward elements of this debate in order to isolate the effects of European integration and the settlement of European issues in the national political space and assert their uses through an examination of parties’ populist discourse. In addition, the analysis produces empirical elements to contribute to the scientific debate on political cleavage: reflecting in particular on the possible rise of new cleavage lines in party systems, structured by European issue. The current debate opposes two analyses, the first one denying a strong effect of Europeanization on party systems, neither in their forms, nor in their dynamics (Harmsen 2004 & 2005, Mair 2000) whereas, for the second, the opening of a European political space produces premises of a new cleavage opposing pro- and anti-EU parties (Bartolini 2005, Marks and Wilson 2000).\(^2\)

To answer these questions and address the above hypothesis, an empirical study has been built, based on a comparison of the European election manifests (called Euromanifestos) of French political parties during the elections in 1999 and 2004\(^3\). In order to contrast the uses of populist discourse in these Euromanifestos, a coding system has been produced to make a content analysis, thus allowing the researcher to evaluate populism in the text through its link with European issues. The researcher is therefore situated with a phenomenological approach, following a descriptive and comparative objective in analysing different populist arguments within a European electoral context, in order to offer up elements of understanding concerning the effect on European issues, their characteristics and meanings.

Our investigation of the link between Europeanization and the use of populist arguments in the French partisan system is organized through three levels of comparison. The first one is a contrast between French pro- and anti-EU parties’ manifestos to interrogate the assumption of a populist discourse specificity in anti-EU texts, reflecting on a “populist-\(^1\) We have preferred calling the parties opposed to European Union “anti-EU parties” in the extent that “anti-European” or “anti-europeanist” create confusion between an opposition to European Union and an opposition to the process of a European construction itself. In our anti-EU parties, several offer a favorable position towards a theme of European construction. Besides, regarding actors’ own categories, almost every French anti-EU party denies an opposition to Europe but asserts its will to build “another Europe” (The PCF 2004 electoral slogan of understanding the effect on European issues, their characteristics and meanings.


\(^3\) Our corpus, as it is going to be detailed further, is composed of the Euromanifestos of the socialist party (PS) and RPR-UMP pro-EU parties and of LCR, PCF, RPF-MPF, FN for anti-EU ones. We can add to this the legislative manifestos of the FN in 1997 and 2002.
eurosceptic” versus “democratic, pro-EU” cleavage. Our results show that there are differences in the use of populism between anti- and pro-EU parties but also among anti-EU parties themselves, which leads directly to our second point. To what extent is French anti-EU position linked to a populist discourse? What are the specific themes and systems of construction concerning anti-EU parties’ populism? The comparison between Euromanifestos of anti-EU organizations show that if these parties have the use of important references to the people and a denigration of the elite in common, then one can distinguish different populism among anti-EU parties. Several aspects make the FN populist discourse stand out. Consequently the last point of investigation is focused on this extreme right party. How far is the FN populism argument linked to its anti-Europeanism? A comparison between FN manifestos of European and national general elections allows, through an observation of their scope of populist communication, to observe the possible link between the opening of this political space and an increase of the use of a populist discourse by the FN, and to make a hypothesis concerning the influence of a European political space on the behaviour of the extreme right party. A more precise observation of the party’s Euromanifestos provides the researcher with elements regarding the extent to which the populist discourse of the FN on European issues and electoral context is linked to its populist ideology.

Construction of a measurable concept of populism

To build the empirical index gauging populist discourses in Euromanifestos, the researcher based the coding system in a theoretical concept of populism. Populism can appear as a confused concept due to the multiplication of scientific uses of the term as it has been noted by Canovan. This confusion is compounded by the controversial current use of it in the political field (made to legitimize or reject opponents as analysed by Taguieff). According to Taguieff who proposes an analysis of the successive historical and scholarly theoretical shapes of populism, and following Canovan who tried to shed light on the ambiguous nature of the concept, the researcher considers that the different forms of populism share at least two characteristics: an “exaltation of the people” and “an appeal to people” first and, secondly, every shape show, “in one sense, an anti-elite position”.

In order to assess populist discourse in Euromanifestos and contrast the uses of populist argument, this study has developed and proposed a measurable concept of populism, to weigh up and analyze the proportion of the texts devoted to populist discourse. The empirical coding system has been developed based on this definition of a broad concept of populism in order not to a priori exclude discourses and parties, and not to focus on a particular populist type, keeping in mind that one aim of our study is to better understand, through empirical analysis, the nature and meaning of populism, used in a European electoral context. To analyze populism in Euromanifestos the coding systems featured within this study, are, consequently, composed of two mains elements called “indexes”, largely inspired

by the Jagers and Walgrave’s measurable concept of populism proposed for quantitative content analysis, but with several transformations.

The first element, focusing on the people activated and appealed to in the discourse, is called the “people index”. It aims to measure the proportion of text devoted to an “appeal to people”, by counting words (positively connoted) speaking to or representing the people in general or people categories. The objective is to evaluate the part of the text dedicated to an appeal or an identification of the party with the people. And, in addition to this, to assess the importance of the activation of a community (in % of the text), by creating sub-categories of the “people index”, trying to identify several types of appeal to people in order to understand and compare the visions of the people and communities built in the text through this activation of the people. The second element, following the given definition, is an “anti-elite index” which measures the Euromanifestos’ part devoted to a criticism of elite. This index has been divided into “anti-political elite” and “anti-economic and financial elite” (separated into national, European and general level) in order to characterize this criticism of the elite more precisely in its targets and to understand its possible link to the European issue. Thus the two indexes follow two objectives: measuring the importance of populism discourse (define through references to the people and anti-elite speeches) in terms of proportion and understanding the mode of the appeal to people and criticism of the elite, the conception of group and the nature of the community built, and the connection between populist discourse and the European issue.

There two main elements (people index and anti-elite index), considered by most populist scholars as central features of populism, the study has added another variable to characterize the populist discourse, constituted by the party’s attitude towards democracy and called “claim for democracy index”. The aim is to make the conception of populism we are facing in Euromanifestos clearer. This proposition is linked to the precaution advocated by A. Collovald, concerning the effect of the use of populism, in other words to reject a definition of populism narrowed to extreme right populism and give back to populism its semantic diversity. To fight against a spread of the use of a common pejorative sense of populism in scientific language, Collovald recalls us of one conceptual meaning of the term: used to describe parties’ strategies of mobilization of the working-class, and claims for their participation in power. In a more general dimension the “claim for democracy index” aims to assess to what extent the appeal to people is accompanied (or not) by a discourse of denunciation of a lack of democracy and by an explicit will and demand to increase a people political participation. That is why this index is composed of a classification of the texts part devoted to injunction for more democracy and people participation or criticism of a lack of democracy. To characterize the populist discourse of the party more precisely, by including its position towards democracy, this index has been divided in two categories: general statement

7 JAGERS Jan & WALGRAVE Stefaan, « Populism as political communication style: an empirical study of political parties’ discourse in Belgium », European Journal of Political Research, 46:319-345, 2007. Our coding schedule is largely inspired by the Jagers and Walgrave study, but our indexes and categories are differently composed. For a more precise presentation of the construction of our coding schedule and data (selection and encoding), cf. Methodological appendix.

8 Selection of excerpts and coding procedure are developed in the methodological appendix.

9 In reality, the criticism of the elite had been divided, to a certain extent following Jagers and Walgrave, in three categories, including an anti-media category. The analysis has shown that absolutely no party criticizes the media in its Euromanifesto. Consequently, this part of the index was useless and doesn’t appear in the results here.

and concrete measures (separated in general and European level) to interrogate, one more time, the party’s targets and the possible link between populist discourse and European issues.

**Empirical elements**

Concerning the corpus analysed, our study focuses on the Euromanifestos of LCR-LO, PCF, RPF-MPF and FN to analyse anti-EU positions and PS and RPR/UMP’ ones for the pro-EU parties.\footnote{A short presentation of the parties’ situation in the French party system can be useful: LCR and LO are both anti-EU extreme left parties, in 1999 and 2004 they put forward themselves in a coalition for European elections. PCF is the French communist party and PS the socialist one. Between 1999 and 2004 two right wing parties have changed their names: the RPR right mainstream party has become UMP for the 2002 presidential election, and the little right anti-EU party RPF has become MPF. That’s why we will often refer to them writing RP/RPF.} Parties’ positions of hostility towards the European Union have been defined from their opposition to European treaties and French referendums (Maastricht in 1992 and TCE in 2005). The choice to study their manifestos has been made to the extent that if it presents a risk to reduce the importance of organizations’ internal decision-making process and struggle, and to unify party position and strategy, it remains an official expression of the doctrine and a significant object, with political weight.\footnote{Other studies of Euromanifestos can be found in GABEL M. and HIX S., (2002), « Defining the EU political space. An Empirical Study of the European elections Manifestos, 1979-1999 », in Comparative Political Studies, Special issue: Dimensions of contestation in the European Union, 35 (8), pp. 934-964. CONTI N., (2007), « Domestic parties and european integration: the problem of party attitudes to the EU, and the Europeanization of parties”, European Political Science, 6, 2. WUST A. M., and SCHMITT H., (2007), “Comparing the views of parties and voters in the 1999 election to the European Parliament” in: W. van der Brug, C. van der Eijk (Eds.): European Elections & Domestic Politics. Lessons from the past and scenarios for the future. Notre Dame, p. 73-93. For global quantitative studies of political manifestos, cf BUDGE Ian, ROBERTSON David and HAERL Derek (eds.) (1987); LAVER M. & GARRY J. (2000) and LAVER M. (Ed.) (2001).} Expressing the unified position of the organization, leaders can at the same time refer to it and be constrained to justify and support it. Besides the fact that it is useful for a quantitative content analysis, Euromanifestos seem to be a very good support to analyze discourse on European issue in a national comparison: general context of production in the national political space is identical for every party, as are formal obligations of the text production (size, dates etc) and texts addressing the same recipients, i.e. French people as a whole. This standardization of context and production conditions allows legitimizing the comparison and makes it significant.

**Anti-EU, Pro-EU parties and populism: a comparison**

The first point of our study proposes an analysis of populist discourse in a European electoral context for both pro- and anti-EU parties. In order to examine the link between anti-EU position and populist discourse, a comparison has been carried out between pro-EU and anti-EU Euromanifestos, so as to test the hypothesis of a higher level of populism in anti-EU parties and to analyze its link with the Europeanization of political space. Consequently, this comparison aims to reflect on the hypothesis of a “pro-EU democratic” vs an “anti-EU populist” cleavage structuring the political space and to assess its explanatory power. Is populist argumentation specifically or exclusively used by anti-EU parties or do pro-EU parties use a populist discourse too and in the same way? Can we observe major differences? As a consequence, is there a European political space specifically open to the use of populism and is there a specific link between anti-EU position and the use of populism? To see whether
pro- and anti-EU parties offer homogeneous attitudes towards populist discourse, the analysis focus on our three indexes, successively exploring the conception of people, the critic of elite and the attitude towards democracy of the parties.

1. The appeal to people in pro- and anti-EU parties

Before entering into the analysis, our supposition was that anti-EU parties (contrary to pro-EU) shared a very important use of references to people, in terms of proportion; a strong appeal to people in fact. The results show that it is partly true and partly false. First, we learn that for every party there is practically no appeal to “the people” in these words. The reference isn’t activated any more if it has been. “The People” is not a valued resource in Euromanifestos’ argumentation. Thus, in 1999 the term only appears in one text (the LCR/LO one) and only on three occasions. The results for 2004 are not much higher. There is no populism in this particular sense of an appeal to “the people”. But, it doesn’t mean that there are no references to the people built into the texts, populist discourses use other ways to create and produce a community here. To catch these constructions and observe the “appeal to people” made by parties, we have divided our “people index”, (listing references to the people), into several subcategories which can be grouped together in three main categories: activation of a national community, activation of a population in general and activation of social groups. From this categorization, we can measure the importance of the appeal to people in each Euromanifesto and examine the possible determination of homogeneous groups in the French partisan system regarding this use of populist discourse.

In terms of proportion, our hypothesis of a strong appeal to the people in manifestos was partly true, but results show that it is not delimited to anti-EU parties. Indeed, as it is illustrated in table 1, the proportion of manifestos dedicated to an activation of a group built by the text does not respect a pro- and anti-EU partition. Parties can be gathered into three groups: a very important rate of appeal to the people (average of more than 20%) for both RPF/MPF and FN, a present but less important rate for LCR/LO, PCF and RPR/UMP (around an average of 14%), and a very weak activation of people in the socialist Euromanifesto (almost 6%). Indeed, PS constitutes an exception here since every other party retains a fairly or really important part of the appeal to people in their manifestos through both elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People index</th>
<th>1999 Election</th>
<th>2004 Election</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>5.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCF</td>
<td>17.04</td>
<td>10.23</td>
<td>13.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPR/UMP</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>14.86</td>
<td>13.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCR-LO</td>
<td>13.74</td>
<td>15.24</td>
<td>14.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPF/MPF</td>
<td>23.74</td>
<td>17.84</td>
<td>20.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN</td>
<td>24.34</td>
<td>23.43</td>
<td>23.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A possible explanation for the weak PS index can be found in the conditions of production of the PS Euromanifestos. For both elections, the party has largely produced its manifesto from a text harmonized at the European level (with other European socialist parties). Here we have a very direct effect of the Europeanization of political space. In light of the proposition, we can put forward the hypothesis that this coordination of Euromanifestos at the European level produces a more neutral text. In its manifesto, PS essentially does not speak to the people (particularly in 2004). Consequently, the manifesto is centred on the different common
socialist propositions and we can thus assume that this organization could leave little place for people activation.

If the importance of the populist discourse, devoted to the people, does not appear to respect a pro- and anti-EU cleavage, the structuring force of the European issue may have to be sought in the composition of this appeal to the people. Have European integration and the development of a European political arena at the national level, had different effects on the construction of community proposed by pro- and anti-EU parties? The analysis of the groups built by the texts provides the following two main results.

The first one focuses on the means and methods used by parties to refer to the group. “People index” subcategories provide us with elements of understanding of the people conception constructed by Euromanifestos. In terms of composition, it would appear that we can organize our results into two groups which do not correspond to the pro- and anti-EU cleavage. Graph 1, shows that right wing parties and PS offer an appeal formed by a broad and undefined conception of the people, shaped by activations of a general population and above all by the use of personal and possessives pronouns (we, our, you, your).

**Graph 1.** People index. Part of the categories creating a homogeneous population in the index; and composition of them (use of personal and possessive pronouns and activation of a general population). Average taken between 1999-2004 (in % of the People index).

These elements, especially the very important use of pronouns (respectively 61.03% of the people index for the PS; 86.34% for RPR/UMP; 78.51% for RPF/MPF; and 62.20% for the FN) allows those parties’ Euromanifestos to draw a homogeneous community, undefined and speaking to a broad cross section of the population. On the contrary, far left wing parties LCR-LO and PCF propose a different conception of the people, constructed through activations of social groups as it appears in Graph 2 (we will go further into this perception of the people in the following section).

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13 It must be brought to the reader’s attention that excerpts concerning “we” and “our” have only been included in the index when they were expressing an assimilation between speaker and recipient. Pronouns (our, we) standing for the party or leaders have not be included.
What we can understand from these figures, is that French parties’ populism, considered as an appeal to people building a community, can be divided into two groups according to the people constructed. The populist attitudes in this case, divided between the creation of a homogeneous population on the one hand and a socially delimited community on the other hand, do not correspond to a pro- and anti-EU division. It seems that the most explanatory structure here remains the left/right cleavage to the extent that these conceptions of people are rooted in an ideological heritage. Indeed, even in a European electoral context, left-wing parties read the political reality through the logic of class-struggle, whereas right-wing parties remain embedded in a concurrent conception of the people, rejecting the class struggle concept and promoting the existence of a homogeneous population and community. The PS’ position can be considered as an illustration of the removal of the party from this first frame of interpretation, and, as every other, as an adaptation to its electorate following, in its case, the Kirchheimer’s catch-all party model.\footnote{Kirchheimer defines catch-all parties as appealing to the electorate at large, giving up a party function as representative of pre-defined sectors of society. Otto KIRCHEIMER, (1966) "The transformation of West European Party Systems", in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner (eds), Political Parties and Political development, pp. 177-200, Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press.}

Nevertheless, the effects of Europeanization on parties’ conception of the people have to be found elsewhere. A second aspect of the analysis of the people index composition provides elements with which to bring together pro-EU parties and to link the discourse on the people to a process of Europeanization. A closer analysis of the RPR/UMP conception of the people, particularly in the 2004 Euromanifesto, reveals the activation of a European community. The text remains relatively ambiguous (“We want the respect of our cultural specificities, of our languages, of our traditions”) but if we cannot speak of a strong assertion of a European populace, a substantial part of the appeal is indisputably formed by a discourse about a community of European peoples, referring for example to a “common awareness of european peoples”.\footnote{« Nous voulons le respect de nos spécificités culturelles, de nos langues, de nos traditions », le texte parle également de l’éveil de « la conscience commune des peuples européen », Euromanifeste UMP, 2004.} This was already present in the 1999 text. The same conception can be
found in the PS Euromanifesto, particularly in 2004, where, due to the text conditions of production, the only community viewed here is a European community. The few ‘activations’ of people in the PS’ text are situated at a European level, producing a European population consolidated by common values and built in opposition to the “Other” identified in the United-States of America. This determination of a homogeneous European group can only be found in these pro-EU manifestos. In light of this, it will be interesting to see if one can identify a trend towards Europeanized community conceptions confirmed by the approaching 2009 elections. In addition to this, it is possible, here, to observe the effect of the Europeanization of political parties and of the introduction of a European political space. In pro-EU Euromanifestos, populist discourse has been Europeanized to the extent that the conception of the populace itself has been broadened at a macro, European level. The Europeanization of these parties transforms their conception of body polity itself and, in this way, achieves the party’s ideology.

The contrast of pro- and anti-EU “people indexes” reveals that, proportionally, the positioning towards European integration doesn’t seem to play an important role. For example, the UMP does not appear to present a less “populist” rhetoric than others in its appeal to the populace. The gap between pro- and anti-EU parties in terms of populist discourse, viewed as an activation of the people or a community, has to be reconsidered to the extent that neither the proportion, nor the mode of activation can be taken as a criterion for distinction. The only element that reinforces this cleavage lies in the European ‘character of the community’, affirmed by the RPR/UMP and more vaguely insinuated by the PS. Regarding the case of the PS, one can clearly note that its strong Europeanization, marked by a European harmonization of manifestos, tends to neutralize the appeal to the populace. This can be analyzed as a concrete effect of the Europeanization of national politics: for pro-EU parties, if still homogeneous, the conception of community has been Europeanized. In this sense, one can identify the first element of populist discourse here defined by Taguieff, as “referring to the people beyond social class, in an opposition of people and political power”.  

To persevere with this analysis of populism, regarding its relationship with party position within the EU, one must now consider this second aspect of the populist discourse, in other words, focus on anti-elite attitudes.

2. Elite criticism in pro- and anti-EU parties

To explore the linkage between the Europeanization of parties and political space, and the development of populist discourse, one must use the second main element of populist definition composed by the anti-elite discourse as a lens for analysis. The attitude towards the elite in Euromanifestos has been analyzed in this study through an “anti-elite index”, whose results can be found in table 2, first measuring the text proportion devoted to the criticism of persons, groups or institutions belonging to the political world (or to the political world as itself).

16 « On peut cependant supposer avec Laclau que tous les discours idéologiques de type populiste […], font référence au people, par-delà les classes sociales, sur fond d’une opposition entre peuple et pouvoir politique.”, Paul-André TAGUIEFF, “ Le populisme et la science politique: Du mirage conceptuel aux vrais problèmes, ” art.cit, p.8-9.

17 The anti-elite index presented here, besides the criticism of political the elite, is composed of another category which is focused on the economic and financial elite, but is not significant for pro-EU parties. This part of the index will be analyzed in Part II.
Table 2. Anti-elite index (in % of manifestos).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anti-elite index (%)</th>
<th>PS</th>
<th>RPR/UMP</th>
<th>PCF</th>
<th>FN</th>
<th>RPF/MPF</th>
<th>LCR-LO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>21.09</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>22.55</td>
<td>34.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13.96</td>
<td>17.01</td>
<td>23.44</td>
<td>38.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.33</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.55</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.03</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.59</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>36.70</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the average is weaker for pro-EU parties, the above results underline the two different configurations for each election, especially in the case of RPR/UMP. In both elections, PS is noticeable due to its low or non-existent rate of anti-elite discourse. As for the appeal to the people, these figures can be explained by the strong Europeanization of the Euromanifestos’ conditions of production. As a consequence, the place for a national critic of the French right is reduced and there is no European socialist critic of European political civil servants or institutions (at most we can find an injunction for more efficient institutions). Following on from this, it would appear that, in a similar way as for the people index, the Euromanifesto harmonization leads to a moderation of discourse and neutralizes the populist rhetoric in terms of anti-elite criticism. However, upon analysis, the study has found no similarity with the RPR discourse of the 1999 election, which offers a surprisingly important anti-elite index. With 21.09% of the text devoted to a criticism of the elite developed in the political sphere, RPR Euromanifesto presents the third percentage of anti-elite discourse, (near RPF and far higher from FN and PCF).

Even in terms of content RPR cannot be separated from the others. Graph 3 illustrates the level of the anti-elite discourse for the 1999 European election, divided into a National, European and general or international focus of criticisms. Subsequently, one can observe that RPR offers criticism whose target appears to be as much European as for FN or PCF one. Indeed, the RPR’s criticism of the political elite is composed of a strong criticism of the French left at a national level and of bureaucracy at a European level (“We commit to better control the Brussels commission, to fight against all wastes and excesses of bureaucracy”). A part of this RPR discourse can be explained by the electoral political context: in 1999 RPR held a position of opposition against the leftist government. This position was clearly reflected in the manifesto: more than half of the criticism of the elite (51.85%) is developed at the national level and is totally focused on the main electoral adversary of RPR: the socialist party (“The only [electoral roll] that can thwart socialists”)


19 In the PS Euromanifesto from the region île de France, the researcher has also identified a criticism of the European right, which can be seen as a mark and or indeed a prelude of the Europeanization of the political space and partisan system.

20 « nous nous engageons à mieux contrôler la commission de Bruxelles, à lutter contre tous les gaspillages et les excédés de la bureaucratie », RPR Euromanifesto, 1999.

political elite. In the RPR manifesto, one does not observe a less prominent anti-elite discourse and a weaker criticism at the European level, as one may have expected from a pro-EU party. On the contrary, the development of a European political space may only have developed the anti-elite discourse here.

Graph 3. Composition of the anti-elite index concerning the level of discourse: National, European or general/international (1999; in % of manifestos).

The 2004 elections revealed a complete change of the party discourse: the criticism of elite index dropped to zero. A noteworthy parallelism has to be underlined here with the PS manifesto (cf. Table 2). Criticism of the elite is absolutely absent in both texts. Here is a real analogy between the pro-EU parties’ attitudes and a measurable gap with anti-EU ones: whereas PS and UMP have excluded anti-elite discourse from their texts, anti-EU parties’ present rates had rise from about 14% for the lower (PCF) to 38.80% (for LCR/LO). An effect of the national context can be seen here, to the extent that UMP is not in an oppositional position any more by 2004. However, the most important factor is that Europeanization has completely annihilated a discourse against the European elite for these two parties, which draws a strong distinction between anti- and pro-EU parties. For the latter, there is no

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22 As it has been explained at the beginning of the text, “RPR” has been changed in “UMP” for the 2002 presidential election to gather together a more important right majority. But the party personnel and ideology has not fundamentally altered.

23 The change of the ballot type for the 2004 European election (divided into 8 regional constituencies instead of one national constituency), and, as a consequence the selection of the manifesto for PS, neutralizes the possibility of measuring the part of PS discourse dedicated to a criticism of the right at national level. Only the part of the manifesto harmonized at the national level by the party has been coded in the anti-elite index. Now, in 2004, the PS manifesto has been divided into two parts: the first written by regional leaders and the second nationally harmonized. This last part appears to correspond to the European socialist text, thus it cannot contain criticism at the national level. However, in coding the regional part of one Manifesto (the île-de-France one), it appears that the discourse devoted to a national criticism of the right party or of the government is very weak (3.70% of the text), and that there is no criticism of European institutions. The data remains quite similar to the UMP ones (in the regional part of the UMP manifesto, which is divided in the same way as the PS one, there is no criticism of the elite at all).
criticism of European institutions any more. Referring to Szczerbiak and Taggart, it becomes apparent that the position occupied in the political space appears decisive and, in addition to this, that the European political space seems to reproduce the effects of the national arena. In others words, one can propose the following hypothesis, that for parties of government to belong to the mainstream groups in the European political space (supporting European projects and occupying a central place in the European party system) implies a neutralization of an anti-elite discourse and creates a censorship and a logic of annihilation of European political elite criticism. The moderation or extinction of this populist discourse here is thus strongly linked to a position of support for the European Union. In direct opposite to this, anti-EU parties entering the European political space in a peripheral place or as an opponent experience no reductive effects in terms of anti-elite discourse (for both European and national levels). Whereas, Europeanization seems to substantiate anti-EU parties in their stance as opponents and anti-elite discourse, it has completely neutralized the criticism of the European political elite for the mainstream parties and, between 1999 and 2004, the European electoral context appear to have reduced the space for criticism of their national adversary. As to the increase in discourse on a European community, this transformation will have to be confirmed during the 2009 elections. It has to be noticed that the attitude towards democracy, which constitutes our third index to characterize party populist discourse, follows the same logic as the anti-elite index and substantiates the study’s last observations. The cry for democracy in PS and RPR/UMP reduces or disappears in 2004; furthermore, especially for PS, its content was more composed of injunctions than strong criticisms of European democracy.

Finally, it appears that one can isolate differences in the use of populism between anti- and pro-EU parties but not homogeneous groups. The link between anti-EU position and the growth of a populist discourse must be put into perspective, especially concerning the appeal to people, where the left-right cleavage seems more significant. The right wing and pro-EU parties construct the people as a general and homogeneous entity. Criticism of the elite can be linked more to a pro- and anti-EU distinction, which is above all true for the 2004 elections, and as it also seems to be linked to a national electoral context, the trend has to be confirmed. Questioning the hypothesis of a European issue as a new arena for “extremist” and populist politics, this research has laid the groundwork which can lead us to interrogate the potential homogeneity of anti-EU parties’ uses of populist discourse in the European electoral context.

The heterogeneity of populist discourse in anti-EU parties

An analysis of French Euromanifestos shows that linking anti-EU position to populism or to a populist discourse is often too simplified an observation. The research has shown that pro-EU parties were not necessarily excluded from the use of a populist discourse. The results, presented in this study, also lead to another conclusion in the sense that we cannot speak of


25 PCF, MPF and FN have members in the European parliament, respectively in GUE-NGL for PCF, ID group for MPF. After having belonged to the UEN, the FN elected representative are now non-attached members.

26 Conversely if we could find in the 1999 RPR manifesto clues of a Europeanization of the political system, marked by the criticism of a European left, this is not the case any more in 2004. All these trends remain simply hypotheses and have also to be confirmed in the next elections.
one anti-EU populist discourse. It appears that Europeanization, as a new issue in the political game, has not produced the same effects on the different partisan organizations. The study of their populist discourse can reveal elements on the way European issue has been integrated in the party’s ideology or strategy. How is anti-EU position linked to populist discourse of different parties? Can we distinguish different populism between anti-EU parties? Trying to isolate the effects of European issues on these parties’ populist discourse, the research puts forward a hypothesis that even if anti-EU parties have the use of important references to the people and anti-establishment criticisms in common, the extent to which they use them differs. Looking at several different aspects, FN discourse can be isolated by a particular populist discourse ahead of European integration. To explore this relationship of French anti-EU positioning with populist discourse in a European electoral context, this study has traced the same three aspects of populist discourse as before, through the appeal to the people, the criticism of the elite and the attitude towards democracy.

1. An appeal to different peoples in anti-EU parties

The first contrast which appears upon comparison of anti-EU appeal to people has to be observed in terms of proportions. There is no homogeneity in the people index: remembering Table 1, the index indicates that the two right-wing anti-EU parties generate a more profound appeal to the populace: respectively, taking an average of both elections, 20.79% for RPF/MPF and 23.89% the FN, compared to 14.49% for LCR-LO and 13.64% for PCF. The activation of a group is stronger in the right wing parties, FN presenting the most important rate. Moreover, we have already seen (Graph 1) that these two parties were building broader and increasingly homogeneous communities whereas LCR/LO and PCF were communicating with the people through an activation of social groups. Thus, the amount of people index subcategories allowing parties to create a general and homogeneous community through their discourse is 91.70% for MPF and 68.83% for FN, where the activation of social groups (Graph 2) occupies 61.18% of LCR/LO index and 47.28% of the PCF appeal (in comparison to 3.67% for MPF and 10.85% for FN).

A more comprehensive observation of the content of parties’ references to people permits us to distinguish different types of construction in terms of the community. One can identify very heterogeneous populist rhetoric in anti-EU manifestos, which seem to oppose right and left anti-EU parties in terms of appeal to people but also underlines a singular FN discourse, different from all others. The first kind of ‘people appeal’ that can be discerned is quite homogeneous between left anti-EU parties. It is constructed from a social characterization of the group. In the LCR-LO Euromanifestos, the group is essentially referred to through the figure of the worker (in 2004: 50% of the people index and 7.62% of the manifesto are composed by references to “workers”). The people have a social identity, embodied by working-class and poor backgrounds. Besides this, the people situation in society is seen through a relationship of domination: the populace the party is addressing is composed of the “oppressed” and “exploited” or simply “the poor” (references to underprivileged backgrounds form around 8% of the people index in both elections). The PCF’s construction of the populace is less specific but is also built upon social division. References to workers and poor people are less important, yet remain present, and the text stresses commitment in political and community organization movements often referring to a support of the “social movement” or “social forces”. If one can observe a will to enlarge references to a more open community (speaking to women and young people) the populace retains a social identity. Especially in the case of the LCR-LO, the populace is homogeneous only after social delimitation. Far from a populist discourse type appealing to a large
homogeneous community, we are dealing here with another kind of populism considered as the populism of the underprivileged, a discourse of proximity and defence of the people understood as people from poorest backgrounds.

The second main feature of the left anti-EU party’s conception of people lies in the assertion of its international nature. The PCF’s view of the community, as the LCR’s one, is developed against a national delimitation of the people. Both Euromanifestos contain the marks of construction by an open group in terms of nationality (both refer positively to and claim for rights for undocumented immigrants and foreign residents). In addition to this, both parties explicitly present themselves as anti-nationalist. PCF declares its belief in “A Europe of solidarity against nationalisms”, while LCR and LO maintain: “A unified Europe, without borders between peoples, it’s future.” Following from this, the opening of a European electoral context creates an opportunity to affirm the international and anti-nationalist vision of the people for these parties (more than in a national electoral context). Furthermore, especially for LCR-LO the European issue offers a space within which to strengthen discourse concerning the international nature of the class struggle and consequently of the parties appeal to the people. As it will be confirmed by the analysis of their anti-elite discourse, for LCR-LO, the European question has been understood through the party ideology and ultimately integrated into it. In this way, European elections constitute a favourable space within which one can affirm that “Workers of every country have the same interests.” In addition, a more direct effect of Europeanization can be observed within the populist discourse of LCR-LO: in the 2004 Euromanifesto one can see the development of a European community. 30% of the people index (and 5% of the text) make up an appeal to an explicitly European group. The populist discourse develops a European dimension here. This Europeanization of discourse focuses on the main party’s target: 14.29% of the index is an evocation of “European workers”, in this way integrating the European issue into the party’s doctrine and at the same time moving its lines a little.

The FN singularity

The populist discourse of appealing to the people is different in composition within the right wing anti-EU parties. Not only in the sense that the people are almost never socially defined, but also, especially in the case of the FN, the discourse is strongly opposed to an international vision of the community. FN Euromanifestos reveal a particular type of populist discourse. Indeed, both RPF/MPF and FN discourses are referring to a broad community (using a strong proportion of personal pronouns merging speaker and recipient in the same group). But in the case of the FN, this homogeneous community has a particular and decisive feature: it is delimited to the national borders. This characteristic, absent in the 1999 MPF Euromanifesto, appears in its 2004 text but the proportion (2.70% of the text and 15.12% of the index) is far lower than the FN ones. The stimulus of the group in FN Euromanifesto is made through the view of a national community: the French people. Here, FN populism constitutes nationalism to the extent that the populace is defined on a national base. Besides the population in general, the only group stimulated are the French who, for example, constitute 25.19% of the people index in 2004 with a rate that reaches 40.21% added to possessive pronouns referring to common values, identity and feelings; features which characterise the populace as a cultural community. The construction of this common belonging to a French nation is strengthened by the exclusion of categories of people, particularly in the figures of foreigners and

undocumented immigrants. One can a second specific attribute of FN populist discourse here in the sense that the community is explicitly exclusive and as a consequence defined by what it is not. The group built by the FN is delimited and exclusive. Upon closer analysis one can identify several instances of a strong opposition to immigration and immigrants (note here the flagrant antagonism with the left anti-EU populist discourse).

This exclusive side of the populist discourse creates a FN singularity in the anti-EU populist speeches. One regular expression of the 1999 Euromanifesto illustrates the intrinsic exclusivity of the community built: “Français d’abord” (this is the name of the party’s newspaper and can be understood either as “Frenchman first” or “French first”). This sentence underlines not only a nationalist conception of the people, but it also implies a difference, closes the community to foreigners and can be understood as an assertion of a hierarchy of groups (at least the treatment of people) to the extent that it claims priority for the French population. Far from a European community, (there is no alternative in texts to a national community, and “French first” can also be understood in terms of identity as “French before European”) one can dispose of the hypothesis of Europeanized populism for the FN. However, other effects of European integration can be determined in this extreme right party manifestos. One can observe that the settlement of European issues on the political game has intensified defensive references to national identity within the FN discourse. In light of this, one may propose the following hypothesis, that the European context, to the extent that it embodies a threat (against community), constitutes a dynamic element for a nationalist appeal to the people. One sentence of the 1999 Euromanifesto appears paradigmatic: “It is Brussels who will decide of the foreigners’ settlement in our country (chez nous), leaving the “immigration-colonization” surging”.29 This sentence acts as a comprehensive example of the general rhetoric, including: an assertion of a homogenous community based on the single characteristic of nationality; a French community, built in opposition to the figure of the “foreigner” (in a game of us and them). In fact, the Europeanization of the political space is considered a danger. The European Union, accused of opening borders, is directly implicated as responsible for the threat constituted by foreign immigration. As a consequence, the European issue contributes to the generation of the discourse of resistance in the appeal to the people.30

2. …leading to an opposition to different elites.

As the term populism, used to describe anti-EU discourses, embodies very different types of appeal to people, the populist arguments in part made by anti-elite speeches, reveal heterogeneous proportions and contents of anti-EU parties’ discourses.

If anti-EU position is always linked to a discourse criticizing the elite, the first main distinction can be established between organisations through the target of the criticism. One can here identify an important difference between left wing anti-EU parties and right-wing ones. This can be illustrated by the analysis of the LCR-LO and PCF depreciation of the elite which integrates, besides a major part devoted to the political elite’s criticism, an important section of condemnation directed against an economic and financial elite (which is not the case for the two other organizations). This particular element of the left anti-EU discourse

30 The image of French Resistance during the Second World War is often activated by FN leaders to speak about the European political context.
appears entirely coherent with their ‘people appeal type’, previously described, and inserted into a class-struggle doctrine (“Workers of every country have the same interests and the only border is the one which separates exploiting people from the world of labour”). The LCR-LO’s Euromanifestos illustrate the strongest criticism of the economic and financial elite, proportionally (for example, compare 13.74% of the text and 39.71% of the anti-elitist index for 1999 against 2.20% and 27.14% for PCF), as regards content. It seems that the imposition of the European issue in the political arena has had a real impact on the party’s discourse since one can observe the development of a particular denunciation focused on a European elite (“Europe is made […] to serve interests of great European employers”). Indeed, discourse against the economic and financial elite is exclusively developed at a European or general/international level (never at a national one). One can see here first, a confirmation that, as a new political issue, European integration has been incorporated into the parties’ ideology. In a parallel move, European construction awakes the theme of the capital’s international organization against workers and of its denunciation. In the text, great employers’ group is a general but also European enemy. As a consequence, this ideological position denouncing the European economic and financial elite is a dynamic element structuring the parties’ anti-EU position to the extent that, in the texts, the economic and financial elite are likened to the political elite: “Europe, enlarged to 25 countries, establishes the domination of great capitalist groups from the European Union on the East of Europe.”

The European Union, as a political entity is often aligned with this economic and financial background (the expression “their Europe” frequently appears in Euromanifestos, assimilating their actions and interests). The LCR-LO anti-EU attitude is linked to a critique of the elite at the European level and so produces a real European populism. In the PCF case, the analysis reveals the same discourse in terms of lines of denunciation of regarding the political and economic circles’ incorporation at the European level (“To break the European Union presents logic enslaved by financial markets”). But texts are diluted, and this populist criticism appears very infrequently (6.03% of the index in 2004).

The second main distinction between anti-EU parties is revealed by the analysis of their criticism of the political elite and concerns this targets’ level of Europeanization. Is the anti-elitist discourse more or less developed within a European framework? It has to be clarified here, that for every party’s Euromanifestos, even when a section is devoted to the economic and financial elite, the main target remains the political elite. Investigation reveals, for every party, a denunciation is directed against a European target (table 3) but there is also a real inconstancy of proportion: the national and European dimensions of discourses against the political elite are highly variable between the two elections for each party, as shown in table 4. It seems that the weight of the national electoral context remains the more important variable on this point.

Table 3. Anti-elite index composition, in % of texts: Discourse against the political elite compared by National and European levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LCR/LO</th>
<th>PCF</th>
<th>RPF/MPF</th>
<th>FN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average 1999-2004 National level</strong></td>
<td>% of the text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCR/LO</td>
<td>16.89</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>9.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average 1999-2004 European level</strong></td>
<td>% of the text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCR/LO</td>
<td>10.72</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>15.12</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Anti-elite index composition, in% of indexes: Discourse against political elite compared by National, European and General/International levels, in both European elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LCR/LO</th>
<th>PCF</th>
<th>RPF/MPF</th>
<th>FN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1999</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National level</td>
<td>85.15</td>
<td>49.02</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European level</td>
<td>14.85</td>
<td>39.22</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen/int level</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2004</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National level</td>
<td>56.86</td>
<td>85.32</td>
<td>62.84</td>
<td>72.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European level</td>
<td>41.14</td>
<td>14.68</td>
<td>32.74</td>
<td>27.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen/int level</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This composition of the criticism of the elite in Euromanifestos highlights two facts: an effective integration of the European issue on discourse on the one hand and a great stability of the nationalization of stakes in European elections on the other hand. It is undeniable that every party’s manifesto features the identification and disparagement of a European political elite. It takes different shapes, the FN denunciation of “European technocrats” or the MPF accusing: “Europe of Brussels’ members of the Commission it’s Europe of norms and constraints, which want to impose GMO”35; the PCF reproaching the power of “liberalist partisans” in Europe36 or the LCR-LO denigration of a political class, strongly Europeanized in 2004, linking up French and European leaders in their condemnation: "Blows given to workers […] have been made by national governments, in a coordination with Brussels, that’s to say with European institutions".37 As a consequence we can say that there is a Europeanization of the anti-elite discourse, but also that it often remains fairly weak (for example in table 4, 27.91% for the FN in 2004 means only a few sentences).

The constant higher rate of criticism at the national level confirms the overt use of the European election as a platform to denounce national policies or organisations. Indeed most variations of the rates composing criticism against the political elite (as shown in table 4) can be explained by an examination of the political context. Thus the important difference in the composition of LCR-LO criticism can be analyzed from that perspective: strong attacks against PS and PCF in the 1999 Euromanifesto have to be linked to the fact that, in the political context of a left government coalition (PCF and PS), LCR and LO need to distinguish themselves and use a critic tone to gain visibility. (The situation is quite the same for FN in 2004). As a consequence, in comparison to this, the 2004 high proportion of criticism in the LCR-LO manifesto at a European level has to be cautiously interpreted and does not necessarily mean a Europeanization of the parties’ discourse and ideology.

Conversely, the important part of the European targets in the 1999 communist Euromanifesto could be explained by the fact that, belonging to the left coalition government, the party cannot afford to criticise either its partner or its politics. On the contrary, in 2004, the right wing government isn’t spared, the anti-elite discourse is almost exclusively formed by a criticism of the French right, and the European level of discourse diminishes. The European issue seems to only have a slight effect on this part of populist discourse and there is no strong link between European electoral context and the condemnation of the political elite. Oppositely, it is used as an opportunity to develop strategies inside the national political game and national issues, back to a lasting second-order model of election.

These explanations tend to stress the great presence of the national political game in the European electoral context and the importance of parties’ situation on the national political space. A distinction confirming this last aspect can be made from the composition of the national elite criticism of the different parties. A more precise observation of the national target in the discourse allows the separation of the PCF and MPF from LCR-LO and FN Euromanifestos, regarding the nature of their anti-elite criticism. The common feature of LCR-LO and FN denunciation lies in its broad extent. Both texts do not hesitate to condemn parties of the two sides of the political space, especially the mainstream ones, which links their discourse to a broad denunciation of the political class as a whole. The PCF and MPF discourse appears more lightened and limited. Their position on the national party system, nearer to the mainstream parties than the last ones and more able to enter coalition or take out electoral agreement, seems to delimit their criticism. Neither in both MPF Euromanifestos, nor in PCF ones can one locate a criticism of the mainstream party on their political side. Their anti-elite discourse is an opponent discourse. On the contrary, for the two other organizations, one can find a criticism of every adversary, in a necessity of distinction. The position in the partisan system seems relevant here to understand how the anti-elite discourse of anti-EU parties differs.

One can say that if French anti-EU positions are always linked to a populist discourse of the criticism of the elite, it is different in its composition and logic of constitution. If one observes a rooted criticism of European targets, it often remains weak and the importance of the national political context makes it difficult to propose a hypothesis on the potential increase of the European issue in the anti-elite discourse. It rather seems that it is integrated in the parties’ ideology (criticism of the economic and financial elite for the left wing organizations) or practice (inclusion of a broad political elite denigration for the most “extreme” parties in the political space), even if, consequently, organizations sometimes become Europeanized. Thus, one can say that the integration of the European question in the French political game here strengthens populist discourse to the extent that it gives opportunity to develop it or reinforce its traditional themes. In this way the Europeanization of political space constitutes a source for a development of discourse against an economic and financial elite linked to the European Union. But European issue and political space does not really appear as a strong new and singular source of populism considered as anti-elite rhetoric.

At last, referring to the debate centred around a ideology-versus-strategy dichotomy to explain...
Eurosceptic party positions, one can observe here that both parties’ ideologies and identities and positions in the party system play a part in the use of a populist discourse in a European electoral context.

3. The dissimilar attitudes towards democracy in anti-EU parties.

To complete the analysis of anti-EU parties’ populism, we have built a third index aiming to characterize Euromanifestos’ discourse towards democracy. The first purpose of this index was to measure the distribution of injunction for or criticism of a lack of democracy between general statements and concrete proposals. As it is produced in table 5, two homogeneous groups can be distinguished, corresponding, one more time, to left and right parties. In these last Euromanifestos, there is an obvious absence of demands and proposals to increase the democratic character of the regime (national or European). RPF-MPF and FN absolutely do not develop a program to promote people’s participation. Conversely, LCR-LO and PCF do not stick to general remarks but develop concrete positions in their texts to increase people’s participation. It has to be noted that this is especially true for the 1999 elections, where concrete proposals occupy 17.25% of the communist manifesto (and around 5% of the LCR-LO proposal), stressing, in particular, a right to vote for European residents, a right of petition for the people or a will to establish an initiative power for European parliament. It has to be noticed that both proportions drop drastically in 2004. That is why one can say that the claim remains, above all, a critical position. Nevertheless, here one has elements which constitute populism as an ideological position, wanting to amplify participation of the people in power. The process of European integration can therefore act for these parties as a dynamic element and increase this part of populist discourse.

Table 5. Claim for democracy (in % of texts).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCR-LO</td>
<td>11.22</td>
<td>9.56</td>
<td>Concrete proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCF</td>
<td>20.37</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>General statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPF/MPF</td>
<td>18.40</td>
<td>10.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 1999-2004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete proposal</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>8.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General statement</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro. Level</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>14.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General level</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is confirmed by the second aspect of this index measuring the claim for democracy, which is divided between the European level of the discourse and a more general one. These two parties produce the most important part of their claim for more democracy at a European level, separated from a more general one (which is for example linked for LCR-LO to a claim for citizen control of banking system, and for PCF to the electoral roll constitution to reach greater representation). The MPF discourse does not share in its Euromanifestos this general demand for more participation of people, but for both elections, the party shows an important denunciation of a lack of democracy directed against the European level. The tone of the index is exclusively criticising and points at a European Union, too omnipotent in its power, deciding without people and against its interest. But we cannot speak here of an ideology stressing the need of a strong participation of people, it rather seems that these indexes have to be analyzed as a criticism of the European power over nation-state, in other words, as a criticism defending national sovereignty. As a consequence, this kind of populist discourse is
obviously a side-effect of Europeanization. The European stakes and European electoral context contributes to a development of this claim for democracy. Populism understood as a criticism of too powerful institutions is doubtfully created here by European integration and the European electoral context.

Opposed to all these elements, the FN discourse on democracy, or its near absence, underlines a very different attitude of the party. First, in its 1999 Euromanifesto, the party does not devote a word to a claim for more democracy or denunciation of its lack. Not only FN does not appear to be supporting a European ideology of “revitalisation of politics through the people” by promoting its participation but also considers that the People it is speaking to does not strongly want to participate: “For many of you, to vote isn’t your main concern”. Far from the others parties’ arguments, the FN’s claim for democracy, when it is developed (4.86% of the text in 2004) is not linked to a European level and remains, far from, the weaker part of the party’s populist discourse. Europeanization of political space has not brought any effect at all in terms of this aspect of the FN discourse and the party does not criticize a lack of European democracy. Targets of discord are elsewhere; as a matter of fact the elite were criticized for their policies and attitude (corruption, incompetence etc) not for their monopoly of power.

The analysis of anti-EU Euromanifestos shows that there is a real and important heterogeneity of anti-EU populist discourse through the three dimensions examined. Speaking only in terms of pro- and anti-EU populism conveys a risk of hiding the importance of organizations’ own ideology (in which European issue is integrated) and situation in the system of parties. To a certain extent, some European issues can appear as elements bringing new populist themes, thus the LCR-LO criticism of the economic and financial elite at a European level produces a real European populism. But one can observe that in most of the cases, European integration as a (new) political question is integrated by parties in their ideological frame of interpretation and in their own way of comprehending reality. In that sense, European issue can constitute an opportunity of developing populist discourse but rather than in a new way, in the traditional forms and systems used by the party.

The comparison of anti-EU parties’ discourses confirms, to a certain extent, a homogeneity of left versus right populist discourses towards the European issue. Thus, LCR-LO’s (and at a lesser level PCF’s) Euromanifesto can be related to Lazar’s description of extreme left populism which is pictured conveying an idealized image of the people considered as a social reality, opposing the collusion between political and economic power and claiming a greater democratic control of the people. As a consequence, the left-right cleavage remains an important structuring category to characterize anti-EU attitudes through populist discourse. But it is not the exclusive grid of interpretation: the observation of a party’s situation in the national party system was heuristic too to understand those parties’ discourse within a European electoral context. Anti-EU populist discourses have to be understood at the crossroads of these two structuring models, as, referring to the debate centred around a ideology-versus-strategy dichotomy to explain Eurosceptic party positions, the research has exemplified that both dimensions interact, to the extent that a party’s ideology and identities play a part, as well as coalition tactics. At last the anti-EU parties’ comparison underscores the particularity of the FN position in Euromanifestos, in particular through its appeal to people and the very low level of its claim for democracy. The National Front shows a singular type of populism in its discourse linked to the European issue, which the research will now tackle in more depth.

40 M. CANOVAN, 1981.
41 “Pour beaucoup d’entre vous, voter n’est pas le premier de vos soucis », FN Euromanifesto 2004.
42 Marc LAZAR, « Du populisme à gauche : les cas Français et italien », p. 122-123.
FN national and European manifestos: a comparison

The last point of our investigation in the link between populist discourse and anti-EU position has been built by a comparison of FN national manifestos from general elections with its Euromanifestos from the same period. Scientific debate tends to link populism to anti-EU position through the designation of extreme-right parties as populists. In order to go further in our analysis the research has focused on the French extreme right party to understand to what extent its populist discourse undergoes effects of Europeanization and in this way to identify how it is linked to its anti-EU position. The hypothesis to be tested is that the opening of a European political space and the Europeanization of parties through the irruption of European issues in the national electoral space, creates a favourable arena for populist rhetoric, especially in extreme right parties. One can see that FN really behaves differently from the other anti-EU French parties within a distinctive use of populist arguments concerning European issues. The comparison with legislative manifestos helps in asking whether the Front National Euromanifestos use a more populist argument, or produce a different use of the populism argument. The observation of the scope of populist communication in FN Euromanifestos compared to national texts, can tell us about a positive influence of the European political space on the behaviour of this extreme-right political party, and second a more precise study of the Euromanifesto populist argumentation gives elements of understanding in terms of the blend of populist argumentation and European issue one into the other.

1. National and European electoral manifestos

To assess the impact of European electoral context on populist discourse, the research has compared FN Euromanifestos with legislative manifestos using the same three components of argumentation. The analysis of anti-EU Euromanifestos has shown that FN appeal to people is distinct from the others, first, because it builds its community through the colour and concept of French nationality, and second because this construction is explicitly exclusive and rejects several types of people who cannot enter the group. This characterization is not particular to the Euromanifesto. The analysis of general election manifestos’ composition reveals a strong parallelism of construction as well as of proportion, as illustrated by table 6.

Table 6. People index composition (% of texts).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People index</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of pronouns</td>
<td>12.61</td>
<td>17.01</td>
<td>14.81</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>13.79</td>
<td>10.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General community</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same three elements can be recognized: if national texts do not offer a vision of the people determined by social groups more than European ones, one can find, likewise, a major trait activating a general group, essentially built by the use of pronouns (we, you etc) and a few general descriptions. The group is homogenous, inside one particular feature: added to this strong general appeal, the people construction in national manifestos also refers to a

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43 The two « national » manifestos coded have been produced for the legislatives elections of 1997 and 2002, while European elections settled in 1999 and 2004.
significant activation of French community. The same national–populism is developed in national texts. The similarity of proportion can be underlined here appearing in table 6. But this parallelism brings an immediate conclusion: neither the creation of a European political space, nor the European electoral context brings about a strong effect of increasing references to a French community in Euromanifestos. Conversely, rates corresponding to the appeal to a French group are slightly higher in national manifestos (table 6). In addition to this point, proportions of this national appeal inside the people index are a bit stronger in national manifestos (21.33% of the index for Euromanifestos and 45.60% for national texts on average for both elections). If we consider the general rate of people index (table 7), the strengthening of an appeal to people in Euromanifestos because of a menace of Europeanization is not obvious (if it is true for 1999, but rates are quite the same in 2002-2004. Therefore the differences do not appear as very significant). If the settlement of the European issue on the political game can intensify defensive references to national identity in the FN Euromanifesto as the research has illustrated, then they appear more as a substitution rather than a newly added proportion. There is no clear side-effect of European integration as an increase of the populist-nationalist discourse in FN texts. People index in the European election is not more nationalist than in others. By these facts, we can understand that appeal to people and activation of a French community is inscribed in FN practice. European issue enters this framework but its effect is weaker than one could have anticipated. In fact, the construction of the group in Euromanifesto is nothing new compared to national texts, and their construction procedures are coherent and similar: the same process of definition “against” can be found (built by diverse figures of the other) and the same strong defence of priority for French (particularly in 2002). Euromanifestos’ appeal to people is inscribed in the party’s patterns of language.

Table 7. Comparison of populist discourse in European and national FN manifestos (in % of texts).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Euromanifestos</th>
<th></th>
<th>General election manifesto</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People index</td>
<td>24.34</td>
<td>23.43</td>
<td>23.89</td>
<td>10.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-elite index</td>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>17.01</td>
<td>14.59</td>
<td>21.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim for democracy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>5.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparison of anti-elite discourse in national and European manifestos can provide one with two observations. Like in the people appeal, the difference in terms of proportion does not appear very significant. Rates seem to be about as important. What is more, the composition of the denunciation remains the same: no criticism of the economic and financial elite can be found, but several sentences providing a strong, aggressive and explicit assimilation of left and right mainstream parties (“The group of the four: one for all and all scumbags!”). This conclusion infers that the European integration process has not produced an increase in terms of the critical discourse of the elite. The important part of national level criticisms in Euromanifestos and that the central role played by electoral context has been underlined make this conclusion un-surprising. Instead, the party’s denunciation of the political elite has undergone partial adaptations within the European electoral context, focusing on European targets for a (fluctuating) part as the research has noted. Besides, one fact can be underscored: in the 2002 legislative manifesto lies a condemnation of Brussels’ technocrats, which reveals the settlement of European targets in FN anti-elite discourse and

44 The four points at RPR/UDF/PS/PCF, mainstream parties from right and left and their allies; “LA BANDE DES QUATRE: UN POUR TOUS, TOUS POURRIS», FN General election manifesto 1997.
the integration of European stakes in the party anti-elitist ideology leading it to insert (in a very weak part) the European issue in the national-political game and context.

The FN claim for democracy remains very low compared to others components of populist discourse; neither in its Euromanifesto, nor in its national manifestos, do democracy and people’s participation appear as emphasized concerns. But if the proportion of the claim in the national texts analyzed does not appear strongly more important than in the European electoral context, national rates are more constant in the two elections (the FN 1999 Euromanifesto was completely silent on this subject). Furthermore, claim for democracy for both national elections presents one or two concrete measures to improve people representation (the 1997 text proposes an introduction of a referendum initiated by people, while the 2002 manifesto defends a proportional representation for each election). Whereas Euromanifestos only propose very large statements one can deduce that European issue and context seem to diminish the claim for democracy intensity in the party discourse. In FN discourse, there is almost no use of this theme to criticize Europe and no use of European context to develop the topic of democracy. If not salient, national context seems to be more opportune for FN to present an element of a demand of people participation. Finally, a last point can be highlighted in the fact that in both the 1997 and 2002 national manifesto, one can observe critical references to the European Union. Their proportion is slight but they represent a sign of the Europeanization of the national political space. In each text, one critical demand at least is devoted to the European Union: European issue has entered national manifesto and settled as a new category in the FN discourse.

2. Element of a qualitative analysis of the FN anti-EU populist discourse

Our last point to analyse FN populist discourse about Europe is built upon a close reading of FN Euromanifestos and allows us to clarify the combination between FN anti-EU position and populism. The FN’s people first appears to be strongly conceived as an ethnos in the sense of a cultural community, but also as a demos, a political community delimited here by its connection to the Nation-state. Indeed, in both texts, the member of the group described is above all a “compatriot”, identified by his or her belonging to the homeland. A lot of the pronouns which build the general vision of the people are referring to a community of values, traditions, identity and feelings, creating and intensifying, in their repetition, the cultural characteristic of the community: “our traditions, our roots, our homeland inherited in common, our currency, our national identity”. Here one can find the classical features of nation and the definition of cultural group. There are also elements of definition of a demos, taken as a political community, and referred to by assertions as “our social protection, our public services, our retirements, our social security, your liberty, your rights” which are specified enough to be identified to the French nation-state. In addition to this characterisation, one can find discourse which contributes in an implicit way to the development of the group through proximity if not assimilation of the leader and the people. The language level first allows giving the impression of clearing social borders by the use of common or lightly colloquial vocabulary (“stupid policies, phoney prevention”) and reasoning structures appealing to common sense (instead of logic argumentation for example): “Offenders, illegal immigrants: send them back home”\(^{45}\) the juxtaposition of these two figures acts as an assimilation linking crime to immigration. Which leads us to another feature of FN construction of the people: the characterization of the community is also reinforced by the

determination of what she is not and the activation of negative figures and images; offenders and immigrants are two main categories, as opposed to “honest people”.⁴⁶

Most of these traits contribute to root the European Union in an image of opponent or even of threat. In Euromanifestos, European integration is often included in the FN ideological framework as linked with the loss of border control leading to immigration waves. As a consequence, “Brussels” directly threatens the community described, in its identity and security. Thus it appears necessary to struggle against it and to resist. This reading of the European issue links the FN populism through its appeal to people to an anti-EU position as it is illustrated by the FN statement of the European elections stakes in 1999 “Here is the stake of your vote of the June 13th: to defend and stay what we are” ⁴⁷. Putting the community definition (nation and homeland) into question makes Europe a direct danger. One can suggest the hypothesis here that national populism position and ideology of the FN has had an effect on the construction of its anti-EU position (more than the opposite). Anti-EU position is also, if not more than the opposite, a side-effect of populism when it is based on nationalism.

Anti-elite discourse is the second great feature of FN populism and here also European issue has been integrated in the ideological framework and populist discourse’s patterns of the party. The criticism of the European elite takes up the same aspects as the than national one, accusing the EU of dishonesty, incompetence, and inefficiency. If populist argumentation of the FN can have a real European target, the criticism often copies the national model. Indeed, whereas FN leaders distinguish themselves insisting on their morality “High head and clean hands”⁴⁸ European leaders are accused of immorality: “A Brussels’ Europe which has lied to you”⁴⁹. In an inverted construction, the relationship between people and FN leaders is based on confidence, and texts strengthen this liaison in building proximity. The vehement and sometimes colloquial tone of the criticism distinguishes FN from others party, expressing in this way, the closed nature of their political discourse and building them as an elite. Against elitism, the proximity between the FN leader and the people is also found on the big use of ‘we’ and ‘you’, contributing to the illusion of a direct dialogue without intermediary, as does the great presence of the leader (by the repetition of its name and the importance of its photography) in manifestos of a European ballot made of electoral rolls. We join here the Taguieff’s description of FN populism as a personalised appeal of a charismatic leader,⁵⁰ as true for national general elections than for European ones.

Conclusion

Finally our analysis has shown that the opening of a European political space and the insertion of the European issue in the national political competition has produced moderate effects on the populist discourse. There is no systematic relationship between parties’ position towards the EU and their use of populist argumentation but a variety of rapports. It has been observed, especially for PS, that the Europeanization of pro-EU parties, as well as their position in the national and European political competition tends to moderate or defuse their

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⁴⁶ The 1999 Euromanifestos opposes a new « worrying » immigration to the previous immigration of honest people » (« différente de l’ancienne immigration des honnêtes gens »).
⁴⁹ « une Europe de Bruxelles qui vous a menti », FN Euromanifesto 1999.
populist discourse. But it has to be confirmed for UMP and besides, this is not true for its appeal to people which differs from the PS one through its greater and constant proportion. Concerning anti-EU parties, the empirical findings reveal that this label tends to homogenate very different realities. Populist discourses on European issues are generated by ideological as well as strategic motives. We have seen that the populist discourse of opposition to the European Union is dissected by two elements which contribute to build it: the party position in the national and now also European political space, through its proximity or distance to mainstream parties, and the right/left cleavage. European issues are indeed integrated in parties own left or right ideologies and identities. The last main result of the survey can tell how the European issue has been integrated into the political discourse. It seems, and has been underlined by the FN discourse study, that Europeanization has not created an arena which brings about an increase of populist discourse and the development of new specifically European themes. Thus, the conclusion is that anti-EU position can lead to populism only through the integration of European issue in the party’s ideology and discourse patterns: social class frame for left anti-EU organizations and critic of the elite or threat for the community for the right ones for example. Against the hypothesis of a real transformation of populist discourse by the settlement of the European issue on the political game, one could speak of an adaptation of the parties’ national discourse patterns to European context which can lead to the Europeanization of some populist themes. The fact that, for a few sentences, one can find exactly the same expression in national and European FN texts or between the two LCR-LO Euromanifestos shows the stability of party’s practice and doctrine. Manifestos’ subjects and discourse patterns can also be considered as traits of a party’s political culture, functioning as scheme to interpret reality. Their constancy in the European electoral context can constitute references with whom the elector can find its way around in the new political space of Europe.
Bibliography


Methodological appendix

Encoding system and selection excerpts:

The proportion of each index was measured by words number, in percentage of the total manifestos’ number of words. It has been chosen to only encode significant segments regarding our categories and not the entire sentences. A description of the composition of the three components of populist discourse which have been analyzed is proposed here.

1. People index

Excerpts have been selected when they contained terms that referred to the population (population as a whole or population categories). Only excerpts which constituted a direct “activation” of a community (“you…” ) or referred to it (“the French…” ) were taken into account. (Thus “each vote counts” has not been selected for example). Every excerpt was typed out literally. The length of the segment selected depended on the context. It has been chosen to take out and count not the entire sentence but the significant segment/unit of sense which stands for a group or the population in general. As far as possible, the definition of the significant segment limits was harmonized between manifestos.

The index was divided into population categories, defined as groups of people having explicit constant features in common. This categorization was made with two aims: first to avoid a never ending list of referential terms. Second, to give tolls to study more precisely the population built by the party’s Euromanifesto.

People index subcategories were:

French population/ population in general/ possessive pronouns (divided into we/our and you/your) / social groups (divided into workers/ poor backgrounds/ other social groups). It has been considered that the use of possessive pronouns we/our/you/your (“interests, identity” for example) constitutes a direct activation of a community. (The fact that this community isn’t defined doesn’t weaken the appeal. On the contrary it potentially involves the whole people in a homogeneous group). When personal and possessive pronouns refer to a group (or a noun) already quoted, they have been classified as a part of this population category. (Ex: “French have rights […] their soils and their traditions.”)

Question of connotation: Excerpts were encoded as positive/negative activation by the choice of the researcher. However, when the connotation wasn’t explicit on the segment selected, our classification has been based on the observation of the rest of the sentence (highlight or condemn, positive/negative adjective). Connotation choice was rarely uncertain.

2. Anti-elite index

In addition to explicit condemnations, excerpts have been considered as anti-elite discourse when the elite was named with negative (explicit or implicit) connotation, then also when excerpts were measures and propositions to counter those groups. In other words, segments integrated in the anti-elite index are not necessarily critical. But their opposition in a sentence, to the interests of the population activated for example, has been considered as criteria for being classified as anti-elite discourse when it concerned one of its three categories: political elite, economic and financial elite and criticism of media.
Each of these three categories was divided into National, European and General or international level. Each level was itself separated regarding the target of criticism: ad hominem, groups or abstract criticism.

3. Claim for democratic index

In this section have been encoded references to democracy taking into account two situations: the criticisms of a lack of democracy and the claim or demand for more democracy. Democracy here is understood as a will of participation, control or representation for the People.

Excerpts have been divided into two main categories: general statement, which refers to global criticism of the system or general injunctions and general declarations (“You need to impose Europe of democratic rights where populations control decisions” PCF 1999). The second category: “concretes measures” was made of political propositions or measures such as “defending the right of vote for foreign resident people” or asking for a referendum. Each of these two categories has been divided into two levels in order to observe whether propositions were focusing on a European or on a global level, to focus on the target of the claim for democracy.

At length, it can be precised that a segment can be encoded in different indexes. But it is encoded in only one category inside one of the three indexes, in order to observe the part of each category in the index. (Ex: “Chirac hasn’t listened to you” has to be classified for the “you” in the people index, but also in both anti political elite at the national level and in criticism of a lack of democracy as a general statement at a global level). A last, what is important is that, as far as possible, the encoding methods and choices were constant through the different manifestos, to allow comparison.

Selection of manifestos:

For the 2004 European elections, election rule has changed, passing from one national constituency to eight regional constituencies. In order to preserve a homogeneous comparison, several regional Euromanifestos have been observed to conclude that that for most of the parties (especially anti-EU ones) the main part of manifestos was the same in the different constituencies, changing only through candidates names and photographs. The empirical choice has been to compare systematically only the Euromanifestos’ part which was “national” (that’s to say, the same for all constituencies). For the two main French parties (PS and UMP) this choice has meant entering in our 2004 data only the manifestos’ backs (the front remaining, for both parties, particular to each constituency). The rule was exactly the same for FN general election manifesto of 1997 and 2002. The part of the text measured was present in every constituency manifestos. But it appeared that almost the whole manifestos were identical for each candidate (only names and photo were changed) here again.

The situation was a bit different for the 2004 PCF Euromanifestos, since they seem to be different from one constituency to another. We have chosen to work on the text from ile-de-France for two reasons: it seems that in this text the PCF had a strong place (because everywhere PCF was allied to other movements for the 2004 elections). The ile-de-France electoral roll was leading by the PCF leader in European Parliament and the text referred to M.G. Buffet, the PCF leader in France. Consequently, this text has been considered as the nearest of the party’s position. The whole text has been encoded excepting one part devoted to an electoral roll presentation, which seemed to be too particular to interest our study.