

# THE DEVIL CAN QUOTE SCRIPTURE FOR HIS OWN PURPOSE: SO-CALLED *DÉDIABOLISATION* AND THE STRATEGIES OF THE FRONT NATIONAL TO SEDUCE THE YOUTH

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## ABSTRACT

The Front National (FN), a French far right-wing party born in 1972, reached the second round of the presidential election for the second time in 2017. Twenty-one percent of voters aged 18 to 24 voted for Marine Le Pen, the FN candidate (Ipsos, 2017). Like Jobbik in Hungary, the FN now relies heavily on the involvement and the vote of youngsters (Róna, 2014). The youth is both a means and an argument for these now powerful parties in the process of building themselves a new reputation. Therefore, my aim is to stress the important part played by the youth in the strategy of *dédiabolisation* of the public image of the party initiated by Marine Le Pen. *Dédiabolisation*, could be translated as ‘de-demonisation’, and is defined as ‘moderation with the goal of granting the party republican legitimacy’ (Almeida, 2013: 168). Following the study and analysis of the party’s political agenda, of speeches and posters (or their ‘propaganda’, as they like to call it), I argue that the relationship between FN and the youth has considerably changed since Marine Le Pen came to power in 2011. While the FN has long remained a very taboo party, associated with old voters rather than young activists (except for a violent marginal group in the early 1970s legacy of the mother party, *Ordre Nouveau*), it is now more widely accepted as a legitimate party. I explore the turning point that took place in 2011 when Marine Le Pen became president of the FN: young people were put forward in an effort to move away from Jean-Marie Le Pen’s past and his scandalous public statements.

## INTRODUCTION

The Front National has been an object of study and analysis for journalists and researchers for decades: in 1987, Anne Tristan published *Au Front*, the result of a six-month undercover investigation she led on the FN and the FNJ (Front National Jeunesse, the youth branch of the FN) by infiltrating them as a militant (Tristan, 1987). Sylvain Crépon, a sociologist and prominent analyst of the FN, published his dissertation about the FN in 1999 (Crépon, 1999). In spite of the current significant coverage of the FN in the media and its relative electoral success, the phenomenon is far from being new. The party has not changed in many ways; its perception has changed and evolved (Dézé in Crépon et al, 2015), but it has not managed to fully reach Marine Le Pen’s ‘brand management strategy’ (Almeida, 2013: 168).

Marine Le Pen’s main strategy to attract voters and militants is talked about by the media as a process of *dédiabolisation* (roughly translated as ‘de-demonisation’: in other words, a strategy to move away from the scandalous image of the party) (Dézé in Crépon et al, 2015). Recently, Marine Le Pen has claimed that the party (which is officially a movement, rather than a party, like Emmanuel Macron’s organisation *La République En Marche*) that is the closest ideologically to the FN is *La France Insoumise* (FI) (Le Pen in Erner, 2018). She has nonetheless added that they have a fundamental difference:

their respective views on immigration. And yet, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the FI leader has vigorously fought Le Pen for years on many occasions. This shows that Marine Le Pen, through her supposed ‘*dédiabolisation*’ strategy, tries to make her party a ‘catch-all party’ for people who are disappointed with the policies of the long-governing parties — the FN rhetoric has forged the expression ‘UMPS’, a contraction of ‘UMP’ (now ‘LR’, ‘Les Républicains’), the main right-wing party, and ‘PS’, the (ex) main left-wing party).

This strategy to target young people echoes a quotation from a speech given by Jean-Marie Le Pen: ‘The youth, abandoned and worried, are ready to dedicate themselves in a great momentum to the one who offers great conviction. The Front National already takes upon itself these big hopes’ (‘La jeunesse, abandonnée, inquiète, est prête à se donner dans un grand élan à qui lui proposera un grand idéal. Le Front National assume, d’ores et déjà, les responsabilités de ces grandes espérances.’) (Le Pen in Cuminal et al, 1997). Marine Le Pen presents herself as the leader of a wide movement (and talks about the FN as the first French party) struggling against an elite who throws France and her sovereignty to the wolves — in this case, foreign powers and a wave of Islamisation. However, where Jean-Marie Le Pen used the image of an eternal France and of her sons and daughters, Marine Le Pen puts forward a closeness to people themselves

— including in her visual strategy (Dumitrescu, 2016).

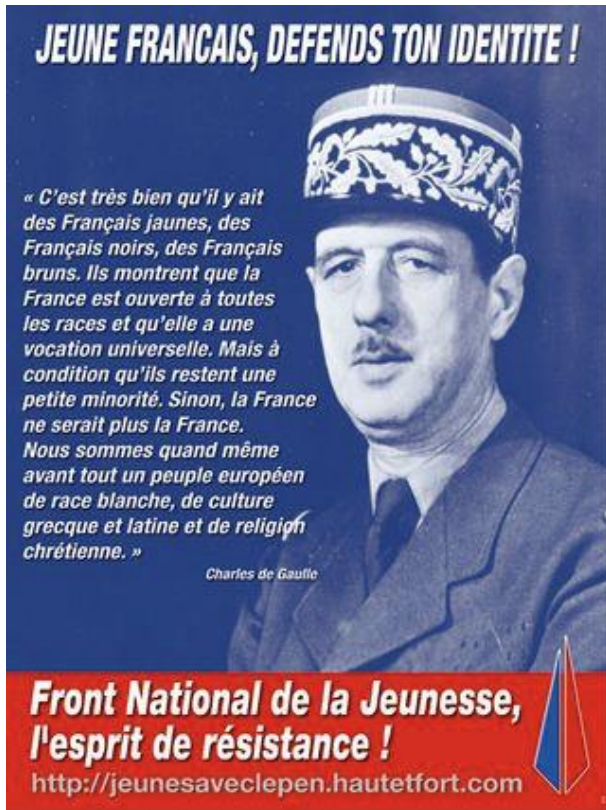


Figure 1: 2009 FNJ leaflet

While Jean-Marie Le Pen was a fierce opponent of Charles De Gaulle (head of the resistant organisation France Libre in London and first president of the Fifth Republic, the current French political constitution), his ideas and his legacy (*gaullisme*), and built his party on the complete opposition to the Algerian independence and to De Gaulle, the FN/RN now alludes favourably to him as a figure who fought for French sovereignty. An FNJ 2009 poster shows a portrait of De Gaulle with one of his quotations (that says that France is open to all races but that they must remain a minority) and two headlines: ‘Young Frenchman, defend your identity!’ (‘Jeune français, défends ton identité!’) and ‘Front National Jeunesse, the spirit of resistance!’ (‘Front National Jeunesse, l’esprit de résistance!’). Connecting to the figure of De Gaulle symbolically puts the FN in a Republican framework.

This article looks at the strategies that are put in place by the RN to attract young people both as activists (aged 16 to 30) and voters (18-24). The aim is not (yet) to assess the efficiency of the various strategies but rather to look at the image that the party is building for itself. The question is: how does the FN, that is historically a taboo party, manage to attract young people? The first step to answer the question is to look at what the party communication and organisation offers to the youth.

Jean-Marie Le Pen was wary of young people because he perceived them as unreliable (Rotman 2014), but in his daughter’s party they have taken on importance. Marion Maréchal (formerly Marion Maréchal-Le Pen: she adopted her famous grandfather’s last name when she entered politics but got rid of it when she withdrew from political life), Jean-Marie

Le Pen’s granddaughter and ex-FN MP has reaffirmed her position at the right of the political spectrum. In September 2018, she will be opening a private university of ‘social, economic and political sciences’ called the ISSEP (Institut de Sciences Sociales, Economiques et Politiques) for fourth and fifth year students. The cost for one year is €5,500— which is less than the notorious ‘Sciences Po’ but far from the €256 fee for masters in public universities that includes the contribution to the ‘sécurité sociale’ (Direction de l’information légale et administrative, 2017). In addition to this, the credits given by her école are not recognized by the state, meaning they hold little value and do not give students an official masters degree. She has declared that her project with this school is to attract students from ‘all parts of the right wing’ (‘une école pour toutes les droites’) and to train ‘a new generation of decision-makers’.

Marion Maréchal might be building an image for herself, away from her aunt who she considers to be too left-wing. She was elected MP in 2012 when she was only 22 and became the youngest MP in French history. The youngest senator of the Fifth Republic is also an FN member: David Rachline, elected when he was 26. Another prominent young member of the FN was Florian Philippot, who was Marine Le Pen’s right-hand man before he left the FN after the last presidential election. Criticised by Jean-Marie Le Pen, he was a symbol of the supposed revival of the party and of the turn towards an increased interest in social matters.

Alexandre Dézé (Dézé in Crépon et al, 2015) claims that the *dédiabolisation* of the FN is more of a construct of the media than an ideological reality. Through various means of communication (speeches, appearances on radio or TV, party communication), Marine Le Pen has successfully managed to spread the idea of *dédiabolisation*, the idea that the FN/RN has become politically correct. Since the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2018, the Front National has been renamed Rassemblement National (RN or ‘National Rally’) in an effort to bring the party closer to power: Marine Le Pen has declared that the name of the party did not make sense anymore now that some of its members were elected and governing (Le Pen in Erner, 2018). It also takes further her struggle against her father, who she excluded from the party in 2015. The media fed the myth of *dédiabolisation* (that should ‘be understood as a catchword related to Marine Le Pen’s brand management strategy’ (Almeida, 2013: 168)) with the feud between father and daughter. And it participates in moving the party away from its embarrassing history (Jean-Marie Le Pen denied the Holocaust on various occasions, for example, when he described the WW2 gas chambers as a ‘detail of history’) — in spite of the resemblance to the names of two French fascist parties, the Rassemblement National Populaire and the Rassemblement National Français.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

I have conducted two interviews. One is with a head of communication of the branch of the party in Ariège (a French *département* in the South-West of France) and was carried out in 2015; the other is with a regional supervisor in Haute-Garonne (another *département* in the South-West) and candidate in several elections, including the recent 2017 MP election (‘élections législatives’) and it was conducted in June 2018. Both interviews were about an hour long.

In the first interview, I asked 22 questions about various issues, but with the aim of surveying the motivations of young people

who got involved with or voted for the FN. The interviewee himself was in his mid-twenties. I asked one question that was specifically about his own journey — how he had come to join the FN and how he saw his future in the party. I did not choose who I interviewed the first time: I went several times to the regional headquarters of the party asking for someone who could inform me of the relationship between the party and young people — as such, I do not know if he was appointed or if he volunteered to be interviewed. As he had the status of head of communication, I assumed he was appointed; this implies he was probably trained to give the ‘right’ answers. For the second interview, I emailed the interviewee directly, thinking that his experience as a candidate would offer me some good insight. I re-used some questions from the 2015 interview, but also asked questions based on the answers of the first interviewee as well as questions more specific to his own political journey.

The interview of a party member, especially one in charge of communication, is methodologically problematic; as Emmanuel Bourdieu had put it, the interviewee is in a position of ‘rhetorical strategy’ (Bourdieu and Podalydès in Bourdieu et al, 1999: 536). However, the focus of this article is the strategies put in place by the FN/RN, so it might be less problematic because it is a less sensitive topic. This research is also largely informed by journalistic investigations and academic literature on the topic; it is difficult to gather data on the FN because they are very wary of the image that the ‘media’ will portray of them.

In addition to the interviews, I have analysed elements of Marine Le Pen’s party ‘propaganda’ (the website of the FNJ), a FNJ leaflet and an analysis of her political agenda in the 2017 presidential election that are comparable with the pieces that I have presented in the introduction (under the leadership of Jean-Marie Le Pen): this allows for a comparison between the party’s past and present while staying focused on Marine Le Pen’s strategies, which are particularly interesting after her electoral success in the first round of the 2017 presidential election. I looked at different medias in an attempt to analyse the discourse of the RN and of its representatives; how they perceive the world and how they (want to) act upon it.

## RESULTS

### Interviews

#### *Nicolas Brunet*

The interviewee began his explanation of how the party functions, comparing it to a ‘big company’ to describe their hierarchical organisation, but later emphasized how information coming from the bottom reached the top (Marine Le Pen) ‘without being filtered’. He defined the FN as the ‘people’s party’ (‘le parti du peuple’) for this same reason: ideas are discussed on several occasions by members (volunteers) and are then passed on through the ‘chain of command’ (‘chaîne hiérarchique’).

In his opinion, more members had joined the FN in recent years because it represented a real change against politicians in power who ‘did their own little business’. It echoes the quotation of Jean-Marie Le Pen in the introduction which talked of a ‘big momentum’ (Le Pen in Cuminal et al, 1997): the people against the political elite. He concluded that the interest of young people in his party is due to the disappointment of lower and middle classes who feel like they aren’t taken into account by the other parties and the government, and who are neglected in favour of ‘communitarianism’. He used the word ‘technocracy’ to describe the way of doing politics in France and in the EU

that the FN is opposed to. By contrast, he talked about ‘economic patriotism’ (putting France first rather than the European Union or the rest of the world) as the solution to put forward. ‘Economic patriotism’ is linked to the idea of *préférence nationale* (a concept invented and promoted by members of the FN or close to them) that implies that the nationals (French citizens in this case) should always be put first (Igounet, 2016).

When asked if he had felt a change in the party when Marine Le Pen had taken over from her father, he said she had ‘brought a touch of modernity’ and the fact that she was a woman had been very important in that matter. Still, in his opinion, the ideas ‘that Jean-Marie Le Pen has defended for forty years’ haven’t changed but they ‘may be presented differently’. He said they had seen many young people wanting to get involved in the FNJ as the membership in the FN increased as well. He said all social classes were represented and that they had been impressed by the large number of students who had joined them.

In terms of the role that young recruits play, he explained that there are different degrees of involvement offered to them: from the ‘gluing of posters’ (‘le collage’) to running for office. Once to twice a month, they organise ‘apéro-débats’ (convivial evenings where they debate a given issue and try and find solutions, like a recent one about ‘the jihad’). If they are motivated, they can be given responsibilities and run for office; unlike other parties ‘they don’t need to have a PhD’. On the other hand, he said that the FN made young people ‘aware of their responsibilities’.

The three issues that young people seem to be most worried about are, according to him, insecurity, employment, retirement and, more generally, a worry about their future. To overcome these issues, he thought that social reforms that out French citizens first had to be undertaken. To have sufficient money to do so, he thought savings could be made in several fields: the AME—‘Aide Médicale aux Etrangers’, a plan to help foreign people in irregular and precarious situations to have access to health services, even if he quickly added ‘we don’t really say we should stop curing foreign people, they can go to the hospital because after all, we’re still humans’, the EU, the Senate (the legislative upper chamber), ‘social fraud’ and having fewer elected representatives.

#### *Julien Leonardelli*

Julien Leonardelli’s answers regarding his personal experience and political commitment were significantly longer than Nicolas Brunet’s. He went back and forth between several experiences he saw as deciding factors in the process of forming his opinions:

- Witnessing the public reaction, including teachers encouraging their pupils to go to protests in *collège* (school for ages 11 to 15 years), when Jean-Marie Le Pen got to the second round of the 2002 presidential election.
- Living in a region that suffered from very high unemployment rates due to the offshoring of textile factories and thus seeing his parents who were bakers struggle to keep their business running.
- The World Trade Center terrorist attack and the lack of respect of some of his schoolmates during the minute of silence.

He read the policy statements of all candidates, did his own research on the Internet and figured out that his ideas were most similar to the arguments of the FN. He started campaigning

(gluing posters) aged 16-17 and officially joined on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

He concluded the interview saying: ‘But... we can’t quantify all of that; it’s not possible.’, reiterating what he had said at the beginning: he described his political commitment as something that’s ‘a part of you’, ‘deep down’.

He pointed out several matters he was and still is appalled by: the construction of the EU, globalisation, the decrease of French sovereignty (because of ‘supranational’ policies), the French political elite, and the reduction of state protection.

He said that during his campaigns, he did not distinguish young from old people but recognised that the aim of the FNJ since its creation is to have young people try to convince young people (because they have the ‘same language and the same interests’). He said that ‘pragmatically’, it was more interesting to convince a youngster than ‘a 90 year-old who won’t live much longer’ but that ultimately, the goal was to “gather the majority of voters plus one”.

His speech came across as very alarming (‘The France we know can disappear.’) and he presented his party as the only option left, as other parties had tried and failed. He repeated several times that not understanding others was ‘a very French problem’ and that unlike what was often said, the RN could not be blamed for anything (regarding WW2, the Algerian War) and that ‘history was history’. Nonetheless, he said that young militants were sometimes afraid of being ‘stigmatised’, even though it happens less than it used to.

He said that when Marine Le Pen stepped in as the head of the party in 2011, ‘all elections became important’ and she asked militants to take root locally. So, rather than targeting people by age, he said that, on social media, he targeted people geographically. He said his main means of communication was Facebook, that Twitter was ‘for a small elite’ and that he also used text messages, phone calls and emails a lot. He said the party made contact with people for example in market places and got their contact details this way.

### ‘Propaganda’

#### FNJ website

On the websites of both the RN and the FNJ (which will soon be renamed ‘Génération Nation’), most of the news is discussed by prominent and regional members of the party, so as to present a united front to members and sympathisers. The arguments that are used to convince young people to join the FNJ are similar to the arguments that Marine Le Pen uses in her public appearances (speeches, debates, etc). The FNJ website, currently inaccessible (maybe because the FNJ will be rebranded Génération Nation on the 23rd of June), had in 2015 a page ‘Why join us?’ (‘Pourquoi nous rejoindre?’) that listed arguments under ten buzz words (responsibility, patriotism, future, elections, activism, pride, training, change, rebellion and youth).

#### FNJ leaflet

The leaflet is from 2014, and yet the phrase ‘Génération Nations’ that will soon become the new name of the FNJ (with ‘nation’ in singular) had already appeared. The argumentation of this leaflet is as follows: if you agree with such and such statements (seven, to be precise), you should join the FNJ.



Figure 2: FNJ 2014 leaflet

Their common themes are presented: ‘healthy protectionism’ (‘protectionnisme intelligent’) vs. globalisation, austerity imposed by the EU, ‘national and popular sovereignty’ vs.

technocracy, French identity, national unity and Republican values. To these are additional arguments tailored for young people: ‘digital liberties’ and merit in the access to education rather than money.

### Political agenda

In Marine Le Pen’s 2017 presidential election agenda, there are four occurrences of the word ‘jeunes’ (‘young people’) in three different ‘commitments’ (‘engagements’ in French), out of 144. On the other hand, the words ‘retired’ or ‘retirement’ appear eight times in seven different ‘commitments’. However, she targets three different types of young people through those ‘commitments’: young workers (entering their first job and up to the age of 21), young farmers and students (up to the age of 27) (Le Pen, 2017). We can assume that young people don’t systematically read political agendas, especially the long versions. However, the RN often reaches out to young people through other means. Nonetheless, it might mean that young people are not the main target of the party strategy. Julien Leonardelli confirmed this but granted that young people are an ‘investment’.

Sortir des traités Européens	Sortir des traités Européens
Sortir de l'OTAN	Sortir de l'OTAN
Sortir de Schengen	Sortir de Schengen
Sortir des accords de libre-échange	Sortir des accords de libre-échange
Protectionnisme solidaire	Protectionnisme intelligent
Référendum d'initiative populaire	Référendum d'initiative populaire
Mise en place de la proportionnelle	Mise en place de la proportionnelle
Abrogation de la loi El Khomri	Abrogation de la loi El Khomri
Retraite à 60 ans avec 40 années de cotisations	Retraite à 60 ans avec 40 années de cotisations
Encourager les circuits courts	Encourager les circuits courts
Interdire le statut de travailleurs détachés	Interdire le statut de travailleurs détachés
Egalité salariale Femme / Homme	Egalité salariale Femme / Homme
Conservier les 35h	Conservier les 35h
Baisser l'impôt de toute personne gagnant moins de 4 000 euros net par mois	Baisser de 10% l'impôt sur le revenu sur les trois premières tranches
Majoration des heures supplémentaires	Défiscalisation des heures supplémentaires
Augmentation des petites retraites	Revaloriser le minimum vieillesse

**INSOUMIS**  
**NE VOUS TROMPEZ PAS DE COMBAT**  
**NE VOTEZ PAS MACRON**

Figure 3: An unbranded leaflet spread online by FN activists between the two rounds of the 2017 presidential election

### Targeting the youth and the working class between the two rounds of the 2017 presidential election: an example

An online leaflet circulated on the pages of FN militants during the two-week lapse between the two rounds of the presidential election (Durand et al, 2017). It tried to convince people who had voted for Jean-Luc Mélenchon, candidate for La France Insoumise (‘FI’, a left-wing movement), in the first round to vote for Marine Le Pen in the second round by comparing (imprecisely) points of their political platforms. 30% of the people aged 18 to 24 who voted (people who abstained are not counted in this percentage) voted for Mélenchon, meaning most

18-24 voters voted for him— 21% voted for the FN (Ipsos, 2017). Mélenchon did not officially encourage his voters to vote for Emmanuel Macron: he refused to give a voting recommendation for the second round. In spite of this, he has criticised Marine Le Pen for years. It did not discourage the FN from attempting to seduce his voters. In fact, the FN has tried to charm lower classes. According to Stockemer, the membership in Marine Le Pen’s party has broadened to more classes, various educational levels and different professions: it is becoming a ‘catch-all party’ (Stockemer, 2017: 134).

This leaflet is unbranded: it could appear unclear who issued it and it looks like it could have been made by FI militants to encourage their supporters to vote for the FN in the second round. It is a good example of the ambiguity of the FN strategies to seduce left-wing voters and working classes. Under Jean-Marie Le Pen’s leadership, the economic vision was clearly ultraliberal. Since March 1992, with the publication of a brochure called “51 mesures pour faire le point sur le social” (“51 Measures to Review Social Matters”) by Bruno Mégret, the party has slowly started to lean towards traditionally more left-wing economic ideas. This brochure breaks away from ultraliberalism, condemns globalism and pleads in favour of an economic, social and national protectionism to align with supposed concerns of working classes (Igounet, 2016).

### DISCUSSION

Looking at different medias of communication of the party and its representatives enabled me to lead to a certain extent a discourse analysis to understand how they understand the world, and potentially intend to act upon it as a political party.

Julien Leonardelli said his political experience was the same as any youngster who got involved in their political movement (he mentioned the gluing of posters, like Nicolas Brunet). He disagreed when I asked if this new *école* would not disadvantage militants who weren’t trained academically in getting positions within the party. In his opinion, it would simply complement the existing organisation.

Because the RN has been a taboo party for so long, it lacks people who have been trained to direct their communication and strategies. The result is that it is fairly easy for the young, motivated and meticulous to climb the ladder quickly and occupy executive positions in the party or even to run for office (Rotman, 2014). In this study, neither interviewees have studied in the field of politics, but they have nevertheless reached important regional positions. This has been described as a feeling of belonging to a (second) ‘family’ for members (Tristan, 1987; Bourdieu and Podalydès in Bourdieu et al, 1999; Stockemer, 2017). The leaflets display systematically the colours of the French flag: *bleu-blanc-rouge* and take on a fairly virulent tone as if France had to be protected urgently from various viruses: the EU, the figure of the migrant, the ‘technocracy’, etc. Their communication strategy does aim to present a united front against determined but vaguely defined enemies.

Traditionally, FN activists have been trained internally (seminars, summer universities, official reading lists) but the opening of Marion Maréchal’s new *école*, the ISSEP, might be a mark of standardisation of the party strategy. Marion Maréchal is not officially opening an FN university, but the school board (exclusively male apart from herself) is made up of members of various far-right wing movements. Incidentally, the three last presidents of the FNJ have studied at university: Lyon-III (founded after May 1968 by opponents of the movement) for Julien Rochedy and La Sorbonne (a renowned

Parisian humanities university that is not traditionally a hub of the far-right) for Gaëtan Dussausaye and Jordan Bardella. Sciences Po Paris is also home to a significant but still a minority student group of FN sympathisers. Nicolas Brunet argued that students were getting more and more interested in the FN and putting forward these figures contributes in spreading this idea. The RN seems to be interested in what students can bring to the party, including legitimacy.

Marine Le Pen uses a rhetoric that triggers her audience's emotions: she tells people she has understood their pain and that she fights for them, for their comfort and their happiness. On the campaigning leaflets of FN candidates, personal 'closeness' and 'importance' has appeared, in contrast to what was done in her father's time (Dumitrescu, 2016). Few arguments that are used on young people are specific to them: the RN likes to present itself as a movement, a 'gathering' for French sovereignty and identity, so it only makes sense that the same arguments are presented.

The RN aims to recruit young people through their local organisations (Julien Leonardelli said that Marine Le Pen had asked them to put emphasis on the local level, unlike Jean-Marie Le Pen who was concerned almost exclusively with national presidential elections). However, they rely heavily on national medias, for example when Marine Le Pen and prominent members appear on national television (Dumitrescu, 2016). They use several strategies to seduce and attract youngsters:

- They create and develop an image of their party as the only one that can possibly understand the (young) people and act in their interest (both interviewees hinted at this).
- Through the 'big' ideals and values that they display ('identity', 'responsibilities', 'patriotism', 'change', etc) and the emphasis they put on 'generations' and 'nation', they do not need to target explicitly and extensively young people because they present their political platform as 'good for all' (Julien Leonardelli said that everything in their platform concerns young people as it is about building a certain model of society and thus their future).
- They talk about issues that are prominent in the French political debate but they present their argument as an 'untold truth' that the political elite deliberately hides from the people to protect their own interest.
- It is easier for young and politically untrained members to reach important positions, which contributes to making the RN an attractive party (Rotman, 2014) and reinforces the image of a 'different' party. There is also a strong group mentality so they present a united front against all sorts of enemies to the 'nation' (migrants, the EU, the bureaucracy, the vaguely defined 'elite' and the current political system, the media, globalisation).
- The supposed deradicalisation or *dédiabolisation* of the party and the supposed integration into the republican framework. Even though I had not asked him, the second interviewee extensively explained to

me why he believed his party could not be called a far-right wing party.

Young people are central to the *dédiabolisation* strategy of the RN. They are a means to an end because they contribute to legitimising the party and are a potential activist force.

## CONCLUSION

Looking at how the FN/RN membership and electoral scores have increased, it is obvious that what they are doing is working to a certain extent. However, before I conclude I would like to reinstate that this article did not aim to assess which strategies are the most effective: that would require further research. What this article looked at were the strategies to attract the youth as produced by Marine Le Pen's party. According to Stockemer (2017), four socialisation mechanisms draw people to the radical right: family and lineage, political socialization in high school and university, formative experiences during adult life and a gradual attraction to the goals and values of the party over time. He adds that under Marine Le Pen's leadership, her charismatic figure and her emphasis on putting people first has played a role in the increasing interest towards the RN. He explains the attraction of young voters to the RN: a higher unemployment rate makes them more vulnerable and thus more sensitive to their discourse while they are not in touch with mainstream parties. According to Dumitrescu, the differences between Jean-Marie Le Pen's and Marine Le Pen's discourses are 'cosmetic' (Dumitrescu, 2016: 1). Nonetheless, Marine Le Pen has shown more interest in the youth than her father, who preferred older people because he did not see youngsters as reliable.

The party has long been described as a sort of 'family' for young activists. It is also relatively easy for motivated militants to reach an important position or to run as candidate for various elections as the party lacks more trained executives. Marine Le Pen has had to reprimand and sometimes exclude young members after scandalous racist comments and behaviours.

The communication strategies of Marine Le Pen's Rassemblement National have become more mainstream, less scandalous, and better organised. She is very present on the radio and on television, as are other party members. After a disastrous debate against Emmanuel Macron between the two rounds of the presidential election where she came across as vindictive and irrational, she lost a lot of her credibility in the eyes of many voters. The RN populist rhetoric (neologisms, *pathos*, etc) along with their apparent normalisation, *dédiabolisation*, bears fruit. The next elections, the European elections in 2019, will show if her strategy continues to convince voters, including young people.

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