

Gender and power in the 2022 presidential campaign in France

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Abstract :

The presidential election is a special circumstance when one person meets the people, said once the Centrist leader François Bayrou in a speech given the 1st of March 2007 during the presidential campaign. This quote has been retaken by many other politicians and it was sometimes attributed to the *général de Gaulle*. But after eight men who were presidents in the fifth Republic in France, it can be interesting to think about the strategy used by women to attempt to become presidents. How do they legitimize their place in a masculine political landscape? What is their *storytelling* in terms of leadership in a personalized election? By using the framework of critical discourse analysis, we will focus on three candidates, Valérie Pécresse, Marine Le Pen and Anne Hidalgo. How did these candidates present themselves to the electors in order to rule the country? By using the typology of Amossy with the notion of *ethos* (2010), we will analyze the books published by and on the candidates during the election. The prior *ethos* is linked to the reputation of the person whereas the discursive *ethos* reflects the performance of the candidate, who tries to react, correct or empower the prior *ethos*. Did the three candidates modify their ethos in order to have a new leadership? The publication of books has a marginal effect on the campaign, but it helps the authors to polish their image. The corpus will be completed with some important speeches delivered by the candidates during the campaign.

Keywords : gender, critical discourse analysis, French presidential campaign, ethos, books

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Bio-bibliography:

Christophe Premat is an Associate Professor in French with a major specialization in Cultural Studies at Stockholm University. He is a member of the editorial board of the review *Sens Public*, an international web journal of social sciences and he is the co-editor in chief of the *Nordic Journal of Francophone Studies*. His current research focuses memory debates in France, discourse analysis and political periodicals in France. He recently co-edited in 2019 a book entitled *Political discourses at the extremes: expressions of populism in Romance-speaking countries* (Stockholm University Press).

He is part of the research project analyzing the political discourses in Romance-speaking countries (ROMPOL, Stockholm University) and the research project “Language and power” (*Språk och Makt*, Stockholm University). He also published in 2021 “La marginalisation du référendum communal en France depuis 2003: étude des mobilisations citoyennes à l'échelon local” in the *Revue Française de Science Politique*.

Presidential election (year)	Number of candidates	Number of women	Proportion
1965	6	0	0
1969	7	0	0
1974	12	1	1/12
1981	10	3	3/10
1988	9	1	1/9
1995	9	2	2/9
2002	16	4	¼
2007	12	4	1/3
2012	10	3	3/10
2017	11	2	2/11
2022	12	4	1/3
1965-2022	114	24	24/114