

**The 2005 referendum on the Constitutional Treaty in France : More, not less
Europeanization of the French political space**

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Summary

Based on qualitative interviews with key-actors of political and social organisations (political parties, unions, social groups) in France, carried out just after the referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty in June 2005, the paper will demonstrate that this major political event actually – and ironically – advanced the process of Europeanization for most political and social actors involved. The deepening of the European dimension of the French political space was a highly conflictual process. The referendum campaign was the moment when a new political dynamic emerged, challenging the previous structuring of debates where it was very difficult to be against Treaties without being against European integration. The first part of the paper presents the conceptual framework of the research, drawing on the concept of space. The second part presents the data from the interviews. The third part analyses the processes by which some of the barriers were broken during the campaign in a way such that we can observe the emergence of a different European dimension of political space in France. The overall result of the referendum campaign is not less political Europe but more.

* During the referendum campaign on the Constitutional Treaty in France, the dominant media analyses were hesitating between two attitudes. One paternalist attitude was to present the “noniste” (those who were militating against the Treaty) as nice citizens, full of good intentions but unable to understand the real dimensions of the debates; the other attitude was to transform “noniste” into a kind of devil, linked with Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the extreme-right party, the *Front National* (FN). Despite this negative media coverage and despite the pressure politicians in power exert on voters, the no camp won the referendum and the Treaty was rejected by 54,6 % of French voters.

The story of this French referendum is an internal political history about a European object. How these elements are articulated in concrete social practices? What are the consequences of this specific moment on the relationship between French political and social actors on one side and Europe on the other? This is the general interrogation of the paper. More specifically, we want to show that the moment of the referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (TCE) (composed by the campaign beginning somewhere in January or February 2005, the result of the referendum, the 29th of May 2005, and the post-campaign period till December 2005) has produced more Europeanization of the French political space.

The concept of Europeanization is a way to measure the degree of influence of Europe on national political dynamics. The study of Europeanization first emerged in the field of public policy and proposed an analysis of how European norms were adopted by member States or how national policies adjusted to European building (Jacquot and Woll, 2004 : 3). This area of study includes also the debate about convergence between Welfare European States that dominated during the 1990es. Here, we intend to apply the concept of Europeanization to the French political space.

We can classify the literature regarding the question of the impact of European building on national political life in two main camps.

1) A first group of research projects deals with the reproduction of the national political life at the European level. Does a European voter exist? Are real European political

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parties emerging ? Is it possible to identify European interest groups or European social movements ? Could we speak of a European civil society ? (Jean-Claude Boual, 1999). For example, in the review *Politique européenne*, the special issue on mobilizations and socio-political cleavages in Europe (spring 2001), focus on how far European political activities is similar or different from what we had observed at the national level for decades ?

2) A second group of studies tries to apprehend the impact of the European building on social protest, and especially on the emergence of European social movements. This literature deals with the question of scale shift for national organisations of social movements and how the relationships with European institutions intervene in this process. These works on *Contentious Europe* (Imig and Tarrow, 2001) had showed that European building has not yet produced a full Europeanization of collective action, the majority of protest remaining nationally embedded. More specifically, they observe that the majority of cases of Europeanization happened by internalisation (development of local or national mobilisations, with local or national actors towards local or national targets but around European questions). Other cases of Europeanization emerged by externalisation (European building creates political opportunities that are taken by local or national actors) (Guidry, Kennedy and Zald 2000 ; Balme, Chabanet and Wright, 2002)) and in some few cases targets of protest were clearly European (lobbying against European institutions or European protest as European Marches Against Unemployment in 1997 – 1998. Europeanization is more rarely the result of a process of supra nationalization that goes with a strong institutionalisation of actors at the European level (the case of some interest groups).

In this paper, Europeanization is considered as “a set of processes trough which the EU political, social and economic dynamics become part of the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies” (Ladrech (1994) and Radaelli (2000)). With this definition we do not suppose that local or national actors has to address themselves to European institutions in order to talk about Europe. In the same way, we do not speak about transnationalization of political protest, but rather of the interference between European building processes and strategies / actions/ discourses of political actors nationally situated as well as with their dynamic of relationships.

We measure Europeanization from variations observed on the four following dimensions (see the first part of the paper for detailed explanations) :

- 1) The dominant form of belonging ;
- 2) The scale of actions and discourses ;
- 3) The structuring of social relationships along specific political cleavages ;

4) State intervention and dynamic of social forces

Our main argument is that the TCE campaign of 2005 in France constitutes a political moment that has accelerated the Europeanization of the French political space on each of these dimensions.

The first part of the paper conceptualised political space and proposed an analytical grid ; in the second part of the paper we apply this grid to the referendum period of time; and the third part is a synthesis of the results.

The political space

Since the Second World War and the European building process, french citizen's debated Europe. Today, the debate seems to be less on the question of the relevance of European building and more on the nature of the building process and the form Europe should take (Balme, Chabanet, Wright, 2002: 23). In all cases, Europe was and is an important subject of political debate. Building Europe tends to become a specific field of political action, for social actors that protest against European institutions or for those who want European institutions to intervene, or for actors that tend to influence the European political process. The work of Adrien Favell on European immigration policy has shown, for example, the development of a specific social European power composed of European elites distinct from national elites (Favell, 1998). In this paper we consider only national actors and their relationships on Europe in the specific context of the referendum in France on the Constitutional Treaty. We argue that this moment has reinforced the Europeanization of the national political space. The notion of political space, exported from the geography field, is a way to dynamically analyse the relationships between pluralities of actors on over a short period of time, for us, the moment of the referendum campaign.

The four dimensions of political space

Building on Lévy (1994) and Lefebvre (1974 ; 1978) works on space, I defined political space along four dimensions : the measure, the scale, the content and the relations to the State. Thus, my analysis of the Europeanization of the French political space during the referendum will be organised along :

1) A privileged mode of space belonging : the measure of space captures the dialectical relationships between territory and networks, expressing the privileged actors mode of belonging, as a relations towards borders of the territory or as a series of links

(networks) between people. Does the referendum moment change this mode of belonging for social and political actors involved in the national political space ? Does territory stay as the focal point ? How is the articulation between networks and territory executed and with which territory ? This first dimension was central during the referendum campaign and revealed the complexity of the relationships of actors to Europe.

2) A scale : The second dimension defines the scope of the space. Scale could be the individual level of sociology or the planet. How do actors speak about Europe during the referendum ? How do they articulate the local, the national and Europe ? Is it possible to observe more frequent transnational relations between actors ? Does a European scale of actions and discourses exist ? The analyses of the scale of space will help us understand the symbolic and strategic relations of actors to Europe.

3) Structured social relationships : The third dimension, the content apprehends what's going on in the political space considered. As political sociology has documented, it is possible to locate conflictual structures in democracies, some are directly linked to social structures (the class cleavages), others are linked to beliefs (religious cleavages) or to historical processes of nation-state building (national cleavage in multinational states). Even if this conflictual structure is not fixed in time, it will influence the way a new political question is treated.

As Marks and Steenbergen note, “ political actors have an incentive to interpret new issues in the light of existing cleavages such as the left/right ideological dimension” (2004: 3). We consider that these pre-existing cleavages had an impact on the way political and social actors interact, but that they could be challenged by new emerging issue, such as European integration. Besides, the question of European integration in itself could be a structural political cleavage. In France, before the referendum campaign the dominant debate about Europe was organised along the line of more or less integration (sovereignist versus federalist) ; during the campaign and after the campaign, the left/ right problematic clearly challenged this monolithic dimension.

4) State intervention and dynamic of social actors: Beyond structuring cleavages we have to consider the mode of relations between social and political actors and the relations of these actors to the State.

In France, the borders between social and political actors are historically sharply drawn. Political parties do not work with social actors even if they are on the same ground and vice-versa. This mutual distrust is expressed in terms of fear of recuperation and in terms

of instrumentalisation of fights. Regarding this constraint, the moment of the referendum appears as a moment where barriers were temporarily up. Finally, a specific relation to the State marks space. The moment of the referendum was going on in a context where relations between social actors and State were bad. How this context played a role in the campaign and has this context been modified by the campaign ?

On each of the four dimensions, we will present the changes that did or did not occur during the referendum moment. Of course, as we are analysing a very short period of time, we would not be able to talk about large processes of changes but only to propose some conclusions about the referendum campaign as a significant political moment for French political space.

Qualitative interviews have been taken in June 2005 in Paris. I met organisation leaders or people in charge of Europe (in larger organisations). Interviews are not confidential because I was looking for official discourse and I met people in this regard. A comprehensive list of interviews is included in the bibliography. The main subject of the interview was the question of globalisation and the relations of actors to globalisation (a research financed by the SSRHC), but spontaneously, a few minutes after the beginning of the interview, people generally spoke of the European building process and the No victory of the 29th of May. Those data were completed by written data (campaign materials, web sites consulted in May 2005, propaganda materials) and a systematic consultation of newspaper (*Le Monde*, *Libération* and *Le Figaro*). The following section presents the preliminary results of this research.

The referendum moment: a crucial moment for the French political space

The referendum moment is particularly interesting to study because, as Jacquot and Woll said (2004: 9), it was a favourite time for French citizens to “use” Europe in the sense that actors were engaged in political interactions on the European question and were posing specific political practices regarding building Europe. In other words, it was a time where concrete political work was done. The “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe” (TCE) was unanimously adopted by the Head of States or governments of the 25 State members on the 18th of June 2004 and formally signed by them in Roma, on the 29th of October. As the

European website explains :

”This Treaty can only enter into force when it has been adopted by each of the signatory countries in accordance with its own constitutional procedures: this is called the ratification of the Treaty by the Member States. Depending on the countries' legal and historical traditions, the procedures laid down by the constitutions for this purpose are not identical: they comprise either or both of the following two types of mechanisms: the "parliamentary" method: the text is adopted following a vote on a text ratifying an international Treaty by the State's parliamentary Chamber(s) ; the "referendum" method: a referendum is held, submitting the text of the Treaty directly to citizens, who vote for or against it » (<http://europa.eu.int/constitution/>, March 2006).

Of the 25 countries, ten have chosen to ratify the Treaty by referendum, as did France. In 2005, nine countries had already ratified the Treaty.

On the 29th of May 2005, French citizens were asked the following question: “*Approuvez-vous le projet de loi qui autorise la ratification du traité établissant une Constitution pour l'Europe ?*”¹. The no votes won with 54, 68% ; the yes votes totalised 45, 32% and the participation rate was very high for a European consultation (69, 7%) (Ministère de l'Intérieur, website, consulted in January 2006, <http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/avotreservice/elections/rf2005/000/000.h>). According to IPSOS analyses, the No voters were voting against the degradation of living conditions (52%) and the too strong liberalism included in the constitution project (40%). The yes camp was expressing the will to build a Europe able to measure itself to China and the United States (64%) and to prevent the No voters from stopping or slowing down the European building process (44%) (Ipsos, website, consulted in January 2006, <http://www.ipsos.fr/CanalIpsos/poll/8074.asp>). In the same analysis, it appears that the sociological cleavage is highly present in the vote: the more affluent and educated people have voted in favour of the TCE while the middle and popular classes, less educated, have voted No to the TCE. Surprisingly for certain observers, young people did voted more than for the Maastricht Treaty and massively for the NO.

¹ « Do you agree with the law proposal that authorized the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe », my translation

The result is essentially a victory of the left part of the No camp (two-third) while the No at the extreme-right represents one-third of the vote. Nevertheless, on the left side of the political spectrum political parties were highly divided. Almost sixty percent of the Socialist and Greens electorates voted against the treaty while the organisations were calling for the Yes. On the right side of the political spectrum, the situation is completely different as 80% of the UMP (*Union pour la majorité présidentielle*) electorate voted for the TCE, as their party were calling for. As for unions, 74 % of *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT) members voted No, 65 % of the *Union syndicale solidaires* too, compared to 46 % of *Confédération française démocratique du Travail* (CFDT) members who reject the Treaty.

Beyond the electoral results, what were the concrete positions taken by collective actors during the campaign ? Next section presents the preliminary results of the interviews.

Actors, actions and their interactions

« Un mai 68 dans les urnes » (Farbiaz, interview, 2005) ; « Un séisme politique national » (Krivine, interview, 2005) ; « une victoire historique contre le néo-libéralisme » (Nikonoff, interview, 2005) ...²

Words used by actors to describe the moment of the referendum are very strong and dramatic. Besides, because of the form of a referendum, the debate was dominantly between two antagonist camps : the oui-ouiste on one side, the noniste on the other. This structure is not very friendly towards subtleties and a large portion of the energy deployed during the campaign by actors was directed to the rebuilding of frontiers between the two camps (the left actors of the yes camp (PS, VERT, CFDT) working very hard to distance themselves from the right actors of their camp (UMP) and in the no camp, the left forces (PS, PC, VERT, LCR, ATTAC, Union syndicale (US) solidaires, CGT) working very hard to separate themselves from the extreme-right (FN))³.

Oui-ouiste	Noniste
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² « May 1968 in the ballot box » ; « A national political seism », « A historical victory against neoliberalism », my translation.

³ PS : *Parti socialiste* – Socialist Party ; PC : *Parti communiste* – Communist Party ; FN : *Front national* – National Front ; LCR : *Ligue Communiste révolutionnaire* – Revolutionary Communist League.

UMP	PC
PS with dissidence	FN
Greens with dissidence	CGT not officially
CFDT not officially	US Solidaires
MEDEF (<i>Mouvement des entreprises de France</i>)	ATTAC
ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation)	Confédération paysanne

Actors	Positions	Principal actions	Justification of chosen strategies
PS	<p>No camp : Treaty will be the end of social Europe /</p> <p>Yes camp: Europe needs the TCE / it is the best we can have (for Social Europe) and we do not know what the next one will look like, if the no camp wins/ French citizens have to vote for the Treaty and not mix the debates with questions regarding the national government.</p> <p><i>“Le oui est une</i></p>	<p>Strong presence in the media/ some links with other no left forces at the grassroots level</p> <p>Committee for the yes / come back of Lionel Jospin/ mediatic meetings / privileged links with European socialist parties and ETUC</p>	<p>It is our duty to say no today to save the future of Europe</p> <p>We need to vote yes today to be able to work together after the referendum to make the Treaty better / we could not afford the price of a division of progressive political forces at the European level</p>

	<i>protection, le non une aventure”</i>		
PCF	Opposition to the liberal project of the TCE AND a political sanction of the government. It is a no for Europe / a no that will allow Europe to be a counter-weight to the hegemony of the US and not a partner of the US	Important leadership in the unitary process of the no (left) camp	Redefinition of the constitutional project, renegotiation with a better voice for the no (left) camp
LCR	Opposition to the undemocratic process of the TCE and to the neoliberal bias of the Treaty – arguments similar to the PCF	They target the yes part of the PS / very active member of the “Collectif”/ impressive grassroots mobilisations with a lot of presence on public places (meetings/ market places/ factories/)	New Charter of Rights/ democratisation of European institutions and governing with more room for participative democracy/ reinforcement of national parliament role / dissolution of the French national assembly/creation of a Constituent Assembly for Europe
Greens	Yes camp : the building of the European political space is a necessity and the Treaty allows that. French citizens have to	Meetings with the yes camp of the PS / important media presence	To say yes and be able to revised it later.

	<p>vote for the Treaty and not to mix the debates with questions regarding national government.</p> <p>No camp: argumentation very similar to the no PS camp</p>	<p>Participation into the « Collectif » at grassroots level</p>	<p>It is our duty to say no today to preserve the future</p>
ATTAC	<p>TCE is denying basic democratic principles and it is the institutionalisation of liberalism through the Constitution.</p>	<p>Popular education on the text of the Treaty/ vulgarisation of the treaty and its analysis/ public debates/ active member of the Collectif / very efficient grassroots campaigns</p>	<p>The victory of the no will make it possible to build another Europe that respects human beings and its environment</p>
US Solidaires	<p>Against the text of the Treaty in the name of a certain idea of Europe (social, democratic, justice)</p>	<p>Grassroots mobilisations and active participation to the Collectif but no official vote instructions</p>	<p>It will be a fundamental error not to resist today the TCE attempt to transform liberal economy as a formal norm</p>
Confédération paysanne	<p>Against the text of the Treaty; has several proposals concerning for example the question of food sovereignty and European agricultural</p>	<p>Grassroots mobilisations and active participation to the Collectif but not as an initiator</p>	<p>Choose to develop their organisation as a political force as strong as possible but not to overpass their</p>

	policy		union mandate
FN	Against the dissolution of nations into a European federation / Against the ultra-liberal policies of Europeanist and leaders of the European Union / Against the Turkish accession	Important mediatic presence but the grassroots mobilisations seems to have been limited to certain places and regions	Historical opportunity to reorient the building of the European union towards a Community of free Nations of Europe (excluding Turkey) / demission of Chirac

As we have seen with the sociological analyses of the voting results, in the left no camp, political parties were highly divided. The question of the TCE creates divisions in each of the organisation studied (unions included), even the most publicly engaged in one camp or another. Apart from this first particularity, the TCE campaign was marked by an active mobilisation of the left no camp organised collectively and with unity. Political parties (PC and the LCR mainly, but also the no camp of the PS and the Greens), unions (US Solidaires, Confédération paysanne, some local CGT unions, some local unions in the education sector) and associations (ex: ATTAC, CEDETIM, Foundation Copernic)⁴ worked collectively on the ground level to organise meetings all over the country. More precisely, the Copernic foundation, a group of social actors that exists since 1998, published a text, the “*Appel contre le traité constitutionnel européen*”, signed by 200 individuals. The text was published in the communist newspaper *L’Humanité* on the 20th of October 2004. Quickly, more than 500 signatures are collected and a Collectif of the *Appel des 200* is created. In April 2005 the Collectif is active under the name “*Collectif national pour un non de gauche*”. After the referendum, the Collectif transformed itself into the “*Collectif national du 29 mai*” and

⁴ ATTAC : *Association pour la taxation des transactions pour l’Aide aux citoyens* – in English, the name used by ATTAC members is : Movement for democratic control of financial markets and their institutions ; CEDETIM : *Centre d’études et d’initiatives de solidarités internationales* – Center for studies and initiatives of international solidarities ; Foundation Copernic : sort of think-tank for progressive forces.

pursues its activities for “an other Europe” (see the website <http://www.collectifdu29mai.org/>).

Historically, the PC was against each text voted between 1951 and 1999 at the European level. In 2001, for the first time it chose not to vote for the Nice Treaty. In 2005, the PCF was clearly in the no camp and presents itself as the main leader of the unification process of the left forces. The arguments developed were similar to the LCR. For the PCF and the LCR, the 29th of May is seen as a step in the fight against neoliberalism and its policies, not an end. For example, after the Treaty, the LCR proposed to work for the dissolution of the national assembly and the departure of Chirac who was seen (and still is seen) as an illegitimate president. But in the same time, they also insist on the necessity to propose another “plan” for Europe and they are working on it along with other organisations members of the *Collectif du 29 mai*.

« Le non d’avenir est porté par les luttes des jeunes et des travailleurs, les combats des mouvements altermondialistes. Il a permis la convergence de militants de la LCR, du PCF, d’écologistes et de socialistes pour un « non » antilibéral (...). » (François Duval, « On continue », *Rouge*, n. 2115, 9 June 2005, p.5.)

Each organisation taken separately is very aware of the risk of “recuperation” and “instrumentalisation” the presence of political parties could pose on the movement, especially in a context where the national political agenda (2007 is a year of presidential elections) could favour such deviation. When will the strategic dimensions of building a political capital by participating to the coalition (which is for sure the case of the PC) prevent the concrete political convergence from happening in the Collectif ? With the building of this unitary dynamic the question of borders between actors becomes central. Who is acting as a party inside the coalition ? What is the first role of unions during a campaign ? What sort of action an association like ATTAC can and cannot do ?

The PS, for its part, sustained all European Treaties, except towards the European Community of Defence where the Party was divided. In December 2004, the Socialist Party organised an internal referendum on the TCE. Fifty eight percent of the militants that voted were in favour of the Treaty. During the campaign, the yes was presented as a vote for Europe, as a political force and as the main actor (and space) of mediation between the national and the global. European building is presented as a central tool to respond to

economic globalisation, along with financial taxation, free trade, sustainable development and the reform of the WTO. In this perspective, the no camp was seen as a no to Europe and there was no other alternative possible. Highly divided, some leaders of the Party engaged publicly themselves for the no: Laurent Fabius, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, Henri Emmanuelli⁵. After the referendum, divisions inside the party remain, even after the national Congress in November 2005.

« Si les français votaient Non, il n’y aurait aucun changement en France, ce serait un non à l’Europe » (Lionel Jospin, Public discourse, Nantes 20th May 2005, cited by *L’Hebdo des socialistes*, 28th May 2005, p.11)⁶.

In terms of strategies, the yes camp of the PS tried to use their European connection (European Socialist Party, European Trade Union Confederation, both in favour of the TCE) to legitimise their national position. One of the main arguments developed was to consider the Treaty as a basis to develop European union action in order to render European building more coherent with progressive values (*L’Hebdo des socialistes*, 21th of May 2005, n.363).

For Pierre Moscovici, General Secretary of the Party for international relations, Europe has progressively occupied the totality of the space of debates inside the party. Militants and leaders raised their knowledge and level of curiosity about Europe, they also have a more clear consciousness of the transversal position of Europe in the French political life. In this perspective, Europe has become a real political question. But, for the worst, the PS is devastated, divided on its identity, unable to reunify antagonistic positions.

As for the PS, the Greens were also shaken by the debates around the Treaty. Since the mid nineties, the Greens were very closed to *altermondialistes* positions⁷. In 2003 they created an *altermondialiste* section in the Party, aside International Relations, for the purpose of the European Social Forum in Paris in 2003. Officially in the yes camp, a large portion of the Green’s militants has voted for the no and was in the no campaign. As Farbiarz said,

⁵The PS is composed of 4 main streams :

- 1) *Nouveau Monde* with Mélanchon and Emmanuelli
- 2) The *Nouveau Parti Socialiste* with Montebourg
- 3) *Motion militante* with Dollé
- 4) The majoritarian stream with François Hollande, First Secretary of the Party.

⁶ « If French vote No, there will be no change in France, it will be a no to Europe », my translation.

⁷ In the Anglophone world, the term *altermondialiste* is replaced by the Movement for global justice or for another globalization. Here, it points out the diverse networks that emerged in France and abroad in Europe on the basis of the World social forum.

“C’est notre identité politique qui est touchée, parce que les Verts sont “naturellement” altermondialistes. (...) Et là, les Verts en portant le oui, on laissez croire qu’ils étaient du côté des sociaux-libéraux du PS...Ça va être très dur de panser les plaies” (Farbiaz, interview, 2005)⁸.

On the right side of the political spectrum, even if some divisions existed, they were not much publicised (*Le Monde*, 29 of April 2005, p9 “*Échos de campagne*”). The UMP was clearly engaged in the yes camp, with Jacques Chirac, President of the country personally involved as a strong supporter of the TCE. During the campaign, he pronounced four public speeches (on TV) to exhort French citizens to vote in favour of the Treaty. His analysis of the signification of the vote was that it is not possible to say “I am European and I will vote no” (*Le Monde*, 5 May 2005, p.7 – *Union européenne, Le référendum du 29 mai*).

The extreme-right was historically against Treaties or abstained from voting during the other European Treaties ratification process. In 2005, the FN and Philippe De Villier movement for France were in the no camp for three main reasons : the necessity of sovereignty of the French nation; the ultraliberal characteristics of European economic policies and of the TCE ; because the TCE was seen as a preparation to the Turkish adhesion to Europe. The FN remains very ambivalent on the possibility of European building in itself :

“L’Europe doit se construire si c’est un instrument de puissance, de protection, un instrument politique pour defendre notre patrimoine et notre réalité industrielle et économique, mais si la construction européenne ne sert que de tremplin à la mondialisation économique et au mondialisme politique, nous y sommes hostiles” (Lang, FN, 2005, interview)⁹.

It is interesting to note that for the extreme-right as well as for the extreme-left, the economic choices made by European institutions in favour of the free market were an important element of opposition to the Treaty. In the FN discourse, it is the ultraliberal

⁸ « It is our political identity that is at stake because Greens are naturally part of the Global Justice movement (...) In making campaign for the yes, we let people believe that we are the same as the socio-liberal of the PS (...) It’s going to be very difficult to put a plaster on it.. », my translation.

⁹ Europe has to be built if it is an instrument of power, protection, an political instrument to defend our heritage and our industrial and economic reality, but if European building is a trampoline for economic globalization and political “worldism”, we are against it », my translation.

character of European economic policies and of some articles of the Treaty (Article III – 314 ; Article III – 148 ; Article I-130; Article III – 166; Article III- 167) that should be resisted while for the coalition of the left no camp, they speak of the liberal character of the Treaty (article I-3) and the fact that no guaranty is made for the protection of social rights, including minimum wage. As Lang said in interview:

“L’interprétation que nous faisons de ce référendum est celui d’un vote de double résistance. Une résistance sociale (...) et un vote de résistance national, conscient ou inconscient. (...) Grâce à ce débat sur la Constitution vous avez eu une sorte de transfert des argumentaires politiques vers les notions de protection et de préférence nationale. Une synthèse entre le national et le social et la synthèse entre les deux, c’est le FN. (...) La gauche internationaliste ne peut pas porter le discours de la reconquête social parce que la reconquête sociale passe par la reconquête économique qui est forcément liée aux notions de marché intérieur, de redéfinition des règles d’échanges, de ré-industrialisation de la France et de l’Europe, de rétablissement de barrières douanières, toutes des notions du FN. L’avenir passe par le nationalisme social” (Lang, interview, 2005)¹⁰.

Here we see clearly that Europe is becoming an instrument of partisan concurrency, the no camp, including the extreme-right, defending a certain conception of European building, not only a negation of it.

For union organisations, it was more difficult to have an official and a visible active position during the referendum campaign that is the privilege terrain of political parties. Yet, the victory of the no is probably largely dependant on the implication of unions and an association like ATTAC. These organisations have done the grassroots work, spending a lot

¹⁰ « We interpret the results of the referendum as a double resistance : a social resistance (...) and a vote for national resistance, consciously or not. (...) Because of this debate, you have a transfer of political arguments towards national protection and preference. A synthesis of the national and the social and the synthesis is the FN. (...) The internationalist left is not able to carry the discourse of the social re-conquest because this re-conquest has to pass through economical re-conquest which is linked with notions like internal market, redefinition of trade rules, re-industrialisation of France and Europe, re-conduction of tariff walls, all notions from the FN. The future is in the social nationalism », my translation.

of energy and resources to meet people on the ground (public markets places; factories; campus) and participating to thousands of meetings in local areas.

For US Solidaires, a victory of the yes camp was seen as a way to freeze the situation in Europe while a victory of the no camp could disrupt the European political field and create good opportunities for progressive forces. They were very active in the campaign, but they do not give any formal voting priority. For the CGT, after a debate of several months, the Confederal Committee rejected the Treaty while the initial proposal of the Direction was much more nuanced and favoured a position of a critical analysis of the Treaty but without any formal voting priority. Nevertheless, formal political engagement and instrumentalisation of the campaign for other finality (ex: 2007 election) were formally forbidden. Locally, some organisations did take the decision to engage publicly into the campaign, against the national confederal advice. As Guy Juquel, responsible for the European/International Relation's section said in interview, the CGT is an organisation in transformation but some disagreements and resistance still exist in the union. Since 2000, the direction is trying to provoke new kinds of relationships between unions and wants to insure the entire autonomy of the CGT from any party and any alignment. Finally, the CFDT was in the yes camp but the organisation did not officially give voting priority to its members.

ATTAC was the principal social actor directly involved in the no camp campaign. In December 2004, ATTAC organised an internal consultation. Two questions were asked:

- Are you in favour or against the TCE ? 84% of the militants who vote said against.
- Do you wish that ATTAC gave vote priorities ? 72% said yes.

As a result, ATTAC (around 80 000 members) has directed all its resources into the campaign for a “no, authentically European”.

As the President of ATTAC, Jacques Nikonoff said:

« Le rejet de ce texte légitimerait par contre tous nos combats, aurait un impact considérable chez les autres peuples d'Europe, modifierait les rapports de force en notre faveur et faciliterait notre combat pour « une autre Europe » (Nikonoff, interview, 2005)¹¹.

The content of this “other Europe” is, *de facto*, already developed in the proposal of changes ATTAC made on the TCE before the referendum. The moment of the campaign was

¹¹ « The rejection of this text will legitimate all of our other fights, it would also have a considerable impact on other European peoples and would modify the balance of power in our favour and facilitate our fight for another Europe », my translation.

a time of stopping the Treaty but also a time of popular education to anti-liberalism on the basis of these proposals. For ATTAC's leaders, the results of the referendum are clearly linked to this anti-liberal interpretation of the Treaty of the French voters.

Finally, we have to mention the MEDEF position that decided to be in favour of the TCE after an internal poll of business heads panel. For the Maastricht Treaty, in 1992, the French business community was divided into two camps: big businesses were in favour, small and medium size businesses against. In 2005, only very small businesses seemed to be against the Treaty (*Sophie Fay and Caroline Monnot, « Union européenne. Le référendum du 29 mai. Les patrons favorables à la Constitution mais réservés sur l'Europe », Le Monde, 22nd of April, p.8*). If the MEDEF campaign of 1992 was central to the Maastricht Treaty debate, in 2005 the MEDEF was a marginal actor and probably decided to stay so.

The European referendum campaign was a turning moment for most of the actors involved. But more concretely, does the referendum moment change something in the relationships of French collective actors to Europe ? It is now time to turn to the measure of the Europeanization of the French political space during this period.

The TCE moment : European learning and building dynamics

If we go back to our four criterion of space, what happened between December 2004 and June 2005 concerning Europe in France ?

1) Belonging and scale : from territorial belonging to territoriality

Modes of belonging were clearly political stakes mobilised by actors during the referendum moment. In the name of the French national State people should vote yes or no to the referendum, in the name of the European belonging, French citizens were exhorted to accept or reject the TCE. Three positions could be found on the dimension of belonging in actor's discourses (one position not excluding an other). A first position is to highlight the French territory and the necessity to preserve its specificity; a second position is to do the same with the borders of Europe; and a third position is a kind of mix between European territorial belonging and the necessity to develop European social networks.

For the majority of the actors involved, we have found a juxtaposition of national and European territorial belonging. Even for the FN, the opposition to the Turkey entry in Europe is founded on the defence of the “real” territory of Europe, which is apprehended in terms of “euro-caucasienne” origins. Aside from the more conservative FN version of the no, if French specificities and particularities are evoked by the *Collectif pour le non*, it is not in a defensive way, but in a “missionary” way; these “good” particularities of the French system should be exported elsewhere in Europe (this argument is very present in ATTAC discourses¹²). On the no left camp, the territory of Europe is clearly a strong reference of belonging and a way of gathering all European citizens into the same fight: the fight against neoliberalism. But it is also in the left no camp that we find some elements of networks belonging, especially for the actors involved since the end of the nineties into worldwide coalitions, campaigns or spaces (like the World social forum).

In terms of scale, Europe is clearly a scale of actions for the *Collectif*, and all the French debate is seen as a debate that goes beyond national scale of actions. But this element is not specific to the referendum period. This kind of articulation between scales exists at other crucial moments, like the European social forums. Nevertheless, as for the belonging dimension, the articulation of scales becomes a political stake during the campaign. For example, inside the PS, the yes camp said that if the Treaty is rejected, the impact of the no will be disastrous for European building but nothing will change in the French context while in the no camp national and European scales are clearly linked and it is precisely because the TCE is seen as affecting directly day-to day European citizens life, including French, that militants worked for the no.

The novelty in the referendum moment is not so much on scale or belonging dimensions taken separately. The novelty is more in the way belonging and scale are articulated. What is emerging during the referendum moment is new links between State/Nation/scales. From historical reasons, Nation State was building territorial links through its social policies and the regulation of social solidarity in general. If social national State is no more a guarantee of social solidarity, what happens to the feeling of belonging ? For more and more actors, “Bruxelles” and European institutions are becoming central actors of

¹² ATTAC is not a homogeneous association; some sovereignist keeping close to federalist on the European question.

solidarity between European citizens, including French ones. In this sense territoriality, which is precisely the articulation of belonging and scale, is becoming more and more European. Because territory and social solidarity are closely linked, the European building process has a direct impact on the links between the two. The referendum moment was a moment of crystallisation of this change. In the left no camp, more European integration should go with more redistribution and solidarity at the European scale. It is as if a growing proportion of left actors pushes for a social model and this social model is associated with (and for some, even not distinguishable from) the territory of Europe. This social investment of the European territory is even more encouraged by the way the debate for an other Europe is structured in the left no camp which associates the building of Europe as a fight against another territorial enemy: United States. As for the Global Justice Movement in general, the US territory is also emblematic of an economic development that must be rejected. European building, as a territory and a social model, could become a way of opposing US hegemony.

2) The structuring of the European debate in France concerning Europe :

In France, 80% of deputies did support treaties during the eighties and the nineties (Rozenberg, 2004: 268). We find a sort of consensus among political elites belonging to parties that have the ambition to govern, that it is difficult to be against more European integration. The rejection of a Treaty is considered as politically costly because it is seen as a rejection of the European process building as a whole, not only the rejection of the national government that demands the ratification. Besides, in the French political situation, European integration is a question of Foreign policy, engaging the country as a whole, not a specific party or a specific fragment of French political elites. Finally, a rejection of a Treaty is seen as a major crisis of Europe, an act that will block and stop the European building. This structuring of the European debate in France makes it very difficult to be against Europe because Europe is a positive reference in the French value system (Rozenberg, 2004 : 273). The unidirectional positioning of the main media during the campaign (quasi unanimously for the yes camp) and the multiple interventions of the government in power to orient the vote in favour of the Treaty are the best examples of this structural element.

Opponents to the TCE had worked very hard to convince people that it was possible to be against the Treaty and for Europe. They finally succeeded to create a choice replacing the absence of choice that prevailed. During the campaign, Europe was at the heart of a strong public debate with thousands of meetings locally and nationally. This debate was not on the adequacy of European building but on the nature of this building. At least, two distinct

political visions of Europe came face to face : for the left no camp, victory of the no was the creation of new opportunities nationally and at the European level to push anti-liberalism forward and create an alternative model of development ; for the yes camp, the adoption of the TCE is the assurance that Europe will be able to become a real world political force and the assurance that the project in place since the second world war will continue. This moment of debate was also a time of political re-appropriation for a lot of French citizens that had deserted the political field. It is true for young people but also for older citizens who used public places to inform themselves about the project and to debate on the subject. The moment of the referendum's campaign had also made clear some divisions of the French society: division between rich and poor, between popular classes and upper urban classes; division between political and mediatic elites and ordinary citizens.

Traditionally, debate about European building was organised along one main line: the “euros sceptiques” on one side and the others on the other side or, to say it differently, the sovereignist and the federalists. During the TCE campaign, even the federalists were divided, because the proposed Treaty was a way to deny the federal character of the European project or at least to prevent from happening (Théret, <http://econon.free.fr/Th%E9ret.html>, March 2006). But aside from this internal division, this traditional cleavage was not unique in the debates, even if the extreme-right parties tried to put it at the front. Compared to previous debates (Nice in 2001 for example or Maastricht in the nineties), the left/right problematic was also an important axis of debate, and probably the most important axis. This division is particularly clear in the no left camp where the political strategies was to built public sympathy for the no from an anti-liberal perspective. It proposed to oppose a certain conception of European building, liberal and economic.

As Bruno Théret said:

« Aussi n'est-il pas étonnant que la compétitivité comme fin en soi et la politique qui l'accompagne de libre ouverture (si ce n'est aux immigrants) des frontières de l'Union, fassent que les populations européennes tendent désormais à confondre l'eupéanisation avec la mondialisation »¹³.

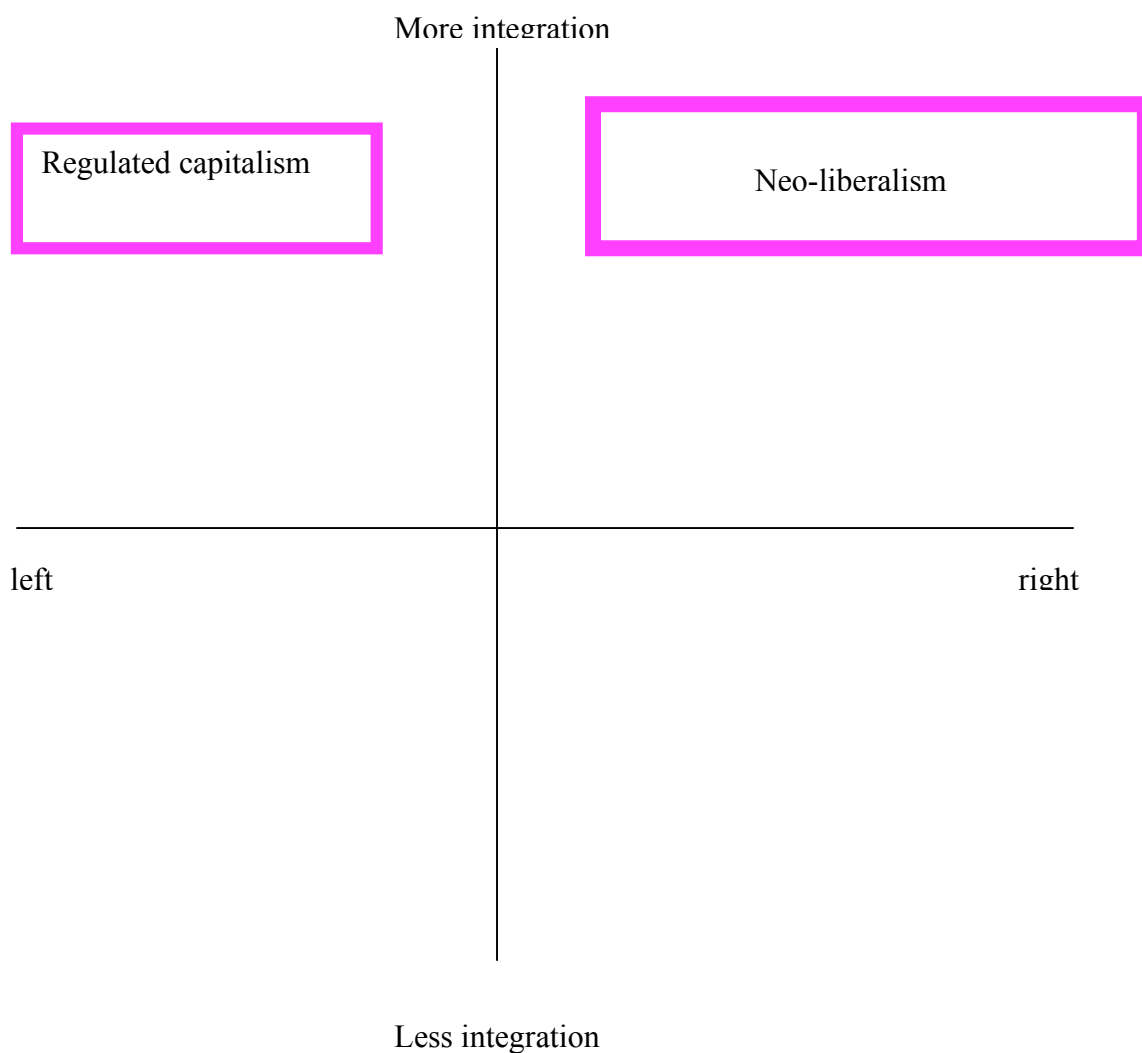
(Théret, <http://econon.free.fr/Th%E9ret.html>, March 2006).

As social actors fight for another globalization since the middle of the nineties, the left no coalition fights for another Europe during last spring in France. From this point of view, members of this coalition reinforced their political position as a credible political alternative to social-liberalism developed by the PS and its plural majority during 1997 - 2002. The TCE should be rejected as a liberal political project in the name of solidarity inside Europe (federalists discourses) or in the name of preserving French social rights and eventually exported them (the discourse of some sovereigntist inside ATTAC). It is not possible to understand the no victory in France without taking into account the context of a strong contestation of globalisation and the development of a Global Justice movement that is composed more or less of the same actors that composed the no left coalition. All material and symbolic resources of this strong network had directly served the no left campaign. In that respect, it would be a shortcut to apprehend the no victory as a simple protest vote or as a simple rejection of the Chirac government. An important part of the no vote is directly linked with the protest against world neoliberalism and the referendum moment is also a moment of the anti/alter *mondialiste* fight in France.

If we now turn to the European cleavages model proposed by Hooghe, Marks and Wilson (2004), we can see a slide in the hierarchy of cleavages. It is no more the axis more or less integration that dominate but the left/right dynamic in relations to the desired model of integration¹⁴. Part of the left no camp (and the central role of anti/alter *mondialistes* forces) wanted to promote more European integration for more regulation of the capitalism; part of the yes right camp wanted more integration for more neoliberalism. In 2005, the idea of Europe is no more sufficient to vote in favour of the Treaty, for most people Europe is a fact and not an idea. Because it is a fact, the possibility to ask for its content is now opened. As Coupé said, “L’Europe c’est un fait, mais on a la responsabilité d’y mettre un autre contenu” (Coupé, interview, 2005).

¹³ « It is not surprising that competition as an end in itself and politics of open market (except to migrants) that goes with made European population mixing globalization and Europeanization », my translation.

¹⁴ Other cleavages could be mentioned, for example the productivist/anti-productivist ones brings by environmentalists and the Green party. This cleavage was present but not dominant during the campaign.



4) State and balance of power

The referendum campaign occurred in a relatively tense national context. The government is clearly losing ground but continues to be closed to social actors claims. The political left is still divided despite the good results of the regional elections in 2004 where the unified left won 20 regions of 22. It is as if the 2002 presidential election were still a trauma for left political forces¹⁵. The future positioning of the PC during the referendum campaign is

¹⁵ During the 2002 presidential campaign, Lionel Jospin, the PS candidate is out after the first round that had opposed 16 candidates and the second round opposed Jacques Chirac, to Jean-

probably linked to this clear failure of the “traditional left”. Besides, social actors had known several defeats in the recent year, especially the pensions reform plan of Raffarin that had been adopted despite the huge mobilisations of May 2003¹⁶.

During the campaign, the most spectacular changes for an observatory of the French society were the fact that militants and leaders from the LCR speaks to militants and leaders from the PS or from the Green Party. In the same vein, the fact that ATTAC was taken part to the Collectif for the no is unusual : French social actors generally tried to escape political parties. After the referendum result the national Collectif for the no had invited people from every networks, and critical member of each political formation, to join us to decide which strategies to adopt for the future of European Building (the meeting was on the 24th of June). After the campaign, unity pursued but national institutional constraints did not allow to preserve unity for the presidential elections of 2007 and each party of the Collectif will present an autonomous candidate.

We have to note that this will to work together is not new; the movement emerged with a similar form during the 1995 mobilisations and could also be originated at the end of the eighties (Agrikoliansky, 2005). It is nevertheless the first time that official Collectifs existed at that scale and seems to be relatively durable. Besides, it is the first time that civil society organizations, unions, and political parties work together during an electoral campaign. This particular context poses some difficulties to participants:

1) The question of the political autonomy of each organization into the Collectif and the capacity to organize its thinking alone or depending on one another. As Juquel said in interview, it is not possible for the CGT to let the thinking and reflexive work to an association like ATTAC. On the other hand, during the campaign a kind of sharing of the

Marie Le Pen, candidate of the extreme-right. After the election, on the left side of the political spectrum, the PS is in a very bad shaped, the PCF obtained its worst result with 3, 39% of votes but extreme-left candidates gained around 10%.

¹⁶ During winter 2003, Jean-Pierre Raffarin government decided to reform pensions plans. Very quickly the pensions reform is linked to European building, Bruxelles asking French government for a “cleaning-up” financial plan (*Le Monde*, 25 April). On the 23rd of April, main unions (CGT, CFDT, FO, CFTC, UNSA, FSU) agreed to create a common front against the reform. In May 2003, huge unions mobilisations demonstrate against pensions and education reforms. After the Raffarin government proposed a series of amendments to the proposed law, the CFDT accepts the agreements and broke the united front. Despite the pursuit of the mobilisation in June, the law was adopted at the National Assembly. It is during this event that the link between European directives and national government submission is publicised by opponents to the reform.

work has occurred and ATTAC, as a popular education organisation was the leader in the symbolic work of the campaign;

2) The question of tradition of independence from political parties. Unions are still traumatised by the historically CGT-PCF relationships and the limited role they have after the 1981 François Mitterrand victory because of their allegiance to the *Front commun de la gauche*. On the other side, associations are terrified by the idea of recuperation by political parties and have a high degree of suspicion towards them. In this context, it is very difficult to work together on a regular basis .

3) All actors mentioned that they do not want to mix the function or role of each type of organisations (parties should stay as such; unions should continue to defend workers and association should not substitute itself to party or union). On the other side, in the day-to-day militant work, it is sometimes difficult to know where the border between associative and partisan work is.

As for the balance of power dimension, we see that for the no left camp, political party leadership is challenged by the presence of other social forces that play a central role during the campaign. Even if this characteristic is not new but more the continuation of transformations that occurred early in the nineties, the formalisation of their collective work (actors will speak about “*la convergence des luttes*”) into Collectifs is a way of affirming their existence as a strong political force. Future will tell if this force will be present more nationally or more on the European level.

Conclusion

Lefébure and Lagneau have shown how European public space exists but not under an institutional form. It is more like a succession of moments which revealed transformations of ways of doing politics (2002 : 526). In the same vein, Favell describes European Union as:

« une dimension supplémentaire à la politique qui reste principalement nationale qui a ouvert des espaces d’action autonome pour tout une gamme de nouveaux acteurs » (1999 : 7)¹⁷.

¹⁷ « A supplementary dimension to politics that stays national but that creates new autonomous spaces of actions for a plurality of new actors », my translation.

We saw in this paper that Europe was a concrete dimension of the French political life. But, new actors do not only invest European autonomous spaces; with the referendum moment, all political and social French actors took part of the European question. For some actors, dealing with Europe had an impact on discourses and practices, for others no. But in all cases, the Europeanization of the French political space transformed dynamical relationships between actors. As Guiraudon said:

« L'eupéanisation ne constitue pas un déplacement du pouvoir social vers de nouveaux acteurs institutionnels, mais plutôt un déplacement des luttes de pouvoir avec d'anciens et de nouveaux acteurs politiques » (Guiraudon, 1999 : 13)¹⁸.

As we have seen, the referendum moment transformed the main cleavage about Europe, from more or less European integration to a right/left debate upon the nature of the European building. For some actors, these two dimensions are still closely interconnected (extreme-right party who defend French nation and national territory in the name of nation first but also in the name of the French social model ; some left republicans who want to preserve French sovereignty in the name of the French model), for others they are disconnected (more integration could be associated with more European social development and regulation, as for some European federalists or more integration could be associated with more free market as for the present government party, UMP). In this reworking of the European debate, the conception of territoriality seems to progressively change and become more and more European in scale.

It is very difficult to measure precisely the deepening of changes mentioned. On a short term perspective, it seems that new dynamics had been created for Europe in France with the pursuit of the Collectif du 29 mai. Will this initiative be successful on the longer run and with what consequences, it will be too presumptuous to say. If we consider the global context of the left no camp and the origins these political forces had, we can also pose that anti/alter-*mondialistes* are becoming a serious political force in the French context. But transformations of the balance of power between actors and new relationships dynamics could also be a question of conjuncture. The preparation of the 2007 presidential election will not occur in a context of a single candidate and the scenario of 2002 multi-candidates is likely to be repeated. Finally, French citizens had demonstrated during this referendum campaign that

¹⁸ « Europeanization does not constitute a shift of social power towards new institutional actors but more a shift of fights with ancient and new political actors », my translation.

they are willing to practice European politics, especially when political elites do not want them to.

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- Guy Jucquel, CGT, Confederal officer for "European activities" ;
- Carl Lang, Front National, Secrétaire Général ;
- Fabienne Pourre, PC, National Council, Globalization Commission ;
- Alain Krivine. LCR, spokesperson ;
- Luc Martinet, CFDT, International cooperation ;
- Gustave Massiah, CEDETIM, ex-President ; member of the national scientific committee of ATTAC ;
- Jacques Nikonoff, ATTAC, President ;
- Olivier Keller, Confédération Paysanne, National Secretary ;
- Patrick Farbiaz, Parti Vert, Responsible of the Transnational Commission ;
- Pierre Moscovici, PS, National Officer, International Relations.