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The Evolving Rhetoric of Marine Le Pen: From Rhetoric
to Rhetoric Manipulation

By

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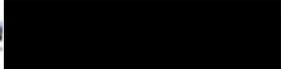
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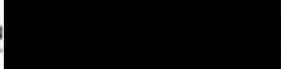
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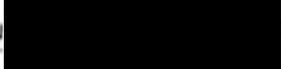
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Dedication Page

To my parents and supervisor, I could not have done this without you.

Thank you for all your support, along each step of the way.

The Evolving Rhetoric of Marine Le Pen: From Rhetoric to Rhetoric Manipulation

Sarah Omar Chidiac

Abstract

With the brisk rise of the Five Star Movement in Italy, the emergence of Law and Justice as the largest party in the Polish parliament, and the entrance of the Alternative for Deutschland as the third largest bloc in the German Bundestag, the eyes of the world were centered on the 2017 French presidential election. The French Presidential election could have ended with the inauguration of Marine Le Pen, leader of the National Front, as president of the French Republic. As populism and nationalism swept away one European country after the other, it was reasonable to think that the French far right had a real chance to rule. Despite having lost to current president Emmanuel Macron, Le Pen's second place in the race was considered a remarkable achievement to her and her party. This thesis explores the politician's rhetoric and how it has evolved across the years. It examines various speeches made by Le Pen on different occasions, starting with the year 2010, during which she campaigned for the presidency of the National Front, to 2017, only a few days prior to the presidential election. The purpose of this examination is to understand and to depict the rhetoric manipulation techniques that have had the ability to conceal the blatant tenets of Le Pen's political discourse. This thesis also endeavors to show how Le Pen's communication of the same old message in a different method was executed to manipulate the French people's votes. The thesis employs a comparative approach to the analysis of different speeches of Le Pen in order to capture her rhetoric style and ideology.

Key Words: Populism, Nationalism, Marine Le Pen, National Front, Rhetoric, Rhetoric Manipulation, Elections.

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Chapter One

Rising Nationalism and Marine Le Pen's Rhetoric

1.1 Introduction

This introductory chapter aims to present the rationale which prompted this study: the rising nationalism in Europe and, specifically, in France in recent years. It also serves to introduce this paper's objective: the study of the recent rhetoric of Marine Le Pen— leader of the French National Front since 2011— and how it has changed across the years. This is the first of four chapters that look to demonstrate how Le Pen's recent discourse has evolved from an upfront to an increasingly manipulative rhetoric, shedding light on the many rhetoric manipulation techniques that had allowed the politician to retain the same underlying ideology, while seemingly communicating a different one.

Rising Nationalism in Europe

In a European continent that is witnessing the proliferation of right wing political parties of the likes of the "Freedom Party" in Austria, the "Alternative for Deutschland" in Germany, and the "Party for Freedom" in Holland, ignoring the ascent of the far right to power in Europe is to turn a blind eye to a sweeping political trend that is pulling away from mainstream politicians and progressing towards political newcomers. Those newly-emerged politicians— no matter how extreme they are in their propositions or agendas— appear to come out as real challengers to the status-quo, promising radical change to the political scene and garnering increasing support for it from disgruntled publics.

Evidently, large and different segments of citizens in different European countries have been disenchanted with political systems that have long seemed stationary. In Austria, a far right contender almost clinched the country's presidency in 2016, signaling a deviation from the conservative and center-left parties that had exclusively dominated the political landscape of Austria since 1949 (Yascha Mounk, 2018). In the Netherlands,

the “Party for Freedom”, a Dutch nationalist and rightwing populist party, has won twenty seats in the 2017 local elections—a gain of five seats from the previous elections—becoming thus the second largest party in the Dutch parliament.

In France—a country so enmeshed with Middle Eastern politics and hosting a substantial minority of African origins— Marine Le Pen’s National Front far right party was able to increase its representation from just three to twenty-four seats in the European Parliamentary elections of 2014. This French party has also managed to garner a historical 6.45 million votes in the regional elections of 2015 and of enhancing the number of its seats from nil to eight in the general elections of 2017.

In that same year, the eyes of the world were centered on the presidential elections in which Le Pen has reaped 21.3% of the votes in the first round, coming out only in second place in the final round, with Emmanuel Macron elected president of the French Republic. Despite coming in second place, Le Pen’s performance was considered a remarkable achievement to both her and her party, highlighting a marked divergence in French politics from the dominance and bipartisanship of the Republican and Socialist parties (Ludivine Benard, 2017).

Usually, the upsurge of “political newcomers” is as much of a mark of democratic vigor and vivacity as it is of imminent illness. With the ascent in power of novice political parties, political systems tend to profit from an exhaustive and stimulating rivalry of opinions (Mounk, 2018). In truth, new parties may be beneficial in both manners: by imposing long-deserted concerns onto the table, as well as by introducing a new throng of representatives into office. Therefore, the emergence of political newcomers may be advantageous in the way it supplies the system with a new lifeblood (The Guardian, 2017). Be that as it may, some analysts still believe that the latest undoing of the traditional party system in Europe is anything but benevolent. For several of them, novel parties are not just offering other possibilities within the democratic scheme—but some of them are going as far as jeopardizing strategic values and principles of the system itself (Jorg Luyken, 2018).

Nationalism, protectionism, anti-immigration stances, and hard Euroscepticism, are but a few alleged examples of the ideology of most far right parties rising in Europe (Peter Davies, 2012).

Angela Merkel, who has served as Germany's Chancellor or head of government since 2005, has just secured a fourth term in March 2018. However, her Christian Democratic Union party has sensed the hostile feedback against mass immigration towards the European continent and Germany. In fact, a previous 2016 November survey showed that 42% of German citizens required a referendum on European Union affiliation (Luyken, 2017). Following the Brexit vote of 2016 and the rise of nationalism in numerous European countries, the chairperson of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany and her allies came to feel progressively more anxious of the changing political landscape in Europe (Luyken, 2017). "What we are witnessing is a re-surfacing of state egoism and nationalism", said Norbert Rottgen, a high-ranking policymaker in Merkel's center-right party. "This is our malady, and it goes in defiance of the firm grounds of the European vision" (Norbert Rottgen, 2017).

Accordingly, it appears that the ultimate approach to finding out how far right parties have been challenging the European vision as of late, is to analyze a selection of their most important rhetoric and propositions. In the case of France, it appears like the best method to finding out more about Marine Le Pen's alleged party "de-demonization" policy, and whether her party's vision still goes in defiance of the European values despite the latter, is by analyzing her rhetoric in recent years.

The interpretation of discourse in the case of populist rhetoric allows us to identify a populist's unequivocal ideology and to isolate his or her agenda from the tools they may use to conceal it.

1.2 Research Questions

Given the recently growing influence of the far right in Europe and in France, how has the rhetoric of the French National Front evolved in recent years? What are the linguistic

manipulation techniques used in Marine Le Pen's rhetoric as of late? And are these techniques more frequent as we approach the 2017 presidential elections?

Choosing the French case to study the growing influence of the far right in Europe and the role that rhetoric has played in its ascent is far from being random. In effect, my choice of this country— and the National Front party in particular— is justified by a multidisciplinary perspective.

Despite the fact that it is not the first chronological case whereby a far right party has recently reached or almost reached power in a European Country— with Poland's Law and Justice candidate becoming president in 2015, Austria's Freedom candidate coming in second place in 2016 presidential elections, and Hungary's Fidesz party dominating Hungarian politics since 2010— it is the first case that displayed an important role for rhetoric manipulation, with numerous experts talking in length about Le Pen's "de-diabolization" stratagem and the novel rhetoric it encompassed (Cecile Alduy, 2015).

Second, France is an influential country, both regionally and internationally, which makes the choice more relevant to international affairs. Enmeshed with Middle-Eastern affairs in addition to those of the West, events in France tend to have far and wide ripple effects that prove to be of substance on the international scene.

Third, France is viewed as a pillar country among European countries. Both its demographic—third in area and population in Europe— and historical weight contribute to the fact that events in France may destabilize more than one country's political system.

Fourth, France is a main mediator in a number of conflicts in Africa and the Middle (such as the internationalized Syrian conflict) and is host to a number of refugees and recent immigrants who may be affected if a far right candidate was ever made president. In fact, an anti-immigration politics in France may impact the immigration rate in other top host countries, including Lebanon. Those countries may have to receive a greater number of immigrants who would cease to be welcome in France in the event of a far right president seizing the rule.

Fifth, it appears vital to look closely at an election which conquers the long-established bipartisanship between the Socialists and the Republicans, and which provides a real opportunity for atypical parties, such as the National Front, to emerge and strive. Examining the role that rhetoric and rhetoric manipulation have possibly played in contributing to this opening might be of benefit, adding considerable value to the studies of rhetoric in politics.

Finally, deliberating on linguistic manipulation techniques may offer electorates additional insights on how to identify them in order to elude the trap of political deception. Emphasizing the difference between genuine agenda changes that a new political rhetoric may introduce, and superficial rhetoric changes introducing the same agenda, may enlighten voters and assists them in making better-informed decisions about who they wish to see in power and the kind of political system they wish to see in force. Examining whether those rhetoric manipulation apparatuses are more pronounced prior to presidential elections may aid electors in identifying a timeframe in which they ought to be particularly vigilant of any rhetoric that may mislead them or manipulate their vote.

1.3 Methodology

Despite losing the presidential race to Emmanuel Macron— the incumbent president of the French Republic— Marine Le Pen’s rank as second was considered, and still is, a remarkable achievement to both her and her National Front party.

In order to study one of the apparatuses that may have helped the French far right come this far, I decipher in this research paper some of the recent discourse of Marine Le Pen. The interpretation of five diverse speeches made by Le Pen allows the identification of most of the standpoints and beliefs that have been carried out by her and her party in recent years— beginning with 2010 which saw her campaigning for the presidency of the National Front, to 2017 which saw her lobbying for the country’s presidency in anticipation of the 2017 presidential elections.

This paper's choice of speeches is, in fact, based upon the pivotal points that a number of them represented in Le Pen's career—such as her 2011 inaugural speech as president of the National Front, or that in which she claimed victory after the first round of the 2015 regional elections. Other speeches are selected based on the generous quantity of proclamations and statements they offer that are worthy to analyze— such as the politician's 2013 speech at the National Front Université d'été, or the lengthy 2017 speech she made a few days prior to the presidential elections.

The comparative approach between those various speeches helps locate the ideology hiding behind the semantics across that timeframe, evaluating whether it has been subjugated to any real change, or whether it has really become more inclusive and moderate, across any of the selected speeches. After examining the ideology of my orator— with particular attention to her stances on immigration and Islam in France— I probe the ways in which those stances were communicated to the audience. Paying heed to any variation in the techniques used by Marine Le Pen to lay out her political propositions, I examine phrasal allusions, connotative meanings, insinuations, metaphors and amalgams (among other figures of speech).

Subsequently, I adopt a comprehensive qualitative approach to analyze the reasons behind the exploitation of these figures of speech and whether they have reflected the true essence of Le Pen's ideology, validating that they were applied to appease electorates and to feign an ideological change to a new, inclusive and moderate ideology, despite Le Pen's maintenance of the old one.

The interpretation of these speeches in a chronological manner facilitates the evaluation of whether those manipulation techniques have become more frequent as we moved forward in time, and whether they have become most pronounced as we reached the latest speech prior to the presidential elections.

Conclusively, as we are dealing with rhetoric analysis, it seems natural to follow an in-depth qualitative approach that enables the divulgence of the true objective of a discourse and its dynamics. Notably, the comparative methodology that this research paper assumes has always been popular in political science and among previous studies of rhetoric, which has made it the most rational method to adopt as well.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

In Chapter II, I review the various literature that I had come across and which had helped me in assessing my hypothesis. In the first section, I document the evolution of rhetorical studies from their early beginnings in Ancient Greece to their fruition in the twenty-first century. This allusion to some of the history of rhetorical studies represents a nod to the past influential work of prominent linguistic experts, such as Norman Fairclough, who had coined the term “linguistic manipulation”— the subject of this research paper— at the end of the 20th century.

In the second section, I make recourse to Ludivine Benard’s work to touch on the history of the National Front as a party and what it was able to accomplish under its previous leader—Jean-Marie Le Pen— known for his flagrant political propositions. Juxtaposing those to the accomplishments of Marine Le Pen, Benard’s work emphasizes the preeminent performance of the latter and encourages the investigation of plausible contributors to her superior accomplishments, including rhetoric manipulation. In addition, the brief discussion of the history of the National Front by Benard permits the illustration of how most of the tenets which have been considered traditional to the party are still maintained by the current leader of the National Front, despite her effort to sound different.

In the next section of the chapter, I discuss the work of Andrew Walker. Pointing out the common factors that had facilitated a rise in power by the National Front under both its former and current leaders, Walker’s work enables the dismissal of certain factors as the ultimate stimulus behind Marine Le Pen’s rise and gives merit to this paper’s undertaking to examine rhetoric as a plausible catalyst.

In the last section of the chapter, I refer to the relevant work of linguistics experts Cecile Alduy and Stephane Wahnich, “Marine Le Pen Prise Aux Mots”. This work compares some of Marine Le Pen’s significant propositions from 2011 to 2014 to those made by Jean-Marie Le Pen from 1987 to 2013. Drawing a uniformity between the two National Front leaders’s ideologies, Alduy and Wahnich’s work helps substantiate one of this

paper's claims: that Marine Le Pen's recent discourse carries the same ideology as her father's, despite sounding otherwise.

In Chapter III, I proceed to analyzing and contrasting five diverse speeches made by Marine Le Pen from 2010 to 2017. I identify the dominant ideology in each of those speeches, and the different rhetoric manipulation techniques that were used to deliver it, to hide it, or to subdue it— in other words, to manipulate it. Finally, I examine whether the use of those manipulation techniques was more frequent as we approached the 2017 presidential elections.

In Chapter IV, I wrap up the results of the study to make my paper's inferences and carry the conclusion of this work.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter aims to introduce the four main literary works that helped put together this study. Accordingly, in an attempt to study Le Pen’s rhetoric and to evaluate how it has evolved in recent years, it was necessary to go over some of the angles through which the topic had been dealt with already. In fact, the literature on the National Front party and various chronicles of its milestones has been extensively visited by numerous analysts since the announcement of Marine Le Pen’s candidacy to the presidency. This revival came concurrently with a series of new public appearances, interviews and assemblages carried on by the presidential candidate herself in order to rally support prior to the elections. However, before proceeding to my own examination of the discourse of Le Pen during some of her recent rallies, I shed light on some of the most relevant literature that I have come to depend on upon writing this research paper—including an overview of the evolution of rhetorical studies across the years and up until the term “linguistic manipulation” was coined.

2.1 The Evolution of Rhetoric and the Definition of Linguistic Manipulation

Rhetoric in Ancient Greece

As previously mentioned, the influence with public opinion—or the power of rhetoric—is an area of expertise that has not newly emerged, but is rather entrenched in the western political notion from the time of ancient Greece and the Athenian polis. In fact, the word ‘rhetoric’ stems from the ancient Greek ‘rhetorike’, signifying the ‘art’ of influential speech carried out by a rhetor (i.e. an orator or a speaker) (Kenneth Burke, 1945).

Initially, rhetoric comprised the teaching of efficient discourse not only to the people of ancient Greece who partook in political activities, but also to those who did not (Burke,

1945). Talking in a social context was fundamental to the Athenian existence. It was a civilization where, customarily, news were circulated by word of mouth and direct meetings amongst people. Accounts and anecdotes had long been communicated that way, as were updates of combats and their aftermaths. What individuals spoke mattered and citizens had a great consideration for the potentials of verbal persuasiveness (Burke, 1945).

But perhaps any contemporary cautiousness in exploring the influence of rhetoric has been the result of a severe polemic that has encircled the art of persuasiveness since the olden days. In effect, the paramount criticism of rhetoric came in the view point of Plato (Martin, 2014). In the opinion of Plato, a fair state was to be established on the basis of undisputable values instead of the partiality of persuasion and argumentation. That is, the affairs of the city-state ought to have a “metaphysical” foundation delivered by the fixed knowledge of philosophy rather than the haphazard ability of an orator to impress their audience. According to the classical Greek logician, if public speaking could convince listeners of almost anything, then the ultimate grievances and breaches could take place in the name of justice. In many of his oeuvres, Plato made obvious his disdain for and wariness of discourse as a dependable area of knowledge (Richard Lanham, 2004). In that respect, it is safe to think that Plato was the first theorist to anticipate—with much trepidation—the potential dangers of “rhetoric-maneuvering” which has the capacity to manipulate speech and to cause infractions (Norman Fairclough, 1992).

Rhetoric in the Roman Republic

In the reflections of Marcus Tullius Cicero—often praised as the ultimate public speaker of the Roman republic—the assistances of rhetoric were fundamental to the affairs of the Polis (Lanham, 2004). Cicero formed a quantity of dissertations on discourse throughout his life where he predominantly commended the positive role of speech-making in maintaining the republican lifestyle and values (Daniel Kapust, 2011). The Roman republic was not a democratic state in the modern gist of the word; it only comprised features of “representation” with a noble-controlled Senate. However, it did present numerous prospects for orators to persuade their listeners, allowing thus freedom of

speech in order to give the impression of a self-governing society (Joy Connolly, 2009). Cicero's musings on rhetoric were less theoretical and more pragmatic. In fact, according to Cicero, the "exemplary speaker" was an honorable man with a great knowledge and mastery of his subject matter who could convince his listeners with "reason, authority and emotion" all conjoined (Connolly, 2009).

For Cicero, it was the proficiency of the speaker himself that counted the most. Thus, a skilled speaker may estimate the convenient style of argumentation by the characteristics of his listeners and fine-tune his approach accordingly (Kapust, 2011). Cicero's progressive views on rhetoric and rhetoric-moderation were actually some of the first musings on the manipulation of rhetoric in accordance to the audience's needs. Consequently, what Plato had considered an injustice and a dangerous weapon, Cicero regarded as an ingenious asset.

Rhetoric during the Renaissance Era

However, after the collapse of the Athenian democratic state and, later, that of the Roman Republic, discourse lost its outstanding role in politics (Bryan Garsten, 2011). Nonetheless, it resurfaced again throughout the renaissance era. During that time, and as a backlash to outer governance by tyrannical leaders and empires, Ancient Greek and Ciceronian notions were revived and called for in order to re-instate the republican values that were relinquished. Once more, discourse was considered an indispensable weapon to calling out for the collective good (Lanham, 2004). Furthermore, discourse was viewed as fundamental to the self-governance of political communities by the people themselves, as opposed to the supremacy of religious doctrine or rule by force (Ernesto Grassi, 2000).

Rhetoric in the Modern Sovereign State

The change that may have posed the ultimate menace to the influence of rhetoric in politics, however, was the rise of the modern, sovereign state (John Morrall, 1980). The emergence of centralized authorities with distinctive territorial borders and the capability to impose fixed rules by means of violence, conflicted with the classic, humane essence of rhetoric (Morrall, 1980). Sovereignty, then, suggested that the public power was to be effected through an independent and imposing set of commands to be complied with, without any questions.

The two most substantial political theorists of modern sovereignty, Thomas Hobbes and Jean Jacques Rousseau, provided different understandings of the nature of sovereignty as a firm foundation to the political system (Burke, 1945). Yet, both of them decisively emphasized the perils of discourse and the desperate necessity to restrain its effects.

Notably, for Hobbes, political influence was to be understood as the creation of an autonomous power necessarily distinct from the individuals who had approved it (Morrall, 1980). Once approved as an authentic authority, the sovereign was at liberty to adopt the laws and define the rights—or lack of—of its people. As a result, a moment of reflection and discussion was short-lived and conclusive. After that, individuals were not to discuss nor to deliberate on public affairs (Morrall, 1980). Therefore, at the core of Hobbes' philosophy, we find once more a deep-seated criticism of rhetoric and the perils it poses to civic peace.

In fact, Hobbes dedicated a substantial space to criticizing the “irrationalities” and fallacies of ancient thinkers, and certainly, “the employment of imagery, tropes, and other figures of speech, instead of words proper” (Morrall, 1980). To this enlightenment philosopher, such misinterpretations, fallacies, and misappropriation of terms—contemporarily referred to as “rhetoric-maneuvering” techniques— were the antecedents to societal and political struggles.

Writing almost a century later, Rousseau offered an alternate interpretation of sovereignty to that of Hobbes' (Morrall, 1980). To Rousseau, sovereignty required an accord among citizens, but which could not be separate from the people themselves.

Restoring a classic republican notion, he suggested that the political system be established upon a community of individuals, each of whom partaking in the identification of the general will (Burke, 1945). Therefore, a “general will” disallowed the handing over of power to a distinct authority that would impose all the rules. But if Rousseau assumed a republican vision of the political system, he nevertheless upheld a conception of sovereignty that had no place for the art of rhetoric.

Unavoidably, Rousseau asserted that it was healthier for the state if there were a great margin of “unanimity” in order to maintain the overall will of the community, “whereas extended deliberations, oppositions and turbulences indicate the preeminence of specific interests and the deterioration of the state” (Garsten, 2011). As a matter of fact, Rousseau cautioned against the likelihood of a “cunning speaker” who could convince individuals against their good sense (Burke, 1945). Consequently, under the authority of the general will, “there was no place for maneuvers nor for articulacy”, and therefore, no place for political rhetoric (Burke, 1945).

Rhetoric during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Nevertheless, the rhetorical arts experienced a significant restoration with the emergence of democratic institutes throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In fact, Scotland’s writer and theoretician Hugh Blair functioned as the front-runner of this budding movement towards the end of the eighteenth century (Garsten, 2011). In his most celebrated oeuvre “Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres”, the theorist promoted the instruction of rhetoric for the average citizen as an essential weapon for his or her social development (Garsten, 2011).

Rhetoric after the American and French Revolutions

Political rhetoric also experienced regeneration following the US and French revolutions. The studies of rhetoric in ancient Greece and Rome were resuscitated in the dissertations of the nineteenth century as theoreticians, orators, and instructors resorted to Cicero and other illustrious orators in order to vindicate the emergence of a new republic. Prominent rhetorical theoreticians comprised John Quincy Adams of Harvard—US' 6th president—who promoted the development of both democracy and the arts of rhetoric, establishing thus a stringent correspondence between the two (Fred Kaplan, 2014).

Rhetoric during the Twentieth Century

During the twentieth century, rhetoric expanded into an elaborate branch of knowledge with the founding of debate clubs and schools that provided average citizens with the opportunity to listen to orators and to improve their argumentation abilities (Peter Augustine Lawler, 2005). These colleges and their curriculums (classes such as public discourse, discourse analysis, and Ancient Greek theories) certainly nurtured democratic principles and encouraged active involvement in politics and the public realm.

Nonetheless, cautiousness and suspicion in investigating the power of rhetoric remained. But it was literary theorists in the likes of Kenneth Burke who resolved to build on the stepping stones of their antecedents in favor of rhetoric, introducing therefore, their own instrumental musings to this concentrated field of study.

Kenneth Burke was among the front-runners—in 1945—to re-emphasize the significance of rhetoric in the study of politics (Gerard Hauser, 2004). Burke assumed that we may uncover the real intentions of a speaker only by delving into their speech and by looking for the reason behind their words. According to Burke, political rhetoric remained the one indispensable apparatus to impact subjects and to effect major political change (Burke, 1945)

Rhetoric in the Twenty-First Century and “Linguistic Manipulation”

But it was not until the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first that Norman Fairclough was able to make a momentous contribution to the political rhetoric studies by expounding on a relatively unexplored— albeit alluded to— concept called “Linguistic Manipulation”. In fact, Fairclough’s input constituted an appendage to all the previously pinned down, must-have skills for rhetors and to the fundamental elements of political rhetoric (William White, 2014). In his work, the linguistics professor carefully emphasized one chief approach to achieving political aims through discourse: linguistic manipulation. According to Fairclough, “linguistic manipulation is the conscious use of language in a devious way to control others” (Fairclough, 1992).

In truth, Fairclough argued that this method of “maneuvering” may be centered on the employment of oblique and “ambiguous” words, or it may encompass the concealment of speech content through the use of “elocutionary effects”. Those effects are the techniques employed by the speaker in order to take the limelight off their material (e.g. their ability to deliver an evocative discourse that could exceptionally woo the audience irrespective of the content) (Paul Chilton, 1993). Fairclough’s contribution affirmed that linguistic manipulation-- albeit paradoxical and contestably “un-ethical”—continued to be the most powerful tool of political rhetoric (Chilton, 1993).

Today, Cecile Alduy— a political discourse analyst and a Stanford university professor— claims that linguistic manipulation may broaden to involve the employment of catch lines and watchwords in speeches, the recourse to allusions and the connotative meanings of the words, the use of an ambiguous language, and the exploitation of imagery and figures of speech (Cecile Alduy, 2015). In fact, and according to the discourse analyst, the language that has been used in political discourse in recent times has made resort to a wide assortment of rhetorical maneuvering techniques. Those techniques have allowed political rhetoric to be easily assumed by media and rapidly accepted by different—even heterogeneous— segments of the population (Alduy, 2015).

This linguistic stratagem to persuade electorates by manners of elusiveness and nuance presents a great peril according to Alduy: it might give political radicalism the chance to hide behind the subtlety and “softness” of rewordings and overtones. At its most dangerous, Alduy claims that linguistic maneuvering may cheat listeners into believing that changes in language have expanded to include changes in ideology and doctrine as well (Alduy, 2015).

Consequently, and setting off from this point, I have decided to examine whether Le Pen’s novel discourse has gone so far as to introduce a novel ideology, or whether it has fallen so short as to introduce a novel language with novel linguistic manipulation techniques only.

2.2 The History of the National Front by Ludivine Benard

On the other hand, a comprehensive study on the history of the National Front by Ludivine Benard— a prominent journalist and analyst— has also occupied center stage in that revived literature, and dominated a large part of the European far right movement studies. In her analysis, Benard explored the debut and legacy of the National Front, as well as the chief accomplishments achieved by the party under its former president Jean-Marie Le Pen. Having recounted those accomplishments, the author juxtaposed them to those fulfilled under its current president Marine Le Pen, emphasizing hence a considerable gap between the performances of the two leaders to the advantage of the latter.

On the heels of Benard’s significant study, numerous researchers became impelled to investigate the ultimate reason behind this performance gap, especially as they learned that the party which came second in the 2017 presidential elections under Marine Le Pen, had only managed to gain 0.52% of the public’s trust the first time it entered a general election in 1973 (Ludivine Benard, 2017).

In effect, Benard introduced her work by illuminating on some of the history of the National Front as a political party. She explained that the roots of the National Front may be trailed back to a multitude of small far right factions, and particularly, to the

“Ordre Nouveau” (Benard, 2017). According to the journalist, that movement was created in 1969 and its values were lucidly declared by one of its superiors at the time, François Brigneau, a couple of years after. During an assembly in 1971, Brigneau affirmed: “we must generate an avant-garde party white as our race, red as our blood, and green as our hopes” (Benard, 2017). This was thought to be an outspoken allusion to the Italian Social Movement, which was a fascist movement founded in 1946 by some of the previous adherents of dictator Benito Mussolini (Benard, 2017).

In her research paper, Benard elucidated on the objective of the “Ordre Nouveau”, which was to join together a sundry of French right-wing parties in order to “strengthen the unison and harmony of French nationalism” (Benard, 2017). In June 1972, the party made the decision to submit to the 1973 general elections within a larger-scale structure. Therefore, on October 5 1972, the National Front was established with Jean-Marie Le Pen— then famed for his participation in the Algerian war— operating as president. However, the party was only able to garner 0.52% of the citizens’ votes upon undertaking its first elections (Benard, 2017). Starting with this modest score, Benard moved along to chronicle the performances and tallies of the party under each of the former and current presidents, as well as to document each presidents’ ideology throughout these performances.

Benard’s findings can be recapitulated in the following table.

Table 2.2 Comparison in Performance and Ideology between the Former and Current Leaders of the National Front

Jean-Marie Le Pen	Marine Le Pen
<p>1974: 0.75% in Presidential Elections</p> <p>(Ideology and engagements: limitation of state function, championing of national interest, limitation of immigration...)</p>	<p>2011: Marine Le Pen elected President of the National Front party</p> <p>(Ideology and engagements: de-demonization of the party by the expulsion of members perceived as</p>

	<p>radical, strong focus on social issues and immigration, vilification of globalization and immigration, championing of national interest...)</p>
<p>1978: 0.33% in General Elections (electing representatives to National Assembly)</p> <p>(Front National’s campaign primarily focusing on the “dangers of immigration”)</p>	<p>2012: 17.9% in the first round of the Presidential Elections – No qualification to the second round but a boost from fourth place in 2007 to third place</p> <p>A boost from zero to two seats in the General Elections</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>
<p>1981: Failed candidature in the Presidential Elections due to insufficient sponsorship</p> <p>(Front National focusing on the same engagements as above, with party counting less than 300 members)</p>	<p>2014: 25% in the European Union Parliamentary elections with 24 seats won versus only 3 seats in 2009</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>
<p>1984: 10.95% in the European Union Parliamentary Elections, with 10 members of the National Front elected into the Parliament</p>	<p>2015: 28% in the first round of Regional Elections – Marie Le Pen herself scoring 40% in the Northern Region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie – Lost second round but achieved highest National Front score</p>

<p>(Same engagements)</p>	<p>of 6.45 million votes versus only 11% in 2010</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>
<p>1986: 35 seats from the National Front won in General Elections</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>	<p>2017: 21.3% in the first round of the Presidential Elections – Qualification to the second round scoring 33.9% - Emmanuel Macron elected as President</p> <p>The National Front winning 8 seats in the General Elections—a boost from 2 seats in 2012</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>
<p>1988: 14.38% in the first round of the Presidential Elections – No qualification to the second round</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>	
<p>1989: 11.73% in the European Union Parliamentary Elections with 10 members elected</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>	

<p>1995: 15% in the first round of the Presidential Elections- No qualification to the second round</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>	
<p>2002: 16.86% in the first round of the Presidential Elections – First qualification by the National Front to the second round</p> <p>17.8% in the second round of the Presidential Elections – Jacques Chirac elected president</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>	
<p>2007: 10.44% in the first round of the Presidential Elections (securing 4th place) – No qualification to the second round</p> <p>0 seats won in the General Elections</p> <p>(Same engagements)</p>	
<p>2009: Setback in European Union</p>	

Parliamentary Elections with only 3 members elected into the Parliament (Same engagements)	
2010: 11% in the Regional Elections (electing regional councils) – (Same engagements)	

Table 2.2 Shows a performance gap between the former and current presidents of the National Front to the advantage of the latter in 1) Presidential Elections, 2) General Elections, 3) European Parliament elections, and 4) Regional Elections despite sharing almost the same ideology.

In fact, Benard’s analysis has been useful to this research paper on the account that it defended the urgency to investigate supplementary reasons that allowed the achievement of higher scores by the National Front under Marine Le Pen— despite a longer tenancy by former party leader Jean-Marie Le Pen. Furthermore, Benard’s study has managed to emphasize not only a longer tenancy of Le Pen the father, but also an uncanny similitude between his ideology and that of his daughter. Therefore, Benard’s work has definitely helped in discarding changes in ideology as a potential cause for Marine Le Pen’s recent rise in power, prompting this paper’s examination of another potentially responsible dynamic: rhetoric, or more specifically, rhetoric manipulation.

2.3 The French Economic Problem by Andrew Walker

Alternatively, and prior to making the connection between changes in rhetoric and the National Front’s recent rise, I was investigating all elements that could have stimulated the National Front’s recent ascent to power. In the middle of my search, I have come across the work of Andrew Walker— BBC World Service economics correspondent— which helped me in identifying (and discarding) the common factors that contributed to a rise in power under both the former and the current leaders of the National Front.

2.3.1 The Socio-Economic Factor under Both Leaders of the National Front

According to Walker, “the National Front’s accomplishment throughout the second half of the 1980’s was related to the socio-economic changes at the time and the fact that sizable French cities were struggling with increasing financial uncertainty and an upward immigration rate” (Andrew Walker, 2017). On the other hand, and according to the same author, Jean-Marie Le Pen’s accomplishment and qualification to the second round of the presidential elections in 2002 was likely related to the rise of nationalism following the September 11 attacks (Walker, 2017). However, Walker argued that financial insecurity, high immigration rate, and terrorism have all been widespread under Marine Le Pen as well, and that all these factors have evidently played a role in the expansion of the party’s popularity under both leaders.

Consequently, those three dynamics, while they have definitely contributed to the current ascent in power for the party, they could not have been the ultimate catalyst to the superior achievements of the National Front under Marine Le Pen, since they have been present under Le Pen the father as well (Walker, 2017).

2.3.2 The Financial Factor under Both Party Leaders: Financial and Economic Insecurity

As a matter of fact, Walker elucidated that with about 3 million citizens unemployed in France in 2016 alone (or 10.2% of the workforce), France came far behind other European countries across the border, with countries like Germany scoring an unemployment rate as low as 4.3% (Walker, 2017). In truth, and with that rate, France came second uppermost in unemployment between the G7 primary developed economies (Walker, 2017). In addition to a disquieting unemployment rate, Walker highlighted a few 2016 reports showing a budget deficit and an accumulated government debt that were on the rise, and at their highest, in comparison to reports from the recent years (Walker, 2017). Moreover, and behind these alarming economic and financial figures, Walker expounded on a persistently weak economic growth amounting to 0.5%

in the first quarter of 2016, founded upon the Gross Domestic Product per person— a rough and ready pointer of average living standards (Walker, 2017).

This deliberation on financial insecurity by Walker has evidently allowed the dismissal of the latter as the “game-changer” that elicited superior election gains by Marine Le Pen, since extreme financial uncertainty has been present under Jean-Marie Le Pen as well. On the word of Walker, the tenancy of Jean-Marie Le Pen as president of the National Front was plagued by the 1973 oil crisis which augmented costs in energy, costs on production and, ultimately, prices (Walker, 2017). According to the BBC economics correspondent, financial uncertainty characterized the entire d'Estaing government years, as well as the primary years of François Mitterrand's tenure which counted in a historical recession in the beginning of 1980s'— all of which were witnessed by Jean-Marie Le Pen as the leader of the National Front party at the time (Walker, 2017). “Growth restarted later in the decade, only to be put to a halt by the economic depression of the early 1990s”, wrote Walker (Walker, 2017).

Consequently, this information provided by Walker has definitely guided my research paper towards disregarding financial instability as the ultimate cause for the recent ascent to power by the National Front, and inspired it to look further for another, stronger stimulus.

2.3.3 Immigration under Both Party Leaders

Concerning immigration, on the other hand, Walker resorted to charts and data from the OFPRA— French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People— and the INSEE— French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies— in order to shed light on an increasingly high influx of people coming from war-torn countries and seeking asylum in France since 2013 (Walker, 2017). Although the number of Syrian refugees arriving to France and seeking international protection has measured low compared to Syria's neighboring countries (UNHCR, 2014), figures provided by the OFPRA still showed an exponential rate of immigration— a 3.68% increase in the refugee rate, a 7.71% increase in the subsidiary protection rate, and a 11.39% decrease in the rejection rate of asylum applicants from 2013 to 2016— under the National Front tenancy of Marine Le Pen. This increasing rate of refugee and asylum seekers to France

must have prompted the alignment of numerous electorates with the anti-immigration philosophy of the National Front in recent years (Walker, 2017). However, Walker has resorted to data provided by Focus Migration—an immigration think-tank in partnership with the Hamburg Institute of International Economics and the German Federal Agency for Civic Education—to indicate a high immigration rate under the National Front tenancy of Jean-Marie Le Pen as well. According to this data, and at the end of the 1980's, the number of applications for asylum in France rose significantly (Marcus Engler, 2007). According to the author of this Focus Migration study, that can be justified, in part, by the fact that migrants relied increasingly upon the right of asylum in the absence of other legal networks for immigration (Engler, 2007). Furthermore, and contrary to the European trend at the time, the number of applications for asylum rose in France at the end of the 1990's to reach its highest number, with 59770 applications, in 2003 (Engler, 2007). In 2005, France had been the country with the most applications for asylum worldwide (Engler, 2007).

These findings have thus abetted in the discarding of high immigration rate as the ultimate stimulus behind the National Front's recent rise, as studies have showed that it had been rampant, at various points in time, under Jean-Marie Le Pen as well.

2.3.4 Terrorism under Both Party Leaders

In relation to terrorism, and as Walker attributed Jean-Marie Le Pen's second-round qualification in the 2002 presidential elections to the September 11 attacks, he maintained that terrorism has been present and thriving under Marine Le Pen as well (Walker, 2017). The January 2015 attacks on Charlie Hebdo, the same year's terrorist offensives on Paris, and the July 2016 lorry assault on acquitted civilians in Nice have been but some of the many attacks that were proven to be perpetrated and coordinated by adherents to Islamist organizations. In the wake of those attacks, apprehension rose across the French society about Jihadist violence and the lure of ISIS-inspired terrorism drawing more Muslims at home (Walker, 2017). Subsequently, and according to Walker, it was only natural for an increasing segment of the population to begin voicing a similar anti-immigration rhetoric as that of the National Front under Marine Le Pen (Walker, 2017).

Accordingly, and since terrorism has evidently played a role in the expansion of the party's popularity under both leaders, it could not have justified any performance gap between the two.

Therefore, and since financial insecurity, high immigration rate and terrorism have all been common influences under both Le Pen the father and the daughter, Walker's analysis justified this research's quest for the ultimate "game-changer" or the "tipping stimulus" behind the National Front's recent rise to power and Marine Le Pen's superior election gains. It has, as a matter of fact, given warrant and merit to the study of rhetoric (or linguistic manipulation) as the added-advantage, or the ultimate catalyst behind this recent ascent in power and, particularly, behind the results achieved by Marine Le Pen as of late and up until the 2017 presidential elections.

2.4 "Marine Le Pen, Prise Aux Mots" by Cecile Alduy and Stephane Wahnich

Another piece of literature that has largely impacted this research paper is the prominent work presented by Cecile Alduy— a professor and specialist in political discourse analysis of the far right— and Stephane Wahnich— a professor and specialist in public and political communication. Together, they have published the "Marine Le Pen Prise Aux Mots" volume, which offers an exhaustive comparative work between the ideology behind Marine Le Pen's discourse and that of Jean-Marie Le Pen.

Out of almost two thousand public appearances made by Marine Le Pen from 2011 to 2014, as well as countless declarations voiced by Jean-Marie Le Pen from 1987 to 2013, the two authors selected five hundred speeches to compare and contrast to one another. In fact, this work had one main purpose in sight: to examine whether the discourse of Marine Le Pen, during that time interval and since her inauguration as president of the National Front party, has communicated a different ideology than that of her father. The selected speeches were dissected with the aid of various technical tools used in rhetoric analysis— such as tools investigating Lexicometry, or the measurement of the frequency with which words occur in text. In effect, rhetoric analysis tools such as Termino,

Hyperbase, and Voyants have all been relied upon by the two authors in order to make this work available to readers with as much accuracy and exactitude as possible. The aforementioned apparatuses have not only helped in underlying words' concordance—or the instance in which two words have been simultaneously used— but also in identifying a uniformity between the words of Marine and Jean-Marie Le Pen and an uncanny similarity between their two ideologies.

2.4.1 Marine Le Pen's Stance on Immigration, According to Alduy and Wahnich's Book

According to the two authors of the book, Marine Le Pen's recent discourse on immigration has not fallen far from that of Jean-Marie Le Pen (Cecile Alduy and Stephane Wahnich, 2015). However, using Hyperbase rhetoric analysis, it became possible to highlight the new economic lexical field used by Marine Le Pen to caution against it (e.g. unemployment, wages, jobs, costs and competition). This set of words was evidently absent from the classic speeches of Jean-Marie Le Pen whose discourse was strewn with words such as borders, identity, strangers, security, and immigration-invasion instead (Alduy and Wahnich, 2015).

Conclusively, the two authors argued that although the 2011 to 2014 rhetoric of Marine Le Pen in respect to immigration involved different words, her stance remained the same as her father's (Alduy and Wahnich, 2015).

“anti-racism is a political instrument holding intolerance against the French, the white and the Christians”, and that the “gas chambers that the Jews had been subjected to in the World War two were a meager detail in times past”, Marine Le Pen’s discourse expounded on a similar inequity existing within the French society (Alduy and Wahnich, 2015). Even though the point of focus had altered from the father’s rhetoric to that of his daughter, “Marine Le Pen Prise Aux Mots” indicated that both orators consecrated a great portion of their discourse championing French ethnic purity against an “inferior” race, religion, or culture (Alduy and Wahnich, 2015). And while Jean-Marie Le Pen’s controversial rhetoric focused on the Jews and the people of color (amongst others), Hyperbase and Voyant findings have revealed Marine Le Pen’s use of a similar divisive ideology against French Muslims and Muslim immigrants (Alduy and Wahnich, 2015). Unfortunately, no hyperbase diagram was published by the two authors regarding this topic.

Consequently, Alduy and Wahnich’s work has been valuable to this research paper on the account that it has given it motivation to uncover additional techniques through which Marine Le Pen may have managed to communicate the same old National Front ideology, while sounding different. It has inspired this paper to follow in the two author’s footsteps to examine other Marine Le Pen’s rhetoric— especially the one diffused most recently and which has not been analyzed by the authors.

As a conclusion, the literary works that this chapter has attended to have all highlighted an uncanny similarity between the ideology of the National Front under Marine Le Pen, and that of her father. This similarity has encouraged the dismissal of the presence of an ideological change, despite Le Pen’s recent efforts to sound more inclusive, moderate and with a different vision. Furthermore, and while the following elements have doubtlessly contributed to the National Front’s recent ascent in power, the examined literature has urged the discard of socio-economic hurdles, immigration, and terrorism as the ultimate trigger for the party’s recent success, showing that these standard grievances were all rampant under Jean-Marie Le Pen as well, thus guiding this paper towards the study of a novel element: the much-talked-about novel rhetoric of Marine Le Pen. Therefore, this literature has given merit to this study to investigate a stronger, novel

catalyst behind the National Front's recent electoral gains, which is rhetoric manipulation. Accordingly, a similar rhetoric analysis to that of Alduy and Wahnich will ensue, validating Le Pen's leap from rhetoric to rhetoric manipulation in recent years, and uncovering additional manipulation techniques that have allowed the politician to sound excessively different, while maintaining the same old ideology of the party.

Finally, as the previously mentioned authors have halted their analysis of Marine Le Pen's speeches in 2014, the next chapter will resume it to encompass the politician's discourse from 2010 to 2017.

Chapter Three

The Analysis of Marine Le Pen's Rhetoric From 2010 to 2017

This chapter seeks to analyze five different speeches made by Marine Le Pen, from 2010 to 2017, in order to evaluate how her rhetoric has evolved over the time. In addition, it aims to decipher any rhetoric manipulation technique used by the politician in order to deliver the same ideology, to conceal it, or to subdue it. Subsequently, it serves to examine whether those techniques have been employed more frequently as we progressed in time, and particularly, in anticipation of the 2017 presidential elections.

Accordingly, in order to analyze various speeches of Marine Le Pen leading up to the 2017 presidential elections, this chapter builds on the work of Alduy and Wahnich's study that has seen the analysis of another sample of Marine Le Pen's discourse, in addition to some of her father's.

Despite not using any rhetoric analysis tools in the likes of prior researchers, I benefit from their skills in identifying the context and the setting of the speeches, the underlying ideology behind the politician's words, and some of the figures of speech that have been used in order to manipulate discourse. I proceed to add to the latter several other techniques that I have uncovered and which have served the same purpose.

3.1 Marine Le Pen's Speech Campaigning for the Presidency of the National Front (2010)

It is worthy to note that the examination of this speech has been crucial to showing that Marine Le Pen's use of rhetoric manipulation techniques has been gradual and exponential. As a matter of fact, this speech confirms that the politician's discourse began as direct and unpolished, and evolved to become much more airbrushed as she became the president of the National Front.

On December 10, 2010 in Lyon, and while internally campaigning for the National Front presidency before 250 to 300 supporters of the party (Le Monde, 2010), Marine Le Pen proclaimed:

“It has been fifteen years since we have witnessed the emergence of the veil, and veils have been increasingly spotted since then. After that, we had the Burqa, and with time, there has been more and more Burqas. Then the prayers in public space took place [...] Today, there are ten or fifteen places whereby a good number of people come together regularly to occupy the French territories” (Marine Le Pen, 2010).

Le Pen, voicing clear and vociferous complaints about the religious practices of a certain segment of the French population, has successfully managed to do it while avoiding to call those out by who they are. Instead, Le Pen has chosen to solely hint at them by targeting their exclusive characteristics or properties such as their religious attire and prayers. In addition to that subtle insinuation, Le Pen has opted to replace the word “Muslims” or “a good number of Muslims” by a vaguer “good number of people” when associating those with street prayers, in a possible attempt to keep her rhetoric more subdued and less directed towards a specific group or entity. However, both these insinuation and word substitution have not been able to entirely conceal her brusqueness in comparing Muslim prayers near mosques to a full-blown occupation.

“I am sorry and regretful to say to those who love to talk about the Second World War immeasurably: if we must talk about occupations, we can talk about those [prayers], for they are also an occupation of territories” (Le Pen, 2010).

Not only has Marine Le Pen luridly compared Muslim prayers near mosques to the act of occupation (i.e. the act of seizing by military force), but also has specifically likened them to the violent Nazi World War Two invasion. Obviously, that forthright comparison between the former and the latter has not been subdued or diluted by the

politician through the use of any rhetoric manipulation technique. Language thus, remained strong, clear and highly polemic.

Therefore, despite using two rhetorical manipulation techniques to subdue her language in this speech— insinuation and word substitution— Le Pen preserved the xenophobic logic and imagery of the National Front by employing a controversial word that is ridden with the party’s traditional dogma. In fact, and through the employment of the word “occupation”, Le Pen endeavored to remind her homogeneous audience of a word that had been historically used within the party, particularly by Le Pen the father himself. Consequently, this blunt comparison could not have been used except to reassure the audience of her position that remained in line with the typical far right ideology of the National Front: nationalism, rejection of multiculturalism, and almost certainly, the limitation of immigration by Muslims.

3.2 Marine Le Pen’s Inaugural Speech as President of the National Front Party (2011)

Alternatively, the following speech verifies that much has changed in Marine Le Pen’s rhetoric since her inauguration as the president of the National Front. In fact, and while she only relied twice upon rhetoric manipulation techniques in her previous speech, it became clear, in this one, that the decision to increasingly exploit those has been made, and that the objective to “de-demonize” the National Front has been undertaken.

On January 16, 2011 in Tours, following her inauguration as the new president of the National Front, and in a televised speech before members and supporters of her party, Marine Le Pen declared:

“The goal of any political association is the conservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of men. These rights are liberty, property, safety and resistance against oppression. It is from this moment forward that the irresistible ascension of the National Front to power begins. It is from this assembly that begins the unprecedented effort to transform the National Front [...] The national Front shall be the common home

of the French, the grand house of those who are enamored with France, a renovated party, open and efficient” (Le Pen, 2011).

By beginning her speech with the recital of article 2 of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and by making recourse to a throng of Republican terms such as “human rights” and “liberty”, Marine Le Pen managed to introduce a more suitable image of herself as a conceivable chief of state and a veritable Republican woman. This allusion to Republicanism and Republican values may have helped in giving French people the impression that the National Front has veered a little more to the center and away from its otherwise extremist position. Moreover, this reference to republican values may have also helped in showing that while standard far right parties were preoccupied with terms such as “borders, territory, and identity”, the National Front was now concerned with other social matters, like rights and justices. In addition to republicanism, the employment of a revolutionary vocabulary that encompassed words such as “unprecedented”, “renovated” and “transform” may have also suggested a swerve from the traditional path of the National Front towards a new and improved party. This allusion to party transformation has made sure that different segments of the population—especially those who did not belong to the traditional follower base of the National Front and who followed the speech on television— visualized a revolutionized party that was “open and efficient”, possibly more inclusive, and considerably less divisive. Consequently, both allusions to republicanism and party transformation have been used by Marine Le Pen in order to subdue her speech and to appeal to a diverse electorate.

“It is time to make of the National Front a tool to retain the power from the hands of those who have led our beautiful country to its current state” (Le Pen, 2011).

Despite resorting to a Republican allusion and a nod to a new and improved party, it was evident that Le Pen still vilified what could have been the incumbent president and his party, or beyond that, a malevolent segment of the population. Consequently, despite

talking in length about new engagements and a new party mindset, Le Pen's rhetoric was still divisive in its essence, heralding the standard presence of an "enemy" that the party has always relied on in the past.

"The government must forbid special opening hours in swimming pools for Muslim women and a religious ban on certain foods in school cafeterias" (Le Pen, 2011).

Through this statement, Le Pen subtly revealed the identity of those she warned her audience against in her former statement. Without calling out her antagonists by who they are, "Muslims", she decried and targeted their exclusive characteristics instead, such as Halal food and special swimming hours for women. This rhetoric manipulation technique, also known as subduableness by insinuation, has been certainly employed by Le Pen in order to render her rhetoric less direct and, therefore, harder to condemn.

"I call on all of you to resist modern dictatorships such as radical Islam and globalization" (Le Pen, 2011).

In this statement, Le Pen has evidently demonstrated a reasonable and levelheaded rhetoric— one that differentiates between "Islam" and "radical Islam". However, having discussed and condemned ordinary religious practices of Muslim compatriots (i.e. Halal food and special swimming hours) right before this statement, she has created an amalgam or confusion between those who are practicing mere religious duties and those practicing "radical Islam". This rhetoric manipulation technique, also known as amalgam, has certainly assisted Marine Le Pen in obscuring the same National Front's ideology with a language that seems different and subdued.

"I call on all of you to resist communitarism and patterns of it" (Le Pen, 2011).

Le Pen's abstention from using controversial words such as "occupation", and substituting them with mitigated terms such as "communitarism", has been noted in this 2011 speech. In fact, this abstention and substitution may be attributed to the lesson Le Pen acquired following her "Muslim prayers" mishap and which had seen her sued by anti-racism associations while campaigning for the party's presidency. Refusing to fall prey to the same xenophobic image that had branded her father without getting him as far as she would like to go, Marine Le Pen held on to her strategy of "party de-demonization" by using various rhetoric manipulation techniques including word substitution.

"France is not a caliphate. It never was, and never will be" (Le Pen, 2011).

Without needing to use the words "Islam" or "immigration", Le Pen was able to evoke—through this metaphor—the image of a menacing Islam worsened by an increasing influx of Muslim immigrants. This rhetoric manipulation technique, also known as metaphor, shows that the dogmatic reasoning of the National Front still fell on the extreme right of the political spectrum, with an underlying ideology that still called for nationalism, the rejection of multiculturalism, and the limitation of immigration.

"To win the battle against delinquency and drugs, we need a refurbished administrative response in relation to our border policy" (Le Pen, 2011).

By using a subdued term in the like of "border policy", Le Pen avoided the exploitation of an otherwise polemic word that has long been exploited by far right parties: "immigration". Furthermore, and despite the fact that immigration was barely mentioned in this speech and hardly, if at all, advanced as a theme on its own, Le Pen's reasoning still recognized it as the source of all the French society's misfortunes. However, relating delinquency and drugs to immigration upon condemning the latter has been but a softer way to reject it, as compared to denouncing it on the basis of identity, religion or race.

Consequently, and despite using eight rhetorical manipulation techniques to subdue her language in this speech, Le Pen preserved the nationalist logic and engagements of the National Front. However, this address substantiated the fact that Marine Le Pen's rhetoric has evolved to include an increasingly altered language and a greater number of rhetoric manipulation techniques in comparison to her previous discourse in 2010.

3.3 Marine Le Pen's Speech at the Summer University (or Université d'Été) (2013)

As to Le Pen's address at the National Front University in 2013, its analysis has been necessary to demonstrate the undeniable evolution of the politician's discourse towards increasing subduableness, obliqueness, and, ultimately, manipulation. In fact, and while her discourse had only relied upon eight rhetoric techniques in 2011, it became clear, in this speech, that the decision to increasingly exploit those techniques persisted.

Furthermore, and since this speech was meant to relay the entire National Front strategy for the new political year, it was riveting to study the ways through which Le Pen was able to camouflage a great number of political engagements that were to be discussed in her address.

In fact, and at the 2013 edition of the National Front party in Marseille (a summer camp kind of weekend where National Front youth and student sympathizers have the chance to assemble and socialize with delegates of the party), Marine Le Pen made a public appearance in order to relay the party's strategy for the new political year following the summer (Le Figaro, 2013). In that speech, Le Pen announced:

“What is our strategy? It is the evermore prioritization of the interests of France and those of the French people. Unlike many others, we do not submit to anyone. We are independent, and from this independence, we extricate our discourse of truth; we are permanently those who are seeking the good of France and the good of the French people” (Le Pen, 2013).

Through this statement, Le Pen has not only unraveled the same political ideology of “national preference” that had long been exhausted by the National Front under Le Pen the father, but has also resolved on using the subduableness by word-substitution technique in order to relay almost the same exact message. By “prioritizing” the interests of France and the French people, Le Pen has successfully substituted the illustriously infamous “national preference” expression by the new mitigated concept of “national priority”. Therefore, she has managed to deliver the same political engagement in a way that would not remind of a past immoderate party. By establishing the concept of “national priority”, Le Pen still implied similar entitlements that her father and other members had called for in the past: the reservation of financial, social and medical aid privileges to those holding the French nationality, and withdrawing them from certain others.

“This is the reason why we are not affiliated to any faction: neither the right, nor the left. Both parties are trailing behind because they are bipartisan. Our only party is that of France” (Le Pen, 2013).

Declaring herself as unaffiliated to any specific party, Le pen relied upon a clever tactic to un-brand herself in an attempt to appease to diverse electorates and segments of the population. Although her line of reasoning and the political ideology she committed herself to still fell on the far right spectrum of French politics, asserting she was neither right nor left still helped in making her sound like a politician who was worthy of the consensus of all— more so than her bipartisan Republican and Socialist contenders. Thus, this technique of un-branding has almost certainly helped the politician in subduing her language, as well as in appearing as a favorite for the country’s presidency.

“Right and left divide, fragmenting the society through their lies, their failures, and their permanent tactics of diversion. We, on the other hand, are the guardians of national unity and we resist against the instigators of division” (Le Pen, 2013).

Making recourse to a metaphor by which she compared herself and her party to the custodians of unity for all the French people, Le Pen emphasized her virtues by the simultaneous use of an allusion to chief republican values: “national unity” and “resist (ance)”. Both the metaphor and allusion to republicanism have allowed Le Pen to obscure her ideology and to present herself and her party in a newly subdued and republican light.

“Today, I know to which extent France is destabilized with human relations that have profoundly degraded. I have only deliberated on our problem of security, but I could also discuss immigration, communitarism, and the erasure of the French identity— all these ills which are ruining our collective aptitude for fraternity and unity” (Le Pen, 2013).

Without making any oblique allusion or insinuation to immigration, Le Pen has explicitly listed the latter among the perils that have been jeopardizing the unity and the fraternity of the French people. However, she has still managed to create a subtle amalgam between “immigration”, “communitarism” and the “erasure of the French identity”— generating thus a confusion between the three and an assumption that immigration will always accompany the other two. Nevertheless, the politician has communicated this message without the need to overtly say it. Instead, she has relied upon the amalgam rhetoric manipulation technique in order to imply it subduedly.

“France regaining her sovereignty is France finding her borders again [...] borders in order to control the human influx and to maintain our fight against trafficking and criminal networks” (Le Pen, 2013).

By relying upon the technique of word-substitution, Le Pen has mitigated her rhetoric, replacing the controversial “immigration” with the unassuming “borders”, as well as “immigrants” with the detached “human influx”. By doing so, Le Pen was able to

maintain the National Front's traditional condemnation of immigration while making it sound less offensive. In fact, by refraining to target a human component such as immigrants, Le Pen has managed to advance the same National Front ideology, prohibiting her audience from sympathizing with "immigrants" for who they are, people, and encouraging them to consider their "influx" as a dangerous phenomenon instead. Furthermore in this statement, Le Pen has associated human influx (or immigration) with the French society's trafficking and criminal networks problems. Through this proclamation, the politician was able to generate a confusion between the three and an assumption that human influx will always accompany the other two. Nevertheless, she was capable of communicating this message without the need to overtly say it— through the use of the amalgam rhetoric manipulation technique instead.

“Appropriate sanctions should become applicable as of the first legal transgression, as of the first delinquent act, even the most minor of all. It is justice we shall render. Why isolate delinquency from immigration, massive immigration, and uncontrolled immigration? I insist on this jurisdictional evidence: every illegal alien is a delinquent. In a state of law, being undocumented is a delinquent crime” (Le Pen, 2013).

By making a statement that is strewn with legal jargon, Le Pen has established herself as a true stateswoman and a woman of law: one whose arguments stemmed from the firm principles of the state in the purpose of upholding and protecting the Republic. By relying upon words such as “sanctions”, “transgression”, “justice”, “jurisdictional evidence” and “state of law”, Le Pen succeeded in maintaining the usual National Front condemnation of immigration — not on the basis of identity, culture, religion or race, but on the basis of law and justice. Thus, this legal argument has certainly helped in subduing the rhetoric of Marine Le Pen and that of the National Front, presenting it in a new and airbrushed light. Moreover, Le Pen has managed to create a subtle amalgam between “immigration”, “massive immigration” and “uncontrolled immigration”, thus prompting her audience to confuse the three and to mistake any immigrant for an illegal entity. Certainly, this has only been allowed through the delicate use of an amalgam,

which has successfully manipulated Le Pen's language while she still advanced her invariable ideology.

"I demand that jobs, in this time of high unemployment, be granted in priority to the French people. I call for the same to be done as to what concerns public housing, in the name of justice. Today, France is destabilized in relation to unemployment and the precariousness of employees, the feeling of no longer reaping fair wages" (Le Pen, 2013).

By making recourse to economic arguments instead of those based on identity or race, Le Pen still called out for the traditional "French preference/priority" and the limitation of immigration. In fact, by exploiting a new rhetoric manipulation technique such as the allusion to economic jargon, Le Pen was able to advance her same old ideology while sounding highly scientific and increasingly more credible.

"It is a good deed to hang pro-secularism banners around schools in France. But this gesture has fallen short and proved to be insufficient. More than a century since the passing of the 1905 secularism law, we still have to remind of principles that have been here for so long [...] in order to understand the French nation, the French Republic, one ought to recognize and acknowledge its Christian roots" (Le Pen, 2013).

By relying upon legislation and the allusion to chief republican values (e.g. secularism) yet again, Le Pen endeavored to condemn the same old "adversities" only in a milder tone and in an increasingly adept manner. However, should anyone examine Le Pen's statement closely, they could not but stumble upon a great fallacy. In her statement, Le Pen has adamantly called for the acquiescence of secularism, only to place Christianity in a higher order than all other religions. Therefore, it has quickly become apparent that this allusion to republican values and secularism has been but a manipulative technique that Le Pen brandished against one confession and one people. Using one of the French

Republic's most agreed upon and most revered principles, Le Pen still endeavored to further the same nationalist agenda of the National Front party only in a softened way that could convince further segments of the population.

“Then again, not one palpable issue has been confronted: neither the Halal meat that is being served at the school canteens, nor the veil that is being donned at universities or the gender segregation taking place at the swimming pool facilities. These mere pro-secularism banners cannot put a halt to this multiculturalism that is fragmenting the French population on the basis of religion and origins. Assimilation to the French nation is indispensable and cannot be achieved unless we put an end to immigration—both lawful and illegal” (Le Pen, 2013).

Despite avoiding to particularly condemn French Muslims or Muslim immigrants in her speech, Le Pen has insinuated the fact they represented the biggest threat to secularism, according to her, by simply alluding to their exclusive religious practices such as their Halal food, their special swimming hours for women, and their religious attire. Furthermore, and as a softened alternative for the polemic word “Islam”, Le Pen has made the sensible decision to use the less offensive “multiculturalism” in her statement about the fragmentation of the French society due to religion and origins— religion and origins clearly denoting Islam and Muslim immigrants. However, by explicitly rejecting both lawful and illegal immigration, Le Pen has made it clear that no matter the rhetoric manipulation techniques she used to placate her speech, she still maintained the same ideology and engagements which called for the limitation of immigration and the rejection of multiculturalism and Muslim practices.

“France is one and indivisible. [...] This France where all of us are equal in the public sphere, and where each one of us is at liberty in the private one. [This France] where fraternal harmony may reign. This France that would put an end to hatred and division. This France that would pass on and preserve the Republican principles [...] This France

that would offer employment to each one of us instead of marching with its two feet towards multiculturalism and globalization” (Le Pen, 2013).

By hiding yet again behind the Republic’s most important values, the “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” tripartite motto, Le Pen subduedly argued the exigency of having a one and homogenous France instead of a multicultural one (i.e. one that has no room for immigrants and non-nationals). Additionally, Le Pen proceeded to end her speech on an economic note, deliberating—in what seems to be an adept and scientific way— on a future France that could offer employment opportunities to each of her citizens had it not been marching towards multiculturalism and globalization (i.e. the same old enemies of the National Front Party).

Consequently, and despite using fifteen rhetorical manipulation techniques to subdue her language in this speech, Le Pen preserved the nationalist logic and engagements of the National Front. However, this speech substantiated the fact that Marine Le Pen’s rhetoric has evolved to include an increasingly altered language and a greater number of rhetoric manipulation techniques in comparison to her previous discourse in 2011.

3.4 Marine Le Pen’s Speech Following the First Round of the Regional Elections (2015)

As to Le Pen's speech that was made on December 10, 2015 before supporters of the National Front in Paris, its analysis has been essential to corroborating the irrefutable evolution of the politician's discourse towards an increasingly altered language. In fact, and while the previous speech has only relied upon fifteen rhetoric manipulation techniques in 2013, it became clear, in this one, that the decision to increasingly exploit those techniques persisted. Moreover, and as the speech commemorated the vast gains that the National Front was able to make in the first round of the 2015 regional elections, it was riveting to study whether Le Pen was resolved on increasing her use of subdued language now that she has reaped its benefits.

In fact, and in order to give the speech a little bit of context, it was the decentralization laws of 1982 and 1985 in France that had seen the establishment of French regions as local authorities and the creation of the regional elections (Mathilde Siraud, 2015). Those elections have made it possible to elect, every six years, regional councilors who would serve as representatives of those regions (Siraud, 2015). Since 1999, those representatives have been elected by proportional representation through not one, but two rounds (Siraud, 2015).

And while alleged strategic voting denied the National Front— which came first in six regions in the first round— any triumph in the second and final round, the party realized its greatest ever score of 6.45 million votes in 2015 during those elections (Marta Lorimer, 2015). With the Socialist candidate purportedly stepping down in order to impede her progress, and with the left-wing electorates pressed to vote for the center-right, the National Front’s leader Marine Le Pen suffered from a loss in her region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie to Xavier Bertrand, a previous employment minister who clenched 57% of the ballots (Lorimer, 2015).

However, in her speech on December 10, 2015 in Paris following the regionals’ first round, Le Pen spoke triumphantly as 28% of the national votes were picked up by her party. This number of votes placed her then ahead of both former president Nicolas Sarkozy’s “Les Republicains” and then president Francois Hollande’s ruling socialists (Lorimer, 2015).

On this special occasion, the president of the National Front addressed her audience, which was mostly comprised of supporters of the party, with a victorious tone, using the platform not only to send out defiant messages to her opponents, but also to remind the listeners of her political agenda prior to the second round of the voting. Le Pen then proclaimed:

“Voters have expressed their preference for a new generation full of novelty and enthusiasm, and big on morals and ideas. By a clear first-round vote, they have chosen conviction, reason, and especially, nation” (Le Pen, 2015).

By using a throng of unprecedented words such as “new”, “novelty”, “reason”, and “enthusiasm”, Le Pen has alluded to party transformation or to the establishment of a “new and improved” party. This subtle allusion has been used by Le Pen in order to reassure some of her audience of her intention to veer the National Front to a more progressive path. However, and just as subtly, Le Pen has proceeded to oppose the word “reason” and all it entails of logic and fluidity, to rigid and inflexible words such as “conviction”. Through this rhetoric manipulation technique, also known in this case as allusion to old party, Le Pen was able to assure the staunch devotees of her party of her undying loyalty to the traditional “conviction” and ideology of the National Front. In fact, and by simultaneously relying upon both allusions, Le Pen has cleverly appeased to different audiences and different electorates.

“Voters have chosen the following values: liberty as opposed to feudalism, equality as opposed to privilege, and fraternity vis-à-vis the forgotten” (Le Pen, 2015).

Alluding yet again to the French Republic’s “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity” tripartite motto, Le Pen has revealed herself as a veritable republican stateswoman. This revelation has assisted the politician in giving the impression that she and her party have moved a little to the center and considerably further from the far right spectrum of politics. This impression has certainly helped Le Pen in appeasing to new segments of electorates, including those who had moderate political views and who had never belonged to the traditional follower base of the National Front party.

“Today, it is fashionable among our inconsistent politicians to invoke co-existence as the ultimate prospect for any collective project. This is the aspiration of those who have nothing else to offer but an alignment of different destinies, or more precisely, co-existence. This is the term they bestowed upon the simultaneous existence of different communities whose antagonism they hope would not lead to a conflict” (Le Pen, 2015).

In this statement, Le Pen seemed pretty adamant in reproving “co-existence” through the discredit of those who had been calling for it. Accusing the latter of being “inconsistent politicians” and of being devoid of “something else to offer”, she was able to obliquely reveal her own pejorative opinion of co-existence without directly attacking the phenomenon itself. Furthermore, Le Pen’s use of another rhetoric manipulation technique, also known as amalgam, has allowed her to associate co-existence with “antagonism” and “conflict”, thus generating a subtle cause-effect relationship between the three terms and the impression that one will always accompany the others. Consequently, the two rhetoric manipulation techniques used by Le Pen have served the purpose of subduing her language, of making it vaguer, and of manipulating it in ways that would benefit the politician and her party.

“We are the partisans of the nation. We are the partisans of the assimilation to the Republic which makes French citizens of all origins the solidary members of a single community: the national community. But the French Republic also necessitates abidance by the common rule, [abidance] by our customs and codes of living, the respect of our principles of life, and the acceptance of our founding values” (Le Pen, 2015).

By alluding to the French founding values, Le Pen has implied the pre-eminence of certain origins and religion within the French society without the need to declare it. Furthermore, Le Pen has opted to replace the National Front’s traditional vocabulary (e.g. Latin/Gallois origins and Christianity) with milder terms such as the “founding values”. By relying upon this word-substitution, Le Pen has managed to subtly reassure the party’s traditional adherents of sustaining the same ideology, albeit expressed in other words (holding the same denotation). Alternatively, this technique has allowed Le Pen to sound increasingly more lenient and, therefore, much more appealing to electorates from various segments. On the other hand, by speaking of the abidance by the common rule, Le Pen was able to hint at the Muslims’ Sharia law, subtly implying an irreconcilability between Islam laws and those of the Republic. Similarly, by speaking of the necessity to abide by customs and the codes of living, Le Pen has

managed to hint at the French Muslim's divergent rituals such as the consumption of Halal food and the wear of the veil. Consequently, these rhetoric manipulation techniques, also known as allusions, word substitution and insinuations, have helped Le Pen in communicating the same nationalist ideology while sounding increasingly more indulgent and a lot more different.

“We have seen Mr. Estrozi, admittedly accustomed to abuse of language, claiming himself as resistant even though he militates in a party which approves and organizes the migratory submersion into the country” (Le Pen, 2015).

In this statement, Le Pen endeavored to subtly discredit migration by associating it with a politician who “abuses language” and who “claims resistance”. And although a more straightforward approach would have seen Le Pen overtly declare that migration is a proof of submissiveness, she proceeded to using an insinuation to the latter by contradicting the act of “resistance” with the act of “migration approval”. Hence, Le Pen was able to subdue her language while still relaying virtually the same message. However, despite making recourse to those rhetoric manipulation techniques to soften her discourse, Le Pen returned to a considerably brusquer language by the use of the “migratory submersion” metaphor. Comparing the influx of immigrants entering the country to a flood, Le Pen relied upon this metaphor to accentuate an otherwise mellowed out language. By using this metaphor, Le Pen managed to manipulate her speech in a way that would also appease to the traditional adherents of the National Front.

“In a ceremony meant to celebrate secularism, [then] Prime Minister Manuel Valls has authorized himself to launch an almost direct appeal to Muslims to vote against the lists of France's first party [the National Front]. What a strange conception of secularism, but above all, Mr. Valls has undertaken the position of a communitarian who urged a community vote. In doing so, it is he who had violated the principles of the Republic. It is he who undermined national unity by classifying French citizens in terms of their religion. We trust our Muslim compatriots to not give in to the imbecile imprecations of

a beleaguered prime minister. We are telling them unambiguously that we are calling them to our side in this great upsurge of national recovery. They have their place. Many of them know it and have already joined our ranks” (Le Pen, 2015).

By alluding yet again to the “principles of the Republic”, “national unity” and “secularism”, Le Pen has displayed herself as a true republican woman and a stringent advocate of the constitution. This subtle allusion has helped her, therefore, to reach out to those electorates who otherwise considered her as a discreditable politician, while still advancing the same ideology. Nonetheless, Le Pen has proceeded to discredit her opponent, Mr. Manuel Valls, in the name of the Republic’s most revered principles. By slurring the “beleaguered” and “communitarian” politician, she has subtly managed to disrepute his political engagements (including his well-known support of multiculturalism and immigration). Consequently, and by discrediting those engagements, she was able to subduedly—but surely—advance her own. As to her recourse to an inclusive call upon Muslim compatriots to join her party, Le Pen has certainly succeeded in softening the National Front’s rhetoric and in refuting any accusation made against her for Islamophobia and racism. Finally, and through Le Pen’s condemnation of Manuel Valls’ communitarian appeal to Muslims, Le Pen was capable of obscuring her own appeal to the latter towards the end of this statement.

“[Voting for the National Front] is voting for a political movement of emancipation [...] We call on all voters who think of themselves as patriotic, regardless of their first-round vote, to overcome the left-right divide that no longer makes sense and to vote next Sunday for the National Front lists [...] The key word to our future work will not be ideology but pragmatism. Each voice will count in the fundamental struggle we are waging for our country, for our people, for their liberties, and for their unity” (Le Pen, 2015).

By alluding to the principles of the Republic and to positive words of republican connotation such as “emancipation”, “patriotism”, and “liberties”, Le Pen has managed

to create a correlation between voting for the National Front and widely-agreed upon French principles. In addition, Le Pen has proceeded to rely upon yet another allusion: that of party transformation. By specifying that the new party will revolve around pragmatism instead of ideology, she has attempted to veer herself and her party away from a rigid, dogmatic image onto moderation and fluidity. Finally, it is worthy to note Le Pen's recourse to the un-branding technique — i.e. not belonging to neither the left nor the right— which has certainly helped her in breaking away from the far right limitation and to appeal to further segments of electorates. With the assistance of all these rhetorical manipulation devices, Le Pen has definitely been capable of moderating her language and appeasing to voters who never belonged to the traditional follower base of the National Front.

Consequently, and despite using eighteen rhetorical manipulation techniques to subdue her language in this speech, Le Pen preserved the nationalist logic and engagements of the National Front. However, this discourse has substantiated the fact that Marine Le Pen's rhetoric has evolved to include an increasingly altered language and a greater number of rhetoric manipulation techniques in comparison to her previous discourse in 2013.

3.5 Marine Le Pen's Speech Prior to the French Presidential Elections (2017)

In the last months prior to the 2017 French presidential elections, Marine Le Pen has gone through a series of public appearances in which she tried to mobilize support and to remind the electorates of her political engagements.

On March 13, 2017, in no place other than Paris, Le Pen has organized a presidential conference in which she spoke to the entire French people concerning themes that have always been of importance to her and her party.

Consequently, the analysis of this speech has been both essential and unavoidable due to a list of different reasons. In fact, and while the previous speech has only relied upon

eighteen rhetoric manipulation techniques in 2015, it was important to see that, in this one, the decision to increasingly exploit those techniques persisted. Not only that, but we also discover that the number of rhetoric manipulation techniques used in this speech has curiously increased at a higher rate than the previous speeches. Therefore, it was riveting to examine whether the imminent presidential elections were the motive behind the exponential use of those techniques. In her March 13, 2017 speech, Le Pen proclaimed:

“We are French, and we celebrate Joan of Arc and Robespierre, the Madonna of the churches and the soldiers of year II, and the Hussars of the Republic and the people of resistance. To all these symbols, to all these French figures, I assimilate the people of France. All the French originate from these people” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this proclamation, Le Pen has introduced and emphasized a restricted image of the “French” citizen and who he or she is. However, she has refrained from explicitly using controversial words such “ancestors”, “Latin”, “French blood”, and “Christian” to describe that image and identity. Instead, and through what might have seemed a respectful tribute to some French historic symbols, Le Pen has insinuated the above, subtly creating a strong association between French, Christianity, and Latin origins. Furthermore, by referring to prominent Republican figures such as “Joan of Arc” and “Robespierre”, Le Pen has managed to veer herself and the National Front party a little to the center and away from the far right spectrum of politics. By paying homage to figures that do not customarily belong to the ideology of the National Front, Le Pen was capable of subduing and manipulating her language. Consequently, she was able to attract new supporters through her softer rhetoric, while still advancing a narrow and exclusive idea of who a true French is.

“I sometimes lost my time, but never while interacting with the people of France. The people of France mean those women for whom France means freedom to be, to dress, to behave” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this statement, Le Pen has subtly declared that a true French woman is the one who aspires to dress the way she wants and behave the way she wants. By advancing a restricted notion of who a true French woman is, she has excluded other women—particularly those who dressed differently or in a way that allegedly lacked freedom. This insinuation to dress could not have been aimed but at Muslim women, whom Le Pen was able to exclude and to alienate without the need to mention. Accordingly, this is another example of how the art of insinuation has helped Le Pen to soften her rhetoric while still advancing the same isolationist ideology.

“We are all the sons and daughters of France, of a millennial history, the children of all those who tonight allowed us to be free, to debate, to have a voice. [The children of those who allowed us] to hold our destiny in our own hands because they have worked and fought, because they were wounded and they died across all the battlefields of Europe” (Le Pen, 2017).

By beginning her statement with the inclusive metaphor “we are all the sons and daughters of France”, Le Pen has attempted to obscure her restrictive notion of who a true French is. As a matter of fact, and according to Le Pen, only the children of those who have instated freedoms in Europe and those who have died fighting for the continent are true French citizens. Consequently, this allusion to exclusive origins and forefathers has enabled Le Pen to implicitly exclude other citizens from the aforesaid notion— particularly those who originated from a different continent. Without the need to mention those citizens, or to explicitly argue their belongingness, Le Pen was able to avoid controversy and to advance the same nationalist dogma.

“I am French”, some people have said it by presenting a C.V or by tending their passport. Others before them have said it before a firing squad or in death camps. Must this meaning be lost forever? [Must this meaning be lost] because the all-powerful individual without neither borders nor a nation has become the unsurpassable horizon?” (Le Pen, 2017).

By alluding to those who are French by passport, and to those who are destined to become French because they have crossed the French borders, Le Pen has subtly hinted at and disparaged those who have been naturalized and those immigrants and refugees who have been received by France. Furthermore, she proceeded to juxtapose those to the French ancestors who have fought and died for France— in an allusion to the French forefathers whose children she considered the true citizens of France. Consequently, and through these rhetoric manipulation techniques, Le Pen was able to make vague the same ideology which upholds citizenship by blood and mobilizes for the limitation of immigration.

“I think of all those thousands of French men and women who tell me they do not know where they live anymore. I think of all those who are forced to move and to leave a neighborhood where they lived because they are forgotten by the Republic and feel like strangers at home. And I think of the worse situation of those who cannot afford to move and who must endure the contempt, the provocations and the incivilities that turn each night into a nightmare” (Le Pen, 2017).

In this statement, Le Pen has held back from revealing the identity of those who stood behind these “provocations and incivilities”, as well as the reason behind a large number of French citizens feeling like “strangers at their own home”. However, and as this oxymoron contained the word “strangers”, it has managed to allude to the individuals who are frequently and commonly described as strangers themselves (e.g. immigrants, refugees and sometimes even naturalized citizens) who “rightfully” need to be feeling like the “real” strangers they are instead. Moreover, this allusion to “strangers” have been followed by a mention of “provocations and incivilities”, allowing Le Pen to create a subtle association between immigrants, for instance, and the French society’s grievances. Consequently, these insinuations and subtleties have enabled Le Pen to subdue her discourse while still relaying the same message as always.

“I also observe these millions of men and women in the world who aspire to become French. Not only do they share a certain idea of France, but they also have a certain idea on liberty, on the way of life, and on the Republic” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this statement, and by alluding to one certain idea of France that those wanting to become French shared, to one certain idea of liberty, to one certain way of life, and to one certain idea of the Republic, Le Pen has subtly excluded a large portion of the French citizens whose views she considered incompatible with France. However, and through the art of circumvention, Le Pen was able to dismiss those without the need to disclose any of their identities. Evidently, the use of this rhetoric manipulation technique has softened the discourse of Le Pen— albeit implicitly contentious— and rendered it considerably less confrontational.

“To those who denounced the shantytowns where a large part of labor piled up, to those who have foreseen the problems to come, a pretentious response was given: that it was good for the growth. In the 1980’s, to the French who were worried about the effects of family reunion, it was said that there was nothing to be done. In the name of diversity, of the open society, of the multicultural paradise promised to France, to even raise the question of Islamism was forbidden” (Le Pen, 2017).

In this statement, Le Pen has carefully substituted controversial words that were reminiscent of the old National Front, such as “immigration” and “open borders”, with new words of similar denotation, such as “family reunion” and “open society”. By doing so, Le Pen has successfully eschewed the use of traditional words that have been charged with so much National Front history and dogma, in an effort to appeal to a new base of electorates. On the other hand, Marine Le Pen has denounced “family reunion” in an attempt to sound softer, as she believed that criticizing one immigration program was more tactful and moderate than denouncing immigration all-together. Alternatively, by including the term “Islamism” in her statement, Le Pen has subdued her speech and rendered it politically correct. By distinguishing between Islam and Islamism, she has

made it clear that she knew the difference and that she was only condemning the latter. Nevertheless, Le Pen has still managed to create a suave amalgam between “labor” (i.e. blue-collar workers), those benefitting from the “family reunion” program (i.e. immigrants), and Islamism. By exclusively giving those as an example while warning from the latter, she has generated a subtle association between the two and implied that all workers or immigrants were, in fact, Islamists.

“The ultimate goal has been accomplished: to pass those who cared for France, respect for the law and for the duties of the citizen as evil and wicked” (Le Pen, 2017).

By making statements that portrayed the obligations of an ideal citizen such as “caring for France”, “respect for the law” and “respect for the duties of the citizen”, Le Pen has succeeded in creating an implicit association between those who denounced shantytowns and immigration programs in the previous proclamation, and those who fulfilled those duties. In fact, and instead of explicitly declaring that a true French citizen is the one who mobilizes against immigration, she has relied upon amalgams and associations to advance the same traditional views of the National Front, only obliquely.

“In the inevitable debate about multicultural societies, two things are unbearable to me: the denial of democracy and globalism. If democracy is the power of the people to decide what concerns them, there is no more important thing than access to citizenship (Le Pen, 2017).

In this statement, Le Pen has substituted controversial words which have the potential to remind of the traditional dogma of the National Front, such as “immigration”, “birthright” and other phenomenon responsible for multiculturalism, by the term “multicultural societies”. In fact, and through alluding to a mere by-product of immigration, Le Pen has avoided making the explicit declaration that immigration is the phenomenon that embodied the denial of democracy. Furthermore, Le Pen’s use of

arguments about “democracy” and the “access to citizenship” has allowed her to reject multiculturalism in the name of the most fundamental principles of the Republic, instead of relying upon the traditional arguments of origin, religion, culture and race. Those newly-used and reasonable arguments have enabled Le Pen to escape accusations of racism, while still maintaining the same protectionist stance on immigration and multiculturalism.

“I demand that the borders be strengthened, that the walls rise up, and that the people, everywhere in the world, get to decide for themselves what concerns them” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this statement, Le Pen has explicitly called for a stricter border policy— even for the erection of an isolationist wall— only having advanced those appeals under the banner of democracy. In fact, and as in her previous statement, Le Pen has endeavored to reject multiculturalism in the name of the most fundamental principles of the Republic, putting an end to the traditional arguments of origin, religion, culture and race. Through those newly exerted arguments, Le Pen has made an effort to soften views that were otherwise uncompromising, and to put forth a line of reasoning that was seemingly different than that of the old National Front.

“[I demand] that citizenship becomes this common good for all French men and women, one that transcends origins and beliefs. I would like for the French citizenship to become the link between French men and women, that common good that unites them and trumps all their differences. That French citizenship ceases to be random. That it becomes the result of a transmission from French parents or another personal commitment” (Le Pen, 2017).

In this proclamation, Le Pen has attempted to obscure her plea for a stricter citizenship policy through her promises of inclusiveness and unison. In fact, her incitements for the unity of French men and women through “a common good which transcends origins and beliefs” has certainly subdued her language, displaying her as an accepting politician who may become an inclusive president of all parts of the society. However, and in spite of seemingly broadening her conception of citizenship to include different origins and religions, Le Pen has proceeded to advancing a divergent petition: to restrict the French citizenship policy to a limited criteria. In fact, Le Pen has explicitly alluded to French ancestry (or the right of blood) as a requirement for citizenship, thus fundamentally nullifying those previous claims about embracing different origins and races.

“I note with horror that the phenomenon of globalization has lost all respect for people, religions, cultures and civilizations, destined to dissolve into a universal one” (Le Pen, 2017).

Refraining from using polemic words that had been exhausted by the National Front in the past, Le Pen has substituted the word “immigration” with “globalization”. Although the latter term has been the result of several economic and social phenomenon, it does encompass the event that has been of Le Pen’s utmost interest: migration and the movement of people. Consequently, this newly-used term has enabled Le Pen in condemning immigration and in communicating the same protectionist stance (perhaps on other dynamics as well such as trade) obliquely and in a way that did not remind of the old discourse of the party.

“It seems indecent to me to treat immigration as an economic flow, like any other, and men as a commodity. How are they not ashamed, those who reduce a person to his market price and turn him into a good that one buys and sells like a slave? (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this set of rhetorical questions, Le Pen has attempted to reject immigration—not in the name of racial or cultural preference— but under the banner of esteem and regard for the immigrants themselves. In fact, by deserting the old National Front argument that has been commonly intolerant of immigrants, Le Pen has adopted a novel one designed to emphasize a deep compassion towards them instead. She has reprehended the treatment of men as a “commodity”, “goods” or even “slaves”, asserting that it is the economic flow of immigration that is responsible for turning immigrants into those. Consequently, Le Pen has succeeded in denouncing immigration, much like her predecessor and the traditional adherents of the National Front, while seemingly praising and looking out for the immigrants themselves.

“The first enemy of France is not the migrant, it is not these crowds of refugees who wander between uncertain frontiers, and who too often fall victim to unjust wars from far away. The enemy is in us. The enemy is the radical individualism that makes every man, every woman, a commodity like any other” (Le Pen, 2017).

By explicitly exonerating the immigrants and refugees from any accusation of transgression against France, Le Pen has certainly softened her language and escaped accusations of discrimination herself. In fact, and through this explicit acquittal of the former, Le Pen has managed to give out the impression of a much more lenient politician, presiding over a much more moderate party. However, by pointing out her admonitory finger towards what she has called “radical individualism”— Le Pen has championed what is the opposite of that phenomenon, also known as collectivism. Consequently, by upholding the latter (and all what it entails of “in-group” orientation instead of an “out-group” view), Le Pen has maintained, at core, the same protectionist and nationalist values only expressed in implicit words.

“What better than millions of migrants to lower the cost of labor and to reduce the bargaining power of unionized workers?” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this proclamation, Le Pen has created a cause-effect relationship between immigration and the decrease in the advantages of French workers. Consequently, Le Pen has managed to denounce immigration, not on the grounds of upholding collectivism and protecting the French culture (all nationalist and communitarian arguments of great density), but on the grounds of safeguarding the French economy. Therefore, by relying upon detached economic arguments and deserting those previously used by the old National Front, Le Pen has hoped to advance the very same stance on immigration without instigating as much controversy as before. Alternatively, by relying on novel technical terms such as “cost of labor” and “the bargaining power”, Le Pen was capable of sounding increasingly scientific and factual, thus appealing to those “elites” who have never belonged to the fan base of the National Front. Le Pen was capable of doing so despite making no alteration to the ideology of the party.

“We are living in a crisis of representation [...] the only democratic answer is in proportional voting and referendum. It is a republican answer and an inclusive answer” (Le Pen, 2017).

By alluding to “democracy”, “republicanism” and “inclusion”, Le Pen has established herself as a moderate politician who is in alignment with the principles of the Republic and the French constitution. However, she has used those revolutionary words in order to push forward the same agenda as her predecessor at the National Front: the taking place of a referendum, or a direct and general vote by the electorate on a specific political matter. And while Jean-Marie Le Pen, the previous president of the party, had pushed for a referendum on limiting immigration, Marine Le Pen has called for a referendum to inscribe the “national priority” concept into the constitution (i.e. priority to French citizens in matters of employment, housing and social rights). And although national priority would have been an unconstitutional law which goes against the fundamental principle of indiscriminate, Le Pen has attempted to subdue it and push

for it in the name of democracy and republicanism. Consequently, and despite relying upon new words and arguments to advance her views, Le Pen's perspective on matters remained nationalist and protectionist.

“From everywhere, France will be summoned to open, to submit, and to surrender” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this statement, Le Pen has created a subtle amalgam or association between “opening up” (French borders), “submissiveness”, and “surrender”. Certainly, Le Pen could have used a straightforward cause-effect relationship to assert that open borders will inevitably lead to the other two, but that could not have contributed to the softening and camouflaging of her rhetoric. Furthermore, and in addition to avoiding the explicit use of the word “immigration”, Le Pen has omitted the word “borders” that naturally succeeded the word “open”, in an attempt to take out all unnecessary and polemic words without disrupting the underlying essence of her proclamation.

“They put an end to the principles of equality and secularism to champion minorities. How can we be surprised at the difficulty of integrating and assimilating them if they are forbidden to understand and to respect those two principles?” (Le Pen, 2017).

In this statement, Le Pen has criticized the empowerment of “minorities” in the name of equality and secularism— the Republic's most valuable principles— instead of alluding to common rightist arguments of origins and race. In fact, Le Pen has subtly associated minorities rights with the defeat of equality and secularism in France, all while refraining from making a direct cause and effect relationship between the two. Furthermore, Le Pen has abstained from revealing the identity of these minorities, with one merely speculating who they were if they were to recognize Le Pen's recent use of “secularism” as a tool to criticizing French Muslims and Muslim immigrants. Finally, Le Pen has been able to criticize the empowerment of minorities and to challenge the

success of Muslims' assimilation to the French society, all while exonerating them as they "have been forbidden" to understand and to respect the Republic's values. Consequently, Le Pen's statement remained subdued and increasingly less confrontational, although it comprised a strong and underlying disapproval towards a specific segment of the French population.

"Jean Jaurès has said that the nation is the only wealth of those possess nothing" (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this allusion to a prominent socialist leader, Le Pen has endeavored to un-brand herself and her party, giving out the impression that she no longer belonged to the right spectrum of politics exclusively. In fact, Le Pen has tried to appease to both Republican and socialist electorates in her recent discourse, in an effort to demonstrate a seemingly different vision than that of the old National Front. Consequently, and as Le Pen referred to both republican and socialist figures in her recent speeches, she was able to camouflage an ideology that still belonged to the far right despite all techniques used to prove the opposite.

"And let no one say to me that it is the chance of birth that makes one French; the vast majority of those who are French are because their parents were French" (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this proclamation, Le Pen has compared birthright citizenship to a work of "chance", metaphorically taking merit and value away from those who have become French by being born on the French soil. In fact, by drawing this subtle association between the right of the soil and sheer coincidence, Le Pen has put in second rate millions of French citizens, discreetly breaching the constitutional law of equality between all the French people. Furthermore, and by juxtaposing the right of soil to French parents ancestry, Le Pen has subliminally put in first rate the right of blood and

those who were born to French parents. Consequently, and without the need to explicitly declare that blood and ancestry are what makes one a true French, or that the French citizens of different origins are second-rate citizens, Le Pen has certainly managed to suggest it. Therefore, the art of insinuation has helped Le Pen in keeping her rhetoric as politically-correct as possible on the surface, while inherently remaining as polemic and bellicose as ever.

“In each French family a story of those who had carried weapons and hid resistance against the occupation. [A story of] those who had welcomed and hid a Jewish child, at the risk of getting deported with their children. They had done it for France, so that their children and the children of their children are French and Free” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through an allusion to the role that the French ancestors had played during the occupation of France, Le Pen has subtly placed those who are French by ancestry and blood above those who are French by the right of soil and immigration. In fact, by relying upon the generalization that “each French family” has emanated from a French ancestor who had fought for France, or has shared the same past and history as the above, Le Pen has implicitly excluded millions of French citizens from her notion of who a French is or what past a French family must have lived through. Furthermore, Le Pen has proceeded to claim that these ancestors had died so “their children and the children of their children are French”— not the children of immigrants or those of a different ancestry— but their children, exclusively. Consequently, and through these rhetoric manipulation techniques, Le Pen has tried to cover-up a biased ideology that could have otherwise raised further controversy if stated directly and in an open manner.

“As I said, I respect all the great religions and cultures that the centuries have forged. It is because I respect Islam that I will not go into any interpretation of what Islam is or should be. It is up to the French citizens of Muslim faith to tell us what Islam is— their Islam, and not that of the Muslim Brotherhood or any other Islamist organization. And it

is up to us to tell them just as clearly what France is, what it means to live in France, what is required to be a French citizen, and what it is to be French” (Le Pen, 2017).

By reiterating her respect for “all the great religions and cultures” at the beginning of her statement, Le Pen has attempted to exonerate herself from any controversial remark she was to make later on Islam. In fact, and by professing a high regard for “Islam” in particular, Le Pen has hoped to camouflage any discriminatory claim she was to make soon against French Muslims. Le Pen has proceeded to distinguishing between “Islam” and “Islamism”, requesting from French Muslims to tell her more about “their Islam” instead of that of the “Islamist organizations”. This subtle distinction between the two terms, which have been mistakenly and interchangeably used by various far right parties in the past, has enabled Le Pen to emphasize a moderate and softened view on Islam and to obscure the bias that she has exerted at the end of her statement against her Muslim compatriots. In fact, and by relying upon these rhetoric manipulation techniques, Le Pen was able to shroud an otherwise highly shocking claim: that French Muslims needed to be told (by a mysterious “us” referring presumably to Catholic French) what it is to be French. Through this proclamation, Le Pen has succeeded in excluding and alienating millions of French Muslims who she did not think of as compatible with her notion of who a French is “what France is” or “what it means to live in France”. This proposal, which has had the potential to become completely outrageous, has been attenuated and alleviated through the use of these rhetoric manipulation techniques mentioned above.

“Those who conceive of living only in a political and social order dominated by religious law, should go live on lands where the Sharia applies and where the Islamic courts say justice” (Le Pen, 2017).

In this statement, Le Pen has refrained from explicitly singling out those “French Muslims” who ought to leave France should they wish to live by religious law. In fact, she has only implied their identity through an allusion to their “Sharia” and “Islamic

courts”. The reason behind which Le Pen may have decided to omit the word “Muslims” is that her statement was already comprehensible as it is, and the identity of those she pondered over could still be effortlessly inferred by the audience. Therefore, an explicit referral to “French Muslims” would have been unnecessary and even inviting to accusations of direct discrimination against Muslim compatriots. However, this effort to dilute one’s speech through certain techniques could not deny the clear biased ideology that Le Pen had against a large segment of the population.

“Between a France who wants to leave out religion, who wants to ignore the religious fact, and the French of Muslim faith who want to live their faith in France, it is the state that will make the link and the difference. It is the state and the shared trials endured side by side, that will create this profound unity of the society and the nation, in which each and every one —beyond his beliefs and practices— is first and foremost, French” (Le Pen, 2017).

In this proclamation, Le Pen has implied a severe chasm and a great dissonance between “France” and the “French of Muslim faith”. In fact, by dividing the two and suggesting a need for reconciliation, Le Pen has made it look like French Muslims were not part of France at all. Le Pen has proceeded to highlight the conflict of interests between the two: France wanting to be a secular state, and French Muslims wanting to practice their faith in France. By juxtaposing those two needs, Le Pen has implicitly advanced a skewed definition of what secularism is. While secularism is widely known as the separation of the state from religious institutions in the public sphere, Le Pen has reworded it to mean the prohibition of all practice of religion. Alternatively, in order to camouflage these implications and still be of interest to moderate electorates, Le Pen has alluded to inclusive and tolerant ideas such as “shared trials” and “profound unity”, marketing herself as a stateswoman who believed in the equality of the French citizens “beyond their beliefs and practices”. However, and despite relying upon intimations and a lexical field of inclusive connotation, Le Pen’s stance remained clearly biased against French citizens of the Muslim faith.

“Is a Frenchman who recognizes that the law of the Republic is the only law that applies to the territory, and that this single and common law is the condition of freedom for all. No law and no rule of a religious nature, in particular, is tolerable in the civil sphere including marital relations, conjugal violence, custody of children, and other affairs” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this statement, Le Pen has made an allusive insinuation to the Sharia law which some French Muslims may favor to the law of the Republic. In fact, Le Pen has avoided the explicit identification of this law in order to keep away from accusations of bias against a specific group of the population. However, and by referring to the specific constituents that are in this law’s scope of governance, “marital relations”, “conjugal violence” and the “custody of children”, Le Pen was able to make it known that it was the Sharia law that she was referring to in her proclamation. Therefore, in spite of her general assertion that all religious laws were intolerable in the civic sphere, and in spite of only implying it, Le Pen has intended to target and to disfavor the Sharia law in particular.

“And above all, the French do not have to be victims of a misguided conception of national solidarity which the confusion of some minds wanted to transform into universal solidarity. Opening up unconditional rights, without defining the limits to that solidarity, will ruin national solidarity” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this statement, Le Pen has obliquely criticized the vast economic and social rights that her nation has been offering in the name of “universal solidarity”, such as medical care, schooling and the right to work. She has done so, not in the name of the traditional National Front argument of “National Preference”, but by substituting those two words with a new benevolent term: “national solidarity”. By relying upon this novel term to advance her point of view, Le Pen has escaped the use of discriminatory terms that have raised controversy towards the National Front in the past. Additionally, and in

the name of “national solidarity”, Le Pen was able to advance the same anti-immigration, nationalist stance as that of the old party, only now in the name of duty.

“The French are in solidarity, and this solidarity is reflected in the high level of compulsory levies that unite them and which are one of the conditions of equality without which citizenship is degraded [...] it is up to the French and to them alone to say on what conditions the new arrivals could benefit from rights, at what level, and how” (Le Pen, 2017).

Through this statement, Le Pen has obliquely criticized the UNHCR’s international refugee law and France’s policy to give refugees the access to vast economic and social rights such as medical care, schooling and the right to work. She has done so, not in the name of the traditional National Front argument of “National Preference”, but through sophisticated arguments such as levies or taxes, solidarity, and the right to decide (i.e. sovereignty). By relying upon novel and detached arguments to advance her point of view, Le Pen has escaped the use of polemic terms that have raised controversy towards the National Front in the past. However, this change of rhetoric remained superficial, as Le Pen retained in essence the same nationalist and protectionist ideology of the party.

Consequently, and despite using forty-one rhetorical manipulation techniques to subdue her language in this speech, Le Pen has preserved the nationalist logic and engagements of the National Front. However, this discourse has substantiated the fact that Marine Le Pen's rhetoric has evolved to include an increasingly altered language and a greater number of rhetoric manipulation techniques in comparison to her previous discourse in 2015. In fact, the number of rhetoric manipulation techniques used in this speech has curiously increased at a higher rate than in the previous speeches.

As will be further developed in the conclusion, this speech analysis shows that novel techniques have been used by Marine Le Pen in recent years, and that they have been increasingly used to reach their peak number in 2017. However, despite her reliance upon those techniques, Le Pen’s ideology remains nationalist and protectionist, with unwavering anti-immigration politics. This discovery indicates a superficial change in

the rhetoric of the politician, rather than in her ideology. Moreover, the detailed decryption of Le Pen's recent proclamations reveals that those metaphors, word substitutions, and allusions (amongst others), have been employed to soften the classic, blatant tenets of the National Front, and to feign an ideological distancing from that of the old party— in other words, to manipulate rhetoric. Alternatively, this analysis points towards the exponential use of rhetoric manipulation by Le Pen across the years, which has come concurrently with burgeoning electoral gains for the party. Consequently, rhetoric manipulation could not have been but a main catalyst for the National Front's recent success, with the highest number of manipulation techniques identified in 2017. In fact, having previously reaped significant gains through the use of those techniques, Le Pen has increased their number to a whopping forty-one so as to favorably influence the presidential elections and—ultimately— to clinch the presidency.

Chapter Four

Conclusion: The Evolution of Marine Le Pen's Discourse from Rhetoric to Rhetoric Manipulation

This conclusion summarizes the thesis's principal arguments, underscoring the main themes discussed in the previous chapters. Accordingly, after a thorough interpretation of Le Pen's statements, the analysis of Le Pen's 2010-2017 discourse shows that it has evolved from a simple and upfront rhetoric to an increasingly manipulative one.

In fact, following an exhaustive decryption of Le Pen's recent proclamations, it becomes evident that the traditional ideology of the National Front has been preserved. Hence, Marine Le Pen's "novel" rhetoric has fallen short on introducing any new doctrine or philosophy: it still advances a nationalist agenda, a narrowly constricted national identity and some excessively protectionist and isolationist views. Nevertheless, the politician's novel rhetoric is dubbed as manipulative due to the several new linguistic techniques that it has increasingly comprised in recent years and which have allowed Le Pen to sound inclusive and open with some exceptionally progressive views. This strategy to display one's self and one's party dissimilarly to what they truly are cannot but highlight Le Pen's leap from rhetoric to rhetoric manipulation in recent years and her wish to manipulate French constituents' votes to her favor.

One of those techniques that have been frequently depended on by the leader of the National Front, as of late, is *the indirect allusion to Muslims by the direct allusion to their norms*. In fact, by making reference to a special religious attire, the duty to consume Halal food, or the women's-only swimming hours, Le Pen was able to target French Muslims and Muslim immigrants. Without revealing their identity or directly calling them out, this rhetoric manipulation technique has rendered Le Pen's speech considerably less confrontational, and less prone to accusations of discrimination. On the other hand, it has also allowed her to preserve and to express her firm belief in the incompatibility of Islam with the principles of the French Republic, as well as in the failed cultural assimilation of the French Muslims.

Furthermore, *word-substitution* has been but another technique often relied upon by the French politician in order to manipulate her discourse. In fact, despite replacing contentious National Front terms (e.g. “national preference”), with words that are more politically correct (e.g. “national priority”), Le Pen still advanced that same nationalist agenda that the party has always pushed for. In this case, Le Pen rallied to place in limits over the extensive rights of immigrants and refugees in France, in the name of priority. In fact, she still maintained her staunch conviction that French nationals should have the right to vaster social and economic benefits than immigrants and refugees—particularly in matters of employment, public housing, and financial welfare.

Likewise, by *touching on articles of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, and by *making frequent references to the core values of the French Republic* (e.g. the 1905 Secularism Law), Le Pen has broadcasted the self-image of a wise leader who is an authority on rights and law. Her apparent familiarity with the laws and principles of the French Republic has certainly helped her in gaining more credibility and reliability. Furthermore, by showing a larger concern for greater social matters such as rights and justice, Le Pen has managed to distance herself from the narrow, traditional concerns of the National Front (e.g. “borders”, “territory”, and “identity”). However, despite her call for the acquiescence of secularism, Le Pen still regularly alluded to and extolled the Christian roots of the French Republic.

In fact, by placing Christianity in a higher order than all other religions any chance she could, it became apparent that secularism has only been a weapon brandished, by the politician, against one particular people and one confession: Muslims and Islam. Consequently, despite drawing on the French Republic’s most important values, including equality, Le Pen still showed a large anti-Islam fixation and an oblique discrimination against a large portion of the French population.

Similarly, Le Pen’s speech analysis shows that she has heavily depended on other rhetoric manipulation techniques in order to implicitly further the same dogma. One of those techniques is the intricate art of *amalgamation*. For instance, by denouncing “Islamism” right after condemning ordinary practices of Islam (e.g. consumption of Halal food), Le Pen has managed to generate a subtle confusion between ordinary

Muslims who are practicing their religious duties as prescribed in the Quran (the great majority), and fundamentalists who are promoting a radical version of Islam (a visible and vocal minority). In fact, this rhetoric manipulation technique – whilst almost undetectable and seemingly innocent – has allowed Marine Le Pen to project a distorted image of Islam, an image that stoked fear of the other amongst many French citizens. Drumming up fears and latent prejudices and anxieties in order to harvest votes in an old practice of the far right in Europe and an art that has been faithfully, but subtly, preserved by Le Pen.

Moreover, having declared herself unaffiliated to any party, Le Pen has relied upon the clever technique of *un-branding* in the aim of appeasing as many electorates as she could. As a matter of fact, although her stances and political ideology still fell on the far right spectrum of politics, Le Pen’s frequent assertions that she was neither right nor left may have helped promote the impression, or the illusion, of an ideological change. Realizing that the “far right” label may discourage some constituents from casting their vote to the party, and the fact many electorates were looking for an independent candidate, Le Pen has experimented with making simple claims that she belonged to neither a specific faction, nor a specific orientation. Consequently, the technique of un-branding has permitted the leader of the National Front to exhibit herself as a nonpartisan, self-sufficient, and dispassionate leader who is worthy of the consensus of all— despite maintaining a typical far rightist agenda.

Alternatively, Le Pen’s exponential reliance upon *legal and economic arguments* in her recent speeches, has enabled her to advance the same anti-immigration stance from a more persuasive and analytical approach. In fact, Le Pen has introduced novel legal terms to the regular vocabulary of the National Front, such as “sanctions”, “legal transgressions”, “jurisdictional evidence”, “state of law”, and “justice”, in order to condemn immigration. In her arguments, Le Pen has denounced this phenomenon on the account of the jurisdictional evidences that have seen crime and delinquency rates soar with the escalation of immigration. Hence, alienating herself and her party from the outdated and arbitrary arguments of “identity”, “culture”, “religion”, and “race”, Le Pen still championed an anti-immigration politics in the name of law and justice. Moreover,

by introducing novel economic arguments that touched on the high unemployment rate and scarce public housing in France, Le Pen still rallied for the strengthening of border control and the limitation of immigration. Consequently, this technique of scientific argumentation has only helped further the traditional ideology of the National Front, through an alternative, technical approach that has been even harder to challenge or to contest.

On the other hand, by *making reference to prominent Republican figures* (e.g. “Joan of Arc” and “Robespierre”), *in addition to various Socialist notables* (e.g. Jean Jaures), Le Pen has promoted the illusion of an ideological change, or at least, a diversion from the invariable, underlying ideology of her party. This rhetoric manipulation technique has certainly left many of Le Pen’s audiences with the conjecture that she might have become more Republican, or more Socialist, depending on the figure she was alluding to in her speech. In any case, this technique has evidently took many of Le Pen’s audiences’ minds off the actual static position of her party, and the unswerving far right ideology of the National Front. Furthermore, by making her pay homage to figures that do not customarily belong to the far right, this technique has presented Le Pen as a progressive leader—one who is open to borrow and learn from all kinds of people—despite her preservation of a protectionist ideology, with exceedingly narrow views.

Consequently, Le Pen’s 2010-2017 speech analysis shows that despite the politician’s use of a sundry of different techniques to manipulate her rhetoric, her ideology remained nationalist and protectionist, with unwavering anti-immigration politics. Despite her many efforts to subdue and soften her speech, Le Pen still adamantly believed in administering limits to the social and economic rights of immigrants and refugees, in reinforcing border control and halting immigration, in revoking birthright citizenship, and in making citizenship transmissible only through blood and French parents (amongst other isolationist engagements and views). Additionally, in spite of her efforts to sound like a genuinely inclusive and progressive leader, Le Pen still viewed Muslims and ordinary Muslim practices as highly incompatible with the French Republic. In fact, she still rallied, in the majority of her speeches from 2011 to 2017, to annul the women-only swimming hours at public facilities, to terminate the access to Halal food in school

canteens, and to ban several forms of religious attire for Muslim women. Finally, despite her superficial efforts to distance herself from the traditional party, Le Pen's agenda still aimed to build and maintain a single, constricted national identity. This national identity— as per Le Pen's constant allusion to the “founding values” even in her most recent rhetoric— would ideally be constructed upon a shared singular history, the history of the French Forefathers, and a shared religion, Christianity.

Furthermore, Le Pen's 2010-2017 speech analysis has revealed that the politician's use of rhetoric manipulation techniques has been exponential from one speech to another. From banking on two techniques to subdue her language in 2010, to depending on forty-one techniques a few days prior to the 2017 presidential elections, the evolution of Le Pen's discourse from rhetoric to rhetoric manipulation has been unrelenting and unshakable. In fact, since her undertaking of the party “de-diabolization” strategy in 2011, Le Pen has identified the vast potentials of an altered language, and embarked on a simultaneous rhetoric de-diabolization project. Alternatively, as her increasing use of rhetoric manipulation techniques came with increasing electoral gains, Le Pen has procured enough confidence in her strategy to count on it in her battle to the presidency. Accordingly, Le Pen has chosen to wage that battle by relying upon the highest number of rhetoric manipulation techniques she had ever used, in the hope of clinching the country's presidency.

Despite losing the presidential race to incumbent president Emmanuel Macron on May 7, 2017, it is undeniable that the evolution of Marine Le Pen's discourse from rhetoric to rhetoric manipulation has played a significant role in the National Front's rise to power in recent years. In fact, despite failing to introduce any new ideology, rhetoric manipulation has assisted Le Pen in appeasing large and different segments of French electorates. It is unclear the exact reason why it had failed to help her clinch the presidency of the country. Perhaps rhetoric manipulation could only get you as far as constituents are prepared to have a candidate from the National Front as the president of their country. Perhaps more time was needed for this new rhetoric to be able to completely wash off the far right taint. Or perhaps, the winning contender had invested in a similar rhetoric that was able to take him farther. With Le Pen changing the name of

her party to National Rally in June 2018, evidence is indicating that she is still holding on to her “de-diabolization” strategy. With a currently destabilized France, and Le Pen’s continuous investment in skin-deep changes, will we witness the inauguration of Le Pen as the president of the French Republic in 2022? Only time will tell.

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