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**SARKOPHOBIA**

**Changes in the media image of Nicolas Sarkozy**

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### **MA Programme Euroculture Declaration**

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## Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION .....	8
2. NEWS MANAGEMENT .....	14
2.1 French party system.....	14
2.2 French media system .....	16
2.2.1 Media freedom .....	19
2.2.2 Media ownership .....	20
2.3 Political and journalist field in France .....	21
2.3.1 French national newspaper.....	23
2.4 Sarkozy's news management.....	25
3. IMAGE PROJECTION .....	31
3.1 Image of presidential candidate .....	31
3.1.1 Sarkozy's presidential candidate's image according to Cichosz's theory .....	33
3.1.2 Sarkozy's presidential candidate's image according to Nimmo and Savage ..	36
3.2 Image projection of the President Nicolas Sarkozy .....	38
3.2.1 Personal qualities of Nicolas Sarkozy .....	39
3.2.2 Celebritization in Sarkozy's France .....	41
3.3 Media intervention in shaping politician's image.....	43
3.3.1 Agenda-setting .....	44
3.3.2 Framing .....	45
3.3.3 News framing .....	45
4. METHODOLOGY .....	48
4.1 Media content analysis .....	48
4.2 Media corpus.....	49
4.3 Quantitative analysis.....	50
4.4 Qualitative analysis.....	52
4.4.1 Semiotic analysis.....	52
4.4.2 Rhetoric analysis .....	53
5. NEWS COVERAGE OF LE POINT AND LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR 2007-2012 .....	54
5.1 The coverage of Nicolas Sarkozy by Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur .....	57
5.1.1 Narrative analysis.....	60
5.1.2 Headline language connotations.....	67
5.1.3 Journalists language .....	72

5.1.4 Nicolas Sarkozy roles.....	72
5.1.5 Media frames.....	75
5.1.6 Visual portrayal.....	77
5.1.7 News management.....	80
6. CONCLUSION.....	82
6.1 Sarkozy: a sold product.....	82
6.2 Sarkozy, perishable.....	83
6.3 'Sarkophobia'.....	84
8. LIST OF REFERENCES.....	85
9. LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS.....	93
10. ANNEXES.....	94

## ACRONYMS

ENA = *École nationale d'administration* (the National School of Administration)

FN = *Front National* (National Front)

PS = *Parti Socialiste* (Socialist Party)

RPR = *Rassemblement pour la République* (Rally for the Republic)

Sciences Po = *Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris* (the Paris Institute of Political Studies)

UDP = *Union pour la Démocratie Française* (Union for French Democracy)

UMP = *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (Union for a Popular Movement)

Sciences Po = *Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris* (the Paris Institute of Political Studies)

## **PREFACE**

A sincere word of gratitude to my supervisors for all their support. To Mgr. Eva Lebedová, PhD and Jay Rowell for their advices, constructive comments and patience reading a text that might have not always been as clear as it was intended. To Kristy Horn Sheeler who was leading the course of 'Political Communication' at the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis - it gave rise to the main theme of this paper and it resulted in my interest in the field of political communication.

I would like to thank my family and friends who helped me a lot in finishing this project within the limited time. To my mother, Ludmila Vávrová, for always having been my inspiration, encouraging me every day, with all the love and care. To my boyfriend, Valentin Bosshardt, for intellectual and emotional support, and patience acquainting me with his own culture. To my best friend Alice von Renard and her boyfriend Haz Dix, for their help with proofreading.

**Ludmila Vávrová, Olomouc, 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2013.**

## **ABSTRACT**

The study 'Sarkophobia - Changes in the media image of Nicolas Sarkozy' examines the media portrayal of former French president Nicolas Sarkozy as it was presented by two French weekly news magazines, 'Le Point' and 'Le Nouvel Observateur' over the period of Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency (May 2007 - May 2012). While using both quantitative and qualitative analysis tools, the main goal was to detect the reasons for the change in Sarkozy's image that help to explain the phenomenon of 'Sarkophobia'. This paper adopts Kuhn's categorization of two of the most important media-related functions applied in Sarkozy's France, news management and image projection. Additionally, a theoretical background provides an insight into the theories of agenda-setting and framing which help us to reveal in what direction the media shaped Nicolas Sarkozy's image and what 'media frames' predominated in Sarkozy's France.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

“(Sarkozy) is unafraid, he does not want you to like him; he wants you to help him to get things done.”<sup>1</sup>

Political news in leading mass media is believed to affect the electorate's opinion. Not only do politicians play the role of representatives of their political parties, but political figures are becoming the centre of public attention. Smith refers in the paper *Conceptualizing and Testing Brand Personality in British Politics* “that politics is increasingly about symbolism as opposed to policy implementation; image rather than content.”<sup>2</sup>

Undoubtedly, there are many political variables that tend to explain the voter's behaviour, such as demographics, political identification, hesitation in voting intentions, or the way in which electoral decisions are made. However, this paper primarily focuses on the increasingly important role of media, serving as a mediator between the political leaders and public.

The above mentioned explanatory variables of voters behaviour were closely examined and applied on the Western European area, in the book called *The New Voter in Western Europe, France and Beyond* by the authors Bruno Cautrès and Anne Muxel.<sup>3</sup> The book examines the electoral behaviour based on the panel study - *2007 Panel Electoral Français*<sup>4</sup>. The survey was carried out among a sample of 1,846 voters who were interviewed four times during the 2007 presidential and legislative elections.<sup>5</sup> The Chapter 4 – *The Dynamics of Electoral Choice* by authors Daniel Boy and Jean Chiche reveal the important finding that “the role played by image is more important than not only political position but also the voter's opinion of the candidate's program. The

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Michel Goudard “Estranged Father May Have Spurred Sarkozy's Ambition,” *New York Times*, 23 April 2007 in Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy* (New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009), 18. [http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s) (accessed 24 April 2012)

<sup>2</sup> Gareth Smith, “Conceptualizing and Testing Brand Personality in British Politics,” *Journal of Political Marketing* 214, no. 8 (2009), <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15377850903044858> (accessed 21 February 2013), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Bruno Cautrès and Anne Muxel, *The New Voter in Western Europe, France and Beyond*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)

<sup>4</sup> *2007 Panel Electoral Français* was carried out by the *Centre de Recherche Politiques de Sciences Po* and was financed by the French Ministère de l'Intérieur et de l'Aménagement du Territoire.

<sup>5</sup> Bruno Cautrès and Anne Muxel, *The New Voter in Western Europe, France and Beyond*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 22.



attribution of systematically positive qualities to a candidate greatly increases his or her chances of being chosen by the voter.”<sup>6</sup>

Considering the way how media inform electorates varies from nation to nation, this work will update and expand upon the journal article *Les Médias, C'est moi! President Sarkozy and news media management*<sup>7</sup>, edited by Professor Raymond Kuhn, expert in the fields of political communication and contemporary French politics; in particular, media policy, news management, political leadership and image projection or political journalism.<sup>8</sup> This paper adopts Kuhn's categorization of two most important media-related functions applied in Sarkozy's France; news management and image projection.<sup>9</sup> Both media-related functions presented by Kuhn are frequently used in Western countries. Additionally to Kuhn's work, the thesis will rely on findings of Todd Gitlin, one of the leading communications scholars interested in mass media, respectively journalism.<sup>10</sup> His concept of framing of journalist language will be applied in this paper.

Nicolas Sarkozy, 23<sup>rd</sup> President of the French Republic, was defeated in his bid for re-election on 6th May 2012, by François Hollande, a Socialist candidate as a result of 48.4 % for Nicolas Sarkozy and 51.6 % for François Hollande.<sup>11</sup> In France, over the five years of his presidency, Sarkozy's approval rating dropped from the highest in the country's history to the lowest, at 26 %<sup>12</sup> which was followed by many news reports. One can also notice decreasing trend in Sarkozy's popularity while reading the following part from Denis Abram's book about Nicolas Sarkozy, released in 2009:

The first French president in decades to label himself as being politically on the 'right', he is deeply disliked and distrusted by many on the left of the French political spectrum. To them Sarkozy is political demagogue, a politician who appeals people's darkest fears and prejudices in order to gain power. He has

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel Boy and Jean Chiche, “The Decisive Influence of Image,” in *The New Voter in Western Europe, France and Beyond*, ed. Bruno Cautrès and Anne Muxel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 79-100.

<sup>7</sup> Raymond Kuhn, “Les médias, c'est moi' President Sarkozy and news media management,” *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 355–376.

<sup>8</sup> Queen Mary University of London “Academic Registry and Council Secretariat: Professor Raymond Kuhn elected member” <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/staff/raymondkuhn.html>, (accessed 3 February 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Raymond Kuhn, “Les médias, c'est moi' President Sarkozy and news media management,” *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 356.

<sup>10</sup> Columbia Journalism School, “Todd Gitlin,” <http://www.journalism.columbia.edu/profile/38-todd> (accessed 20 April 2013).

<sup>11</sup> The Economist, “President Hollande,” <http://www.economist.com/node/21554548> (accessed 30 November 2012)

<sup>12</sup> Biography, “Nicolas Sarkozy: Re-Election Campaign and Defeat,” <http://www.biography.com/people/nicolas-sarkozy-37799?page=2> (accessed 30 November 2012).

been called arrogant and brutal and has been accused of being willing to trade away civil liberties for political gain.<sup>13</sup>

The hatred of Nicolas Sarkozy by the French political spectrum, later called as 'Sarkophobia' can be hardly categorized as an exaggerated reaction of journalists to attract more attention. In fact, 'Sarkophobia' corresponds with the features of 'a phobia' as specified by the American Psychiatric Association, as following:

an irrational and excessive fear of an object or situation (...) which can occur through its overexposure or sometimes only thinking about the feared object can lead to phobic reaction.<sup>14</sup>

In particular, it primarily refers to the fact that Nicolas Sarkozy was considered as a political figure with large quantitative media impact in France. Media overexposure was another part of Sarkozy's media strategy, as will be discussed below. The other important activator of 'Sarkophobia' can be explained by the definition of 'politicophobia' which is often a result of behaviour observed in someone with collectite trust.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, *TNS Sofres* poll for *Le Figaro Magazine* provides a complex overview of the credibility of French presidents since 1978 on the basis of confidence rating.<sup>16</sup> As mentioned in the Graph 1, trustability of Nicolas Sarkozy during the whole presidential term was decreasing. The rapid decline in trust was noticed the first year of presidency as it was in case of other French presidents. Unfortunately, in Sarkozy's case, it slowly dropped the whole time of his presidency (from 2008 to 2011) until it reached the bottom line of 20 %. A lower level of trustability (16 %) was only experienced by Sarkozy's predecessor Jacques Chirac, in 2006.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009.

[http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s) (accessed 24 April 2012) 16.

<sup>14</sup> Cherry, Kendra, comment on „What is a phobia,“

[http://psychology.about.com/od/phobias/f/dis\\_phobiadef.htm](http://psychology.about.com/od/phobias/f/dis_phobiadef.htm) (accessed 15 June 2013).

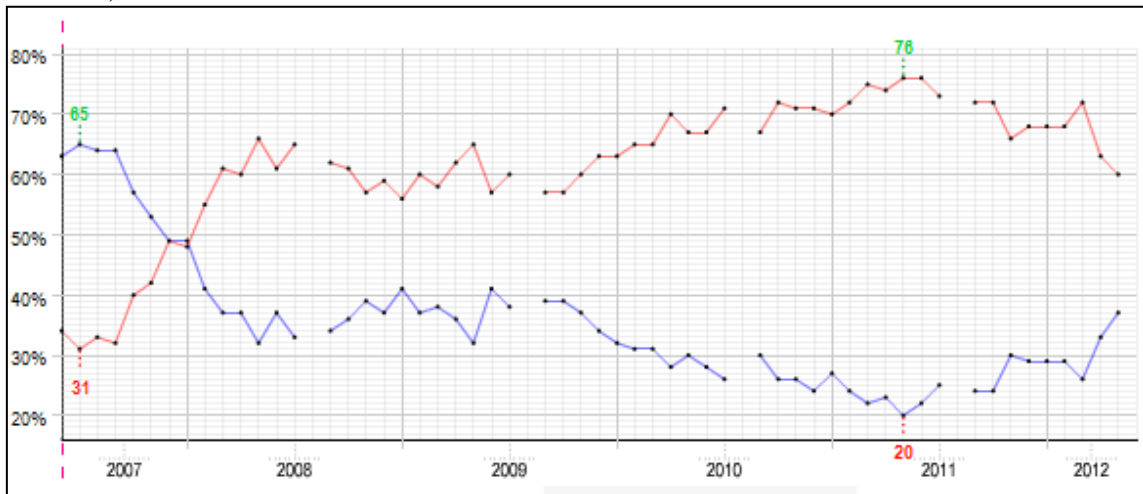
<sup>15</sup> Right diagnosis,“Politicophobia Introduction,“

<http://www.rightdiagnosis.com/p/politicophobia/intro.htm#whatis> (accessed 14 June 2013)

<sup>16</sup> Le Figaro Magazine, *Le Baromètre politique Figaro Magazine réalisé par TNS Sofres/Logica*, by TNS Sofres, Département Stratégies d'opinion (Paris, France: April, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

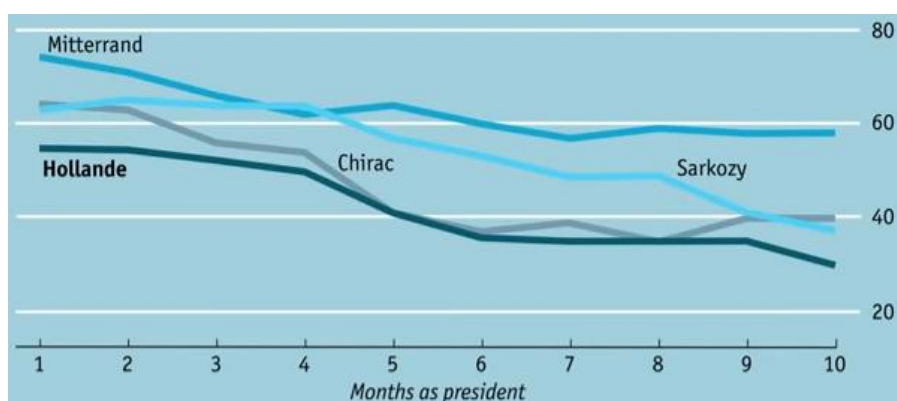
Graph 1: Trustability of Nicolas Sarkozy during the presidential term (06/2007-05/2012)



Source: TNS Sofres/Figaro-Magazine  
 \*Note: blue = trustability; red = unreliability

Nicolas Sarkozy is not the exception in terms of trustability and popularity of French presidents. Their popularity usually drops during the first year in office. Graph 2 shows a popularity comparison of French presidents; François Mitterrand (1981-1988 and 1988-1995), Jacques Chirac (1995-2007), Nicolas Sarkozy (2007-2012) and Nicolas Hollande (since 2012) during their first months of presidency. François Hollande scored even lower than Nicolas Sarkozy in terms of the trajectory reflecting his popularity over the first year.<sup>18</sup>

Graph 2: The least liked presidents in France (popularity of French presidents from the start of their office; % polled)



Source: TNS Sofres

<sup>18</sup> The Economist Magazine, "Live chart: The least liked president," YouTube record. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxLct4Izg9I> (accessed 10 May 2013).

Despite this fact, Sarkozy had extraordinary approach towards media. In words of Sarkozy's main communication advisor and a patron of his image<sup>19</sup>, Thierry Saussez, Sarkozy's winning strategy at the presidential election 2007 was to: „flood the press with soft stories on daily basis.”<sup>20</sup> His idea to overexposure media as: “the volume is such that before there is time to focus on the detail of one story, another one is out there, deceiving media of commentary or analysis.”<sup>21</sup>

Sarkozy presented himself as a modern communicator, focused on his image and a distinctive media strategy. Nevertheless, the combination of these factors, the strategy did not have particularly visible and original effects in the long term run. One must take into consideration deliberate interventions of media groups and their main goal to sell the product as well as the employment of media framing techniques to reach such a goal.

With regards to the importance of media in shaping politicians image, the research question of this paper was stated as: What were the consequences of the rise of 'Sarkophobia' in the French media? And what role did the French media, respectively weekly news magazines *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* play in shaping Nicolas Sarkozy's image during his presidency term (May 2007–May 2012)?

To respond the above stated research question, the paper will be structured as follows:

Chapter 2 will focus on previously mentioned subject while exploring the context of French political environment; specifically, news management, political journalism and media coverage of presidential candidates in France. Important part of the chapter will be a detailed analysis of relationship between French politicians and French journalists. In addition to Nicolas Sarkozy's media strategy and leading news management activities over the 5-year period will be included.

In chapter 3, Sarkozy's image as a presidential candidate will be introduced through two particular theories. Firstly, Nimmo and Savage's theory analysing a political role of a presidential candidate<sup>22</sup> will be applied on Sarkozy's case followed by

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<sup>19</sup> Jelavaisdit.com. „Sarkozy sera Président. Thierry Saussez.“ YouTube record. <http://videos.dhnet.be/video/actu/sarkozy-sera-president-thierry-saussez/?sig=iLyROoaft3Pv> (accessed 8 May 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Guardian, “Brand Sarkozy: who is behind the French leader's London PR triumph?” <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/organgrinder/2008/mar/28/post59> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Nimmo, Dan D. Nimmo, Robert L. Savage, *Candidates and their images: concepts, methods, and findings.* (California: Goodyear Pub. Co., 1976).

Cichosz's<sup>23</sup> six elements of the image of political candidate, relying on attributes from Sarkozy's private life. The other part will discover media interventions in terms of Sarkozy's image projection; in particular, agenda-setting and framing theories will be explored in more detail. These theories will help us to reveal in what direction the media shaped Nicolas Sarkozy's image and what media frames prevailed in Sarkozy's France.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology. For a better understanding of the phenomena, a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis has been applied. Nicolas Sarkozy was assigned to the dependant variable in the quantitative analysis which tends to examine his media portrayal as it was presented by two French weekly news magazines, 'Le Point' and 'Le Nouvel Observateur' over the period of Nicolas Sarkozy's presidency term (May 2007 - May 2012). 'Le Point' and 'Le Nouvel Observateur' were chosen as appropriate units for analysis because of their contradictory political stances, which ensures the balance and objectivity needed for the research. Media corpus included 256 cover pages of weekly newsmagazine Le Nouvel Observateur and 256 cover pages of weekly newsmagazine Le Point issued over the period of 16th May 2007 – 15th May 2012. The cover pages displaying President Nicolas Sarkozy were selected and analysed in a closer detail; in fact, it was 59 cover pages of Le Nouvel Observateur and 67 cover pages of Le Point.

Finally, I will draw up a conclusion whether a media-related function, if any, has had larger impact on the phenomenon of 'Sarkophobia'.

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<sup>23</sup> Marzena Cichosz, *(Auto)kreacja wizerunku polityka*, (Toruń: A. Marszałek, 2003).

## 2. NEWS MANAGEMENT

This chapter is primarily devoted to the news management activities led by Nicolas Sarkozy and his team of political advisors. Additionally, the influence of politics and journalism, as a major influential tool used during Sarkozy's presidency will be explained. The reason for introducing this chapter at first is to distinguish the French way of dealing with politician's media image from the point of view of politician, Nicolas Sarkozy.

Barbara Pfetsch in her paper *Government news management - strategic communication in comparative perspective*<sup>24</sup> compares the news management styles and their outcomes in three Western democracies; the United States of America, Germany and Great Britain. She assumes that "media-centred news management style is most likely to occur in the United States of America, partly as a result of a presidential system, partly due to highly commercialized media, and the predominance of adversarial journalism."<sup>25</sup> In comparison to the other countries, Germany and Great Britain where the political-centred style of communication triggered off a strong parliamentary political system and a less adversarial journalism.<sup>26</sup> Political system, media system and media culture, the contextual factors presented by Pfetsch, can also affect the way how the French government informs the electorate, and so will be briefly presented on the example of Nicolas Sarkozy.

### 2.1 French party system

Nicolas Sarkozy is closely linked to a centre-right party known as the Union for a Popular Movement (*Union pour un Mouvement Populaire*, or UMP) which is considered to be one of the two major parties in France. The party was merged from several right parties and officially founded by Jacques Chirac in 2002<sup>27</sup>. The supporters of the UMP identify themselves with the ideas of neo-conservatism, traditional conservatism, social liberalism or 'Thatcherism'. Sometimes, it is also described as a

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<sup>24</sup> Barbara Pfetsch, "Government news management – strategic communication in comparative perspective," *Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB)*  
<http://econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/49821/1/30895761X.pdf> (accessed 17 March 2013).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Jacques René Chirac is a French politician who served as President of France two consecutive terms from 1995 to 2007

'Gaullist party'<sup>28</sup> due to the fact that the most dominant party joining UMP, known as the Rally for the Republic (*Rassemblement pour la République, or RPR*), was labelled as 'Gaullist'. Some centrist components were merged to the UMP through the Union for French Democracy (*Union pour la Démocratie Française, or UDF*). The party enjoyed an absolute majority in the National Assembly from 2002 to 2012. In November 2004, Sarkozy became a leader of the UMP.<sup>29</sup>

The Socialist Party (*Parti Socialiste, or PS*), a centre-left and social-democratic party became the main party of the left in France. Its history goes much further than the UMP. It was created 40 years ago from “an alliance of parties of the non-communist left.”<sup>30</sup> François Hollande was the First Secretary of the party from 1997 to 2008, and after he was elected as the new President of France, on May 6<sup>th</sup> 2012, the party won the majority in the National Assembly.<sup>31</sup> Alongside with the two main political parties, described above, there are other significant French political parties, for instance, the Democratic Movement (*Mouvement Démocratique*)<sup>32</sup> belonging to the category of centrist parties; or the National Front (*Front National*, a representative of far-right in France. The party was created by Jean Marie Le Pen in 1972.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, there are leftist parties, such as the French Communist Party (*Parti Communiste Français*) or the Green Party (*Europe Ecologie Les Verts*).<sup>34</sup>

In 2000, a constitutional amendment came into force stating that “the executive is elected for the same duration as the National Assembly legislators”<sup>35</sup>, therefore, it is much harder to have a president and a prime minister from different political parties in France.<sup>36</sup> This has sped up the political cycle: before, the presidential mandate was for the period of 7 years, whereas now it is only 5 years. This has increased the pressure to

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<sup>28</sup> Expatica, “The French political system,” [http://www.expatica.com/fr/essentials\\_moving\\_to/country\\_facts/The-French-political-system\\_18346.html](http://www.expatica.com/fr/essentials_moving_to/country_facts/The-French-political-system_18346.html) (accessed 10 May 2013).

<sup>29</sup> Laurent de Boissieu, “Union pour un mouvement populaire (UMP),” [France-politique.fr](http://www.france-politique.fr/chronologie-ump.htm) <http://www.france-politique.fr/chronologie-ump.htm> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>30</sup> Expatica, “The French political system,” [http://www.expatica.com/fr/essentials\\_moving\\_to/country\\_facts/The-French-political-system\\_18346.html](http://www.expatica.com/fr/essentials_moving_to/country_facts/The-French-political-system_18346.html) (accessed 10 May 2013).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Set up by François Bayrou who was a former presidential candidate 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Marine le Pen is a former presidential candidate 2012.

<sup>34</sup> Expatica, “The French political system,” [http://www.expatica.com/fr/essentials\\_moving\\_to/country\\_facts/The-French-political-system\\_18346.html](http://www.expatica.com/fr/essentials_moving_to/country_facts/The-French-political-system_18346.html) (accessed 10 May 2013).

<sup>35</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 2.

<sup>36</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 1.

have a better image in media as it is difficult to get ratings up in a short time after the traditional erosion of popularity in the first year.

## 2.2 French media system

France has 'about 600 local and national mainstream publications, around 1,100 radio stations and more than 100 TV channels (including satellite, cable, and digital).<sup>37</sup> The French media, respectively, national newspaper are subsidized by media groups owned by interest groups whose connections reach up different industries and that are largely dependent on government contracts. Regarding defamation laws<sup>38</sup> and their subcategory 'libel laws'<sup>39</sup>, France is very strict by Western standards.<sup>40</sup>

The model of French election media coverage did not change significantly since 70's; it has the following important features:

the role of the media with its cynical treatment of the political leaders' programs and institutions; the media's responsibility for framing the issues with sensational coverage of crime, violence; the role of the pollsters who were accused, among other biases, of having generated underdog effect<sup>41</sup> by predicting the wrong results.<sup>42</sup>

On the other hand, a ban on campaign advertisement came out in force which does not allow the richest candidates to get the biggest influence in France anymore. As a consequence of that, the press remains being pluralistic in its political leanings.

The state takes care of all official expenses on TV and radio, official posters and printed manifestos. The broadcasting time is strictly defined to all the presidential

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> According to Act of 29 July 1881, defamation is defined as “any allegation or imputation of an act affecting the honour or reputation of the person or body against whom it is made.” In contrast to the French law on privacy, the libel jurisdiction is generally more defendant friendly. This is due to the numerous procedural formalities which must be followed by the claimant. (Available from: <http://kellywarnerlaw.com/france-defamation-laws/>)

<sup>39</sup> Libel is the legal subcategory of defamation. Generally libel is defamation in print, pictures, or any other visual symbols. (Available from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/155602/defamation>)

<sup>40</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 1.

<sup>41</sup> The underdog effect is a phenomenon of when during the election voters perceive a particular party or candidate to be the likely winner, and they tend to support a competitor who is expected to lose – an “underdog” in the race. (Available from: [http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9781405131995\\_yr2013\\_chunk\\_g978140513199526\\_ss5-1](http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9781405131995_yr2013_chunk_g978140513199526_ss5-1))

<sup>42</sup> Eric, Darras, *Free Journalism Under Control: Election Coverage in France*. In J. Strömbäck, & L. L. Kaid, *The Handbook of Election News Coverage Around the World*, (New York: Routledge, 2008).



candidates as well as the specific amount of money that is allowed to be spent on presidential campaign by each candidate.<sup>43</sup>

France still represents a group of countries which predominantly use the traditional ways of political communication, especially television, radio and newspaper. However, the presidential campaign in 2012 scored also very well in terms of the involvement of new media. The incumbent president Nicolas Sarkozy and his Socialist opponent François Hollande were involved in social networks, such as Twitter or Facebook.<sup>44</sup>

Taking into account the media informing French electorates of their presidential choice, polling company *Médiamétrie* published a study updated on 24th July 2012 showing what were the most used communication channels to follow the French presidential election in 2012. The majority of French electorate (62 %) admitted that watching TV is the way to get desired information. The second highest proportion (27 %) reached the source of information through 'new media', followed by national radio (25 %), daily national newspaper (20 %), daily regional newspaper (18 %), and local radio (16 %).<sup>45</sup> (see Graph 3)

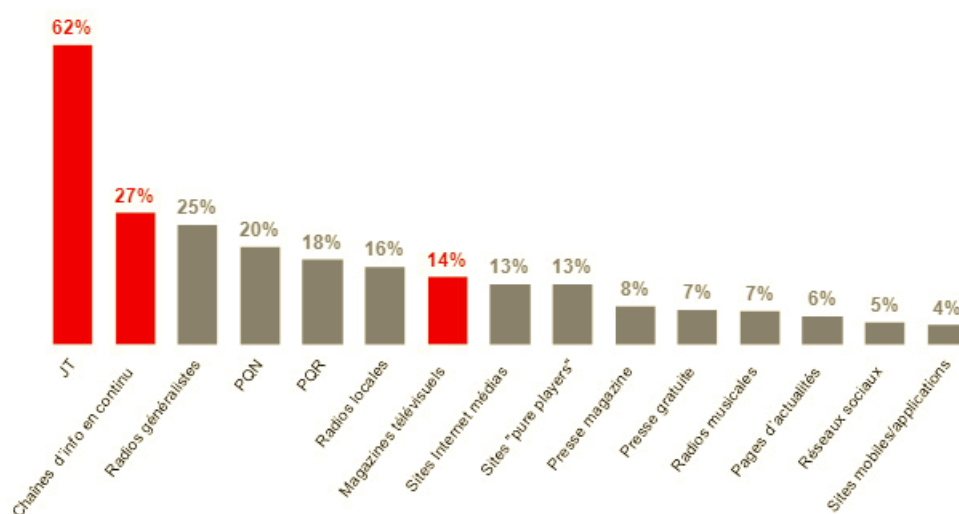
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<sup>43</sup> Eric, Darras, *Free Journalism Under Control: Election Coverage in France*. In J. Strömbäck, & L. L. Kaid, *The Handbook of Election News Coverage Around the World*, (New York: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Médiamétrie. „Présidentielle, la télévision au rendez-vous.“  
<http://www.audiencelemag.com/?article=43&cat=7> (accessed 1 December 2012)

Graph 3: The communication channels used by French voters to follow the presidential election in 2012



Source: Médiamétrie, updated 24/7/2012

\*Note (from left to right): JT = newscast ; Chaines d'info en continu = Breaking news channel ; Radios generalistes = Mainstream radio ; PQN = Daily national newspaper ; PQR = Daily regional newspaper ; Radios locales = Local radio ; Magazines télévisuels = TV magazines ; Sites Internet médias = Media website (e.g. Liberation.fr, Lefigaro.fr, etc.) ; Sites « pure players » = Pure Player means independents website, not from Media group, e.g.: Rue89.fr, Atlantico.fr, Mediapart.fr ; Presse magazine = Press magazines ; Presse gratuite = Free press ; Radios musicales = Musical radio ; Réseaux sociaux = Social networks ; Sites mobiles/applications = Mobile website/app

The latest figures demonstrate a slow decline in using press an information source of presidential candidates. Equally one fifth of the French electorates mentioned either French daily national newspaper or French daily regional newspaper. The lack of confidence in press was also proved by cancelling subscriptions. Dissatisfaction with press may have plenty of causes, mainly lack of accuracy, quality and objectivity. Recent polls show that 57 % of French voters do not consider the press as an independent source of information. They mainly find the problem in mutual relationship between newspaper and political parties.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, public trust has been damaged by journalist's abuse of media freedom and the lack of ethics when demonstrating interest in celebrities and scandals of public figures. Nevertheless, this trend is not comparable to countries such as the United States of America where the phenomenon of celebritization in politics is highly developed.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> William Horsley, *Public Trust in the Media: Why is it Declining?* (Linz: Association of European Journalists. 2008), 2.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

In general, trust in the media has been noticeably decreasing over the past years in France.<sup>48</sup> The figures for trust in radio or TV are still higher compared to press. Despite this fact, the reliability of press is supported with the statistics declaring that “France has one of the highest levels of periodical readership in the world.”<sup>49</sup>

### 2.2.1 Media freedom

The French law guarantees the freedom of speech and press. Unfortunately, the liberty is constrained by “France's restrictions on freedom of expression related to private information on politicians or related to extremist ideas.”<sup>50</sup> The press is regulated by state; newsrooms are investigated on a regular basis.<sup>51</sup> However, situations where journalist is questioned by police for talking to a source off the record are in quantity not comparable with acts of collusion taking place in the sector.

In 2008, Nicolas Sarkozy and his government 'introduced a bill' recognizing the right of journalists to protect sources while stating to the possibility to disclose names in special cases.”<sup>52</sup> Again, this fact did not remain without response mainly from journalists. In the eyes of critics, this could result in “undermining the right to confidentiality” since it was obvious that the “special cases” are not very well defined.<sup>53</sup> In 2010, France noticed “the violation of the protection of journalists’ sources, the continuing concentration of media ownership, displays of contempt and impatience on the part of government officials towards journalists and their work, and judicial summonses – have confirmed their inability to reverse the trend.”<sup>54</sup>

Among others, there was a threat to the work of judges responsible for the investigation of high-profile scandals, such as the 'Clearstream affair' or 'Cofidis'. The scandals involved journalists publishing information obtained from confidential sources without revealing the way they acquired the information.<sup>55</sup> The judges in charge of investigating those cases “issued search warrants in an attempt to discover who those

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<sup>48</sup> Horsley, W. *Public Trust in the Media: Why is it Declining?* (Linz: Association of European Journalists. 2008), 3.

<sup>49</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 2.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>52</sup> Reporters without Borders. „Press Freedom Index.“ <http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2013,1054.html> (accessed 20 May 2013)

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Reporters without Borders. „Press Freedom Index.“ [http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id\\_rubrique=1034](http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id_rubrique=1034) (accessed 20 May 2013)

<sup>55</sup> Association des journalistes européens, section France. „Media Freedom in France.“ <http://www.ajefrance.com/article-7152009.html> (accessed 1 May 2013).

sources were and to that end they seized the hard disks of journalists' computers."<sup>56</sup> It resulted in the initiative called up by the France's national journalists associations and trade unions to call for a new law to protect the fundamental right of journalists.<sup>57</sup>

### 2.2.2 Media ownership

Among French specifics in terms of media, is undoubtedly, media ownership which is at the same time a big threat for above discussed media freedom in France. Since there are several parties running their business in almost every field, from aerospace to retail or transport, they have at significant impact on how the media are governed in France. Not surprisingly, the problem of absence-presence of some major issues related to these industries occurs. In other words, it is very common that specific issues are postponed or even hidden before publishing.<sup>58</sup> The report published by the Association for European Journalists (*Association des Journalistes Européens*) declares, "the high-profile acquisition of media properties by leading French businessmen has greatly changed the national media landscape."<sup>59</sup>

Many leading French newspapers have found themselves in serious financial difficulties aroused from their accumulated debts and lack of funds. As a consequence, these newspapers become members of "groups" that can provide them with direct and indirect subsidies<sup>60</sup>. The other ways of seeking financial help for media, is by all means the "allocation of the advertising budgets of state-owned companies, and cronyism in the banking sector or in the conglomerates which have invested in the press."<sup>61</sup>

However, both sites agreed on a financial plan that brings specific requirements regarding the financial group. Furthermore, it affects the journalists' as they have to change or cut some of the posts as well as expenditures, due to frequent editorial supervision. Namely, *Le Figaro*, has become the property of Serge Dassault, Member of Parliament<sup>62</sup> and a French businessmen and industrialist<sup>63</sup>, of which among others

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 5.

<sup>59</sup> Association des journalistes européens, section France. „Media Freedom in France.“ <http://www.ajefrance.com/article-7152009.html> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>60</sup> 'Subsidies' is the term used to cover all of the ways in which government makes easier the working life of journalists" (Available from: <http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/62/4/665.extract#>)

<sup>61</sup> Association des journalistes européens, section France. „Media Freedom in France.“ <http://www.ajefrance.com/article-7152009.html> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>62</sup> for the party founded by former President Jacques Chirac

implies that its editorial line is shaped in favour of the French government. It was Dassault who stated that not only journalists, but also shareholders should be allowed to write the articles that appear in the newspapers.<sup>64</sup> As this paper examines the case of Nicolas Sarkozy, one must include such important names of media proprietors as Arnaud Lagardère, Vincent Bolloré<sup>65</sup>, or Martin Bouygues, who have a close relationship to Nicolas Sarkozy.

Nevertheless, the issue of media ownership and Nicolas Sarkozy will be discussed below as a part of Subchapter 2.4 Nicolas Sarkozy's News Management in more detail.

To conclude, the independence of journalists is threatened as well as the editorial pluralism is reduced due to the concentration of media ownership in France. It must be noted that French media is not only under supervision of French businessmen and politicians, but also by large pan-European media companies like Germany's conglomerate Bertelsmann or Italy's Mondadori controlled by Silvio Berlusconi.

### **2.3 Political and journalist field in France**

The close relationship of politicians and journalists in France is very unusual. One would say that a reporter should serve public and democracy as having a role of a 'watchdog'. This is certainly not a case of French reporters where the most of 37,000 estimated journalists consider themselves to be intellectuals rather than reporters.<sup>66</sup> It is not coincidence that "many political or economic journalists are educated at the same elite schools as the politicians they later cover, including "Sciences Po" (Paris' Political Science Institute) "<sup>67</sup>. France is a country where many of the Paris elite share a common background; they even visit the same schools and which results in a similar political view.<sup>68</sup> That is why close ties between government leaders and newsrooms are not new in France. An outspoken critic of conflicts of interest in French journalism, Carton, says about French journalists: „They know exactly what they need to do to avoid things

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<sup>63</sup> a giant industrial group whose main activity is the production of military weapons and aircraft for the armed forces, and which therefore depends on large contracts with the government

<sup>64</sup> Association des journalistes européens, section France. „Media Freedom in France.“ <http://www.aje-france.com/article-7152009.html> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>65</sup> Vincent Bolloré was also very good friend with Sarkozy's predecessor Jacques Chirac

<sup>66</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 5.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Eric, Darras, *Free Journalism Under Control: Election Coverage in France*. In J. Strömbäck, & L. L. Kaid, *The Handbook of Election News Coverage Around the World*, (New York: Routledge, 2008).

getting out of hand, but they won't do it." Instead of reporting events, French journalists often analyse and develop a case what may result in an undesirable influence on readers with journalists own biases.

So-called 'investigative journalism' appears frequently in France. Despite this fact, it describes a relatively new phenomenon which came to France in the past decade. The renowned dictionary explains a term as follows: "a type of journalism that tries to discover information of public interest that someone is trying to hide".<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless French investigative journalists are often identified with "gossip journalists". The reason for such an allegation is the fact that investigative journalists work rather as intermediaries for their sources than as initiators of their journalistic research.<sup>70</sup> The icon of French investigative journalism is the political gossip and satirical weekly *Le Canard Enchaîné*. Lot of criticism was addressed to this newspaper, starting with comments on their political ideology tied to the left, followed by their activity as they effectively ignored major scandals involving some of its friends and sympathizers. As a consequence, *Le Canard* can be hardly considered as being the model of deep and serious long-term journalist research.<sup>71</sup>

The other important aspect of the French press is: "cultural affection by an exaggerated respect for politicians, who can easily use the media for their political agendas, especially in the provinces; government subsidies to newspapers through state advertising campaigns."<sup>72</sup> In addition to we could have noticed a reluctance of French journalists to report harmful stories about the key politicians as they were afraid of losing access to government sources. For better understanding journalists' field in relation to political field, one would need to approach each; daily, weekly or monthly newspaper, issued both nationally and regionally. Not forgetting the main goal of this paper which is to analyse French weeklies in order to understand how Nicolas Sarkozy is portrayed by selected weeklies with the expected impact on the entire country, the next subchapter focuses on the French national weekly, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel*

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<sup>69</sup> Cambridge Dictionaires Online. "Investigative Journalism". <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/investigative-journalism?q=investigative+journalism> (accessed 15 May 2013)

<sup>70</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 6.

<sup>71</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 6.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

*Observateur* in a closer detail. These newspapers have a wide readership and thus can influence public opinion.

### 2.3.1 French national newspaper

When approaching French national newspaper, we can see the main categories that define the daily news; political orientation, circulation figures and target audience.

Political orientation is closely related to media bias. The fact that a majority of French journalists lean left or far-left does not necessarily mean that French electorate would only receive one-sided information. The balance is brought by a variety of French national newspaper and their diverse political identification. This fact is especially important for a further quantitative research of two French weekly newsmagazines, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*, which were primarily chosen as appropriate units for analysis because of their contradictory political identification. It assures the research results are balanced and objective.

Circulation figures refer to the average number of copies purchased per day (daily newspaper) or per week (weekly newspaper) in France. The figures are also determinants of credibility of this research as they are able to prove the readership of chosen French newspaper. The information provided below comes from the French Bureau of Circulation.<sup>73</sup> The target audience is the variable which determines the appeal of the newspaper to specific group of electorate.

There are about 60 daily news titles in France; from that high-quality daily newspapers are *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, and *Liberation*, whose editorials and reports can have global impact. Most come out in the morning, though prominent daily evening newspaper, *Le Monde*.<sup>74</sup>

*Le Monde* was founded in 1944. The target audience of this evening newspaper is the intellectual sphere, academics, and civil servants. In comparison with the other newspaper it provides with the most detailed coverage of world politics. It also opens a place for a major forum for political discussion and best reflects French opinion on the international issues as well. Considering the political orientation, it is supposed to be neutral or slightly centre-left. The average amount of printed copies was about 290,667

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<sup>73</sup> OJD. "Bureau Presse Payante Grand Public. Association pour le controle de la diffusions des médias: <http://www.ojd.com/chiffres/section/PPGP?submitted=1&section=PPGP&famille=1&thema=&search=&go=Lancer+la+recherche> (accessed 30 November 2012)

<sup>74</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013), 6.

copies sold per day, in France in 2011.<sup>75</sup> In 2010, the newspaper experienced a crisis; it became refinanced by businessmen with left-leaning sympathies.

Among other dailies, there are newspapers *L'Humanité* (historically linked to and financed by the Communist Party), *L'Equipe* (having a monopoly on sport), *La Croix* (Catholic daily), *Les Echos* (economic daily), etc.<sup>76</sup>

Regarding periodicals, weekly newspapers and magazines are flourishing in France. It only proves the statistics saying that “460 copies sold for every 1,000 inhabitants, France has the highest level of magazine readership in the world.”<sup>77</sup> Five major news weeklies are: *Le Point*, *L'Express*, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, *Marianne*, and *Valeurs Actuelles*.

*Le Nouvel Observateur* is the French left-oriented news magazine founded in 1964 as a more progressive version of *L'Express*. In terms of circulation, it is the most sold weekly magazine in France with about 530,994 copies per week in 2011.<sup>78</sup> It becomes a cultural and social platform since then, mainly due to its leading editor Jean Daniel who has had a well-known and a well-read column with his colleague Jacques Julliard.<sup>79</sup>

Their influence was not limited by press; they were presented very often in broadcast media as well as bookshelves. The newsmagazine, often called by French 'Nouvel Obs' or 'Obs' underwent many changes in the past decades. One of the most influential changes, which also affected a big loss of readership in 90s, was when the Socialists overtook power in 1981. It resulted in decision to relinquish the role of *Nouvel Obs* as an opposition paper. Fortunately, current strategy to focus on young readers together with successful leadership by Denis Olivenness<sup>80</sup>, seems to bring with very positive readership. Its print version is estimated to be read by around 2.6 million.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Intermedia. “Intermedia represents Le Monde” <http://www.intermedia-briefing.com/intermedia-represents-le-monde/> (accessed 15 November 2012)

<sup>76</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 18 May 2013), 17-21.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>78</sup> OJD. “Bureau Presse Payante Grand Public. Association pour le controle de la diffusions des médias: <http://www.ojd.com/chiffres/section/PPGP?submitted=1&section=PPGP&famille=1&thema=&search=&go=Lancer+la+recherche> (accessed 30 November 2012)

<sup>79</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 18 May 2013), 22.

<sup>80</sup> He was appointed in spring 2008 the head of the newsmagazing; he is a highprofile opinion leader and corporate manager

<sup>81</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 18 May 2013), 22.



*Le Point*, founded in 1972, is a representative of right-wing newspaper with the average circulation about 407,085 copies in 2011.<sup>82</sup> Also *Le Point* has become an offshoot of *L'Express*. This weekly newsmagazine is a good example of media ownership and interlink between political and journalist field as it was discussed above. *Le Point* is owned by French billionaire, François Pinault who used to be a close friend of former French President Jacques Chirac. The source of his welfare is his business with luxury. He owns retail store chains and luxury goods, including Gucci. One of the key columnists, Bernard-Henri Lévy is known for his leaning to Pinault's values. Catherine Pegard, the other columnist has also intervened the political field; in particular, she left the newsmagazine in exchange for joining Nicolas Sarkozy's presidential cabinet in the spring of 2007. Furthermore, *Le Point* is connected to the name of Franz-Olivier Giesbert, a political writer and at the moment a leader of *Le Point's* newsroom. Giesbert's has started as a leader of *Le Figaro's* newsroom, from where he moved to *Le Nouvel Observateur's* team at first, later on he switched to *Le Point*.<sup>83</sup>

The other French weeklies can be classified as entertainment weekly (*Paris Match*), satirical weekly *Le Canard Enchaîné*, and cultural weekly (magazine *Telerama*).<sup>84</sup>

## 2.4 Sarkozy's news management

Artufel and Duroux concluded in their book *Nicolas Sarkozy et la communication*<sup>85</sup> that Sarkozy was known by his proactive news management long time before he became French President.<sup>86</sup> Having served as a Minister of Interior under the Chirac's presidency, Nicolas Sarkozy attracted a lot of media attention. He believed this can help him to raise his popularity among the right-wing electorates.<sup>87</sup> The extraordinary relationship between Nicolas Sarkozy and the news media in France resulted in Sarkozy's media strategy which has evolved over the time of his presidency. Nicolas Sarkozy can be considered as a professional in terms of news management activities, it only proves the fact that the model of professionalization of presidential

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<sup>82</sup> OJD. "Bureau Presse Payante Grand Public. Association pour le controle de la diffusions des médias: <http://www.ojd.com/chiffres/section/PPGP?submitted=1&section=PPGP&famille=1&thema=&search=&go=Lancer+la+recherche> (accessed 30 November 2012)

<sup>83</sup> Open Source Center Media Aid. France--Media Guide 2008. <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/france-media.pdf> (accessed 18 May 2013), 22.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>85</sup> Claire Artufel, and Duroux Marlène, *Nicolas Sarkozy et la communication*, (Paris: Pepper, 2006).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2

communication introduced by Mancini and Negrini<sup>88</sup>, can be nicely adapted on the Sarkozy's case. According to the model, Sarkozy's news management activities consisted of:

the input of communications personnel within his team of political and policy advisers at the Elysée; personal ties with media proprietors, reassertion of Sarkozy's control over public broadcasting; close ties with political leaders and political journalists, and myriad initiatives designed to occupy media space.<sup>89</sup>

Sarkozy's communication advisors were following him everywhere. His team of advisors included political journalists, political leaders, political scientists, media proprietors, as well as experts in the field of political communication. Sarkozy's communication team consisted of 80 communication consultants working at the Elysée.<sup>90</sup> Among the most influential, Thierry Saussez<sup>91</sup>, also known by many as "the man pulling the strings for Sarkozy".<sup>92</sup> He has been working with Nicolas Sarkozy since 1980's and he produced the video "*Sarkozy sera Président de la République*" (Sarkozy will be President of Republic) few months before the Presidential election in 2007, where he had highlighted the main strengths of the presidential candidate.<sup>93</sup> Saussez was also the initiator of Sarkozy's media strategy to flood the press with soft stories on daily basis.<sup>94</sup> His idea to overexposure media as: "the volume is such that before there is time to focus on the detail of one story, another one is out there, cheating the media of commentary or analysis."<sup>95</sup> Moreover, Saussez defined the way how Sarkozy could become a master of his image, and so, to make the media run after him.<sup>96</sup>

In 1997, Sarkozy's team was accompanied by Franck Louvrier, who was with Sarkozy throughout his entire political career, and became a member of his election

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<sup>88</sup> Paolo Mancini, Ralph Negrine, Christina Holtz-Bacha, and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, *The Professionalization of Political Communication*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007).

<sup>89</sup> Raymond Kuhn, "Les médias, c'est moi." President Sarkozy and news media management." *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 2-7.

<sup>90</sup> Guardian. „Brand Sarkozy: who is behind the French leader's London PR triumph?“ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/organgrinder/2008/mar/28/post59> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>91</sup> Thierry Saussez, a veteran political operator who has had a hand in many election campaigns, working with leading political figures including Jacques Chirac. Saussez, who created the communication agency Image et Stratégie Europe in 1982, has worked with Sarkozy since the 1980s.

<sup>92</sup> Guardian. „Brand Sarkozy: who is behind the French leader's London PR triumph?“ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/organgrinder/2008/mar/28/post59> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>93</sup> Jelavaisdit.com. „Sarkozy sera Président. Thierry Saussez.“ YouTube record. <http://videos.dhnet.be/video/actu/sarkozy-sera-president-thierry-saussez/?sig=iLyROoaf3Pv> (accessed 8 May 2013).

<sup>94</sup> Guardian. „Brand Sarkozy: who is behind the French leader's London PR triumph?“ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/organgrinder/2008/mar/28/post59> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

team in 2007<sup>97</sup> Laurent Solly was the other important figure belonging to the inner circle of Sarkozy's advisers. Among Sarkozy's advisers, one could find former head of the opinion polling organization Ipsos, Pierre Giacometti, a former chairman of the board of the influential daily newspaper *Le Monde*, Alain Minc, a former leading journalist for the weekly newsmagazine *Le Point*, Catherine Pégard or Patrick Buisson, a former far right intellectual credited with the turn to the right in Sarkozy's attempt to be re-elected in 2012.

Sarkozy's personal ties with media proprietors are introduced in the subchapter 'Media ownership in France'. French elites are highly represented by media proprietors, who are located primarily in the Paris suburb of Neuilly-sur-Seine, a place closely linked to Nicolas Sarkozy's political base. Raymond Kuhn in his paper lists various media bosses closely related to Sarkozy's presidency. Bernard Arnault is owner of the daily financial newspaper *Les Échos*. Arnaud Lagardère, a head of the Lagardère group and the weekly news magazine *Paris Match*, the Sunday newspaper *Le Journal du Dimanche* and the commercial radio station *Europe 1*, TV channel *M6* that once stated about Sarkozy: "he's my brother!" Last but not least, Vincent Bolloré, owner of the television channel *Direct 8* and the free newspaper, *Direct Soir*, as well as chairman of Havas, one of the world's largest advertising and communications companies, that attracted much of an attention as he invited Sarkozy to take a holiday on his yacht soon after the election. Serge Dassault, owner of the conservative daily, *Le Figaro*, is a parliamentary senator in Sarkozy's governing centre-right party. And Martin Bouygues, owner of the most popular TV channel, *TF1*, has also been noticed to be close to Sarkozy.<sup>98+99</sup> These personal relationships with media proprietors would seem to give Sarkozy an advantage in the form of privileged access to define the news agenda as well as influence issue framing.<sup>100</sup>

Third feature applied as a part of Sarkozy's news management activities, is the reassertion of presidential control over public broadcasting. A good example is the Bouygues-owned commercial TV network TF1, which is now often referred as Tele

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<sup>97</sup> Christian Duplan, Bernard Pellegrin, *Claude Guéant, L'homme qui murmure à l'oreille de Sarkozy*. Rocher, 2008, 123-45.

<sup>98</sup> Raymond Kuhn, "Les médias, c'est moi." President Sarkozy and news media management." *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 6.

<sup>99</sup> Association des journalistes européens, section France. „Media Freedom in France.“ <http://www.ajefrance.com/article-7152009.html> (accessed 1 May 2013).

<sup>100</sup> Raymond Kuhn, "Les médias, c'est moi." President Sarkozy and news media management." *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 6.

Sarko because he is seemingly never off the air. Relying on such friends means that unflattering articles can be overpowered by positive TV exposure.

Camille Petitot in her article for EuroTopics talks about a sweeping reform of public broadcasting announced by Nicolas Sarkozy on 8 January 2009 as a consequence of a passionate discussion over media politics in France during 2008.<sup>101</sup> She explains: „the principal changes included doing away with advertising on public television and having the head of France Télévisions group named directly by the president.“<sup>102</sup> The wave of criticism, brought with the comparison of President François Mitterrand’s 1982 reform that first established a regulatory authority for broadcasting.<sup>103</sup> While Mitterrand’s intention was: “to cut the umbilical cord that had tied broadcasting to the state during the Gaullist and Giscardian presidencies and to introduce successive reforms of broadcasting introduced by governments of both centre-right and centre-left after 1982 maintained this appointment function in the hands of the regulatory authority”<sup>104</sup>; Sarkozy’s idea was slightly different. He insisted on two areas. Firstly, “the President has the power to appoint the chief executive in other areas of the public sector; it was logically coherent that he should enjoy a similar power in the case of public broadcasting.”<sup>105</sup> Secondly, “the Elysée alleged that the existing system of appointment by the regulatory authority was essentially hypocritical in that while it appeared to transfer power away from the political realm, in reality the regulatory authority had with one notable exception always bowed to the wishes of the President with regard to those selected.”<sup>106</sup> The reform went through several stages:

A commission was created in February charged with implementing these objectives and proposing recommendations. In June the employees of France Télévisions called a strike in protest of the commission's proposals. Debate in the National Assembly over the bill started on November 25 and was promptly obstructed by the opposition. On December 17 the deputies voted to scrap advertising by 293 votes for the majority UMP against 242 for the opposition

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<sup>101</sup> EuroTopics. „The television duel by Camille Petitot.“

<http://www.eurotopics.net/en/home/presseschau/archiv/magazin/medien-verteilerseite-neu/fernsehen-06-08/debatte-fernsehreform-frankreich/> (accessed 14 May 2013)

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Monique, Dagnaud, *L’État et les medias*. Paris: Éditions Odile Jacob, 2000.

<sup>104</sup> Bourdon 1999; Bédér 2008; Chauvau 1997; Franceschini 1995

<sup>105</sup> Michèle Cotta, *Cahiers secrets de la Ve République, tome II 1977–1986*.

Paris: Fayard. In Kuhn, Raymond. “Les médias, c’est moi.’ President Sarkozy and news media management.” *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

comprising the Socialist Party, the Democratic and Republican Left, the Communist Party and the Greens.<sup>107</sup>

The idea of the President to “assert personal control over the appointments process with a view to having sympathetic incumbents in place well ahead of the 2012”<sup>108</sup> brought a wave of criticism.

Fourthly, Sarkozy’s news management noticed feature defined also by Mancini and Negrini as “fostering of relations with political journalists.”<sup>109</sup> Raymond Kuhn described, the President was not satisfied with keeping close relations only with private and public sector media, and he wanted to assure his position through building links with journalists. Sarkozy reinforced the need of journalists for official sources coming directly from the Elysée on daily basis. To reach this goal, he did not hesitate to use different practices, from intimidating journalists to befriending them.<sup>110</sup> Ridet described that Sarkozy’s was often using a form “you” (*tu* instead of *vous*) to address journalists.<sup>111</sup>

Sarkozy was mainly using two methods during his presidency. First of all, Sarkozy’s control stemmed from the disarray of the main oppositional party, the Social Party (PS).<sup>112</sup> PS had to wake up after the defeat of its candidate for the Presidential election 2007, Ségolène Royal. Moreover, PS’s current leader, François Hollande has resigned on his leadership. It has resulted in much confusion for the PS and they lost a lot from their confidence and efficacy in the news media which could only be beneficial for Nicolas Sarkozy.<sup>113</sup>

Sarkozy also covered media space through his “*strategie d’ouverture*” (strategy of opening up) when some of the representatives of ethnic minorities as well as opposition politicians were nominated to the posts in government or administration with the main aim to receive some of the positive headlines from the media.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> EuroTopics. „The television duel by Camille Petitot.“  
<http://www.eurotopics.net/en/home/presseschau/archiv/magazin/medien-verteilerseite-neu/fernsehen-06-08/debatte-fernsehreform-frankreich/> (accessed 14 May 2013)

<sup>108</sup> Raymond Kuhn, “Les médias, c’est moi.” President Sarkozy and news media management.” French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 5.

<sup>109</sup> Paolo Mancini, Ralph Negrine, Christina Holtz-Bacha, and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, *The Professionalization of Political Communication*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007).

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Philippe Ridet, *Le président et moi*. (Paris: Albin Michel, 2008), 77.

<sup>112</sup> It was not under Sarkozy’s control

<sup>113</sup> It was not under Sarkozy’s control

<sup>114</sup> Raymond Kuhn, “Les médias, c’est moi.” President Sarkozy and news media management.” French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 7.

Another Sarkozy's presidential initiatives aiming to cover media space was executed by Public Relations team of Nicolas Sarkozy. They recruited Nicolas Princen, known as 'cyber spin doctor' to counter internet attacks on the president Sarkozy.

"Sarkozy campaigned on a platform of 'quiet change' and since his accession to the presidential office has proposed a package of reforms across a broad range of policy areas."<sup>115</sup> Kuhn adds: "In dominating the political terrain and policy agenda he has also occupied media space, going further than any of his predecessors in his efforts to manage the news agenda on a daily basis."<sup>116</sup> Sarkozy was aware of power of media in France. Thus, Sarkozy's team adapted some of the functions of 'media framing' that will be discussed in the following chapter; in particular, a technique of 'story-telling'. According to Salmon, Sarkozy was trying to educate the voters about the need of having reform measures and to create a coherent narrative around the theme of reform. He was able to explain the reform's substance as well as he proposed a contra argument to his political opponents.<sup>117</sup>

Above mentioned steps taken by Nicolas Sarkozy were hardly to be followed by journalists. Sarkozy was keeping media on its toes, claiming that if you want to stay master of your image then you have to make the media run after you. However, in the course of time, Sarkozy's news management activities have become outdated. Neither a degree of sophistication of Sarkozy's media strategy nor political controls or close links with the owners of mainstream commercial media outlets did not yield desired effect in the long term run. The important question of the paper stays with: 'Why did press remain critical to Sarkozy?'

Apart from the news management activities; the second media-related function specified by Kuhn as 'image projection', will be presented in the following chapter.

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<sup>115</sup> Raymond Kuhn, "Les médias, c'est moi.' President Sarkozy and news media management." French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 6.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Christian Salmon, *Storytelling*. Paris: La Découverte, 2007. In Kuhn, Raymond. "Les médias, c'est moi.' President Sarkozy and news media management." French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18.

### 3. IMAGE PROJECTION

This chapter aspires to provide an insight into the concept of 'image projection' in relation to Nicolas Sarkozy. First of all, Sarkozy's media image will be examined from a point of view of public relations activities during Sarkozy's presidency. For better understanding, a concept of 'image of presidential candidate' must be described as well as background of Nicolas Sarkozy, both private and public life. Secondly, a concept of 'media image' projected as a response of journalists (journalists' intervention) will be introduced. It goes hand in hand with specific mass media techniques used for shaping politician's image; in particular, agenda setting and framing. With regards to quantitative research, a particular subchapter has to focus on a theory of 'news framing'.

#### 3.1 Image of presidential candidate

According to the Oxford Dictionaries, a term 'image' is defined as “the general impression that a person, organization, or product presents to the public.”<sup>118</sup>

From political communication point of view, a presidential candidate's image is understood as: “the impression of the candidate for office held by voters. These impressions are formed out of a myriad of messages – messages from the candidate, messages from the opposing candidates, from the news media, and from friends and acquaintances.”<sup>119</sup> Politicians learned how to present their values, skills or beliefs to public in order to benefit from it during the time of election.

Hacker defines a presidential candidate's image, as being either 'stimulus-determined' or 'perceiver-determined'. Whereas 'stimulus-determined' considers the image is projected by politician, 'perceiver-determined' is supposed to be „composed by attributes given to a politician by the electorate.”<sup>120</sup> He remarks that it is more useful to approach a candidate's image as a structure of voter's perception or cognition in which the voters have organized impressions of the candidate.<sup>121</sup> Nimmo and Savage defined a multidimensional quality of candidate's image which should consist of both; qualities,

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<sup>118</sup> Oxford Dictionaries. „Definition of image“

<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/image?q=image> (accessed 21 May 2013)

<sup>119</sup> Kenneth Hacker. *Candidate images in presidential elections*. (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995), 49.

<sup>120</sup> Kenneth Hacker. *Candidate images in presidential elections*. (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995), 1-2.

<sup>121</sup> Kenneth Hacker. *Candidate images in presidential elections*. (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995), 1-2.

candidates want voters to see in them, and qualities, what voters do see in candidates.<sup>122</sup> These images can be either attributed to a political or a stylistic role. (See Table 1) Whereas political role is the one associated with acts and qualifications; such as a public official (qualification, record), or a partisan (party leader, interest representative); a stylistic role is linked to a candidate's communication style (use of media, qualities as a speaker, dramatic persona), and personal qualities (age, appearance, honesty, credibility).<sup>123</sup>

Table 1: Presidential candidate's image according to Nimmo and Savage

<b>ROLE</b>	<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
POLITICAL	a public official	qualification, record
	a partisan	party leader, interest representative
STYLISTIC	a communication style	use of media, dramatic persona, qualities as speaker
	personal qualities	age, appearance, honesty, credibility

Source: author's own elaboration on the basis of Nimmo and Savage's „Candidate images in presidential elections“, p. 57

On a basis of above mentioned fourfold category of traits, electorates bring to campaign the idealized images of what they want in president. Consequently, the images are compared to a model of 'ideal president'.<sup>124</sup> The two-step process specifies 'likes' and 'dislikes' of candidate at first, and secondly compares to a prototype of ideal president.

Marzena Cichosz, a Polish political scientist, summarized six key components describing an image of political candidate; such as geographic origin (place of birth), the value of social group to which a politician belongs, education and profession, nationality, race, and denomination, sexual orientation and stability in partnership; and welfare.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Dan D. Nimmo and Robert Savage, *Candidates and their images: concepts, methods, and findings*. California: Goodyear Pub. Co., 1976, 60.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Marzena Cichosz, (Auto)kreacja wizerunku polityka, (Toruń: A. Marszałek, 2003), 62-4.



The following paragraphs will apply the above mentioned theories of Nimmo and Savage (in particular, a political role of presidential candidate)<sup>126</sup> and Cichosz's six elements on the case of Nicolas Sarkozy.

### 3.1.2 Sarkozy's presidential candidate's image according to Cichosz's theory

Cichosz' categorization starts with 'geographic origin' (place of birth or place of residence of a candidate). These attribute symbolizes politician's relation to traditions and values of a country. Nicola Sarkozy was born on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 1955 in Paris as a son of Hungarian immigrant, Paul Sarkozy de Nagy-Bosca and a daughter of a Sephardic Jew<sup>127</sup>, Andree Mallah<sup>128</sup>. He was raised in Neuilly-sur-Seine, one of the wealthiest communes in France, in the presence of his mother and two siblings. Sarkozy's father abandoned the family.

A second element is known as 'the values of social group the politician belong to' and the values that reflect politician's life style. It includes politician's leisure time, interests, hobbies, preferences; but it is also closely linked to a group of people close to a politician. Obviously, people coming from the same social group, share similar values and more likely vote for such a candidate. Another Sarkozy's value has the origin in the childhood. Sarkozy spent lot of time with his grandfather, Benedict Mallah. It could influence Sarkozy's position to nationalism or his support to 'Gaullism'.<sup>129</sup> Sarkozy used to stress his immigrant origins and approach to voters characterised as 'ordinary hard working Frenchmen who get up early and do hard jobs'. At the same time, Sarkozy was persisting on being a friend of the rich.

The element of education and profession is truly very important part of a candidate's image. In general, the more important position the politician stands for, the higher education is expected from him. Sarkozy's family could not afford to send him to a private high school, and thus, he was enrolled at *Lycée Chaptal*, a state funded middle

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<sup>126</sup> A stylistic role will be integrated in the part of „media image of Nicolas Sarkozy“, where Sarkozy's projection in media, his communication style as well as personal qualities will be highlighted.

<sup>127</sup> A Sephardic Jew – the origin is in the Iberian peninsula – Spain, Portugal

<sup>128</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. Nicolas Sarkozy. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009. [http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s) (accessed 24 April 2012), 22-3.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

and high school.<sup>130</sup> Unfortunately, he failed his 6<sup>th</sup> year, and his family sent him to a private catholic school known as *Cours Saint-Louis de Monceau*. Sarkozy was not an amazing student. Despite this fact, he was able to obtain a Bachelor degree. After graduating, he was enrolled at the *Université Paris X Nanterre* where he received two Master degrees in Private law and Business law. This was also the time when Sarkozy was very active in right-wing student organizations. Later on, he passed the entrance exam to study at the Paris Institute of Political Studies (*Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris*, also known as *Sciences Po*), a highly selective school for political and diplomatic elite. The students are learnt where the right people are met or good connections made.<sup>131</sup> Again, he was not successful at studying. Due to the fact that Sarkozy did not graduate from the National School of Administration (*École nationale d'administration*, ENA) unlike his predecessor and successor, he could position himself as an 'outsider'.

Nationality, race, and denomination, the fourth element of Cichocz's candidate's image, plays an undisputable role. France as well as most Western industrialized countries, has the increasing number of immigrants. The influx of foreign populations left visible impacts on transformation of the country's ethnic and religious character.<sup>132</sup> "In the past, predominantly white and Catholic France has turned into multicultural nation whose second religion is Islam."<sup>133</sup> Recent research carried out by the *French Institute of Public Opinion* on behalf of the Catholic newspaper *La Croix* declares that 64% of French describe themselves as Roman Catholic, but only 2.9% of those actually practice the Catholic faith, in comparison with 3.8% of the population practicing the Muslim faith.<sup>134</sup> A vast majority of French electorates have the impression that immigration erodes their national identity, social status and safety and as a response to it, some of traditional parties turned to anti-immigrant, xenophobic political movements on the premise of return France back to French.<sup>135+136</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. Nicolas Sarkozy. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009.

[http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVemIMOMoC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVemIMOMoC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s)  
(accessed 24 April 2012), 33.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>132</sup> Darcigél, Rafaela, „Chapter 9,“ in *Racism, Xenophobia, and Redistribution: Multi-issue Politics in Advanced*, ed. John E. Roemer, Woojin Lee, Karine Van der Straeten, Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2007, 237.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> the French Institute of Public Opinion on behalf of the Catholic newspaper *La Croix*

<sup>135</sup> mainly 'Front National', extreme Right party led by Marine Le Pen (a daughter of notorious leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen)

Sarkozy's denomination and race were inherited from Sarkozy's father, a Hungarian immigrant and Sarkozy's mother, Greek and Jewish heritage. Despite this fact, Nicolas Sarkozy was baptized and raised Catholic and keeps identifying himself with it.<sup>137</sup> Considering Sarkozy was right wing politician in left leaning country, Sarkozy as a child of immigrants has done his reputation being tough on immigrants thinking that he will not be criticised on his immigration policy.<sup>138</sup>

The image of politician can be perceived through his/her sexual orientation and stability in partnership. However, one must take into consideration national specificities. In France, before Sarkozy's election, the issues of candidates' stability in partnership or sexual orientation were supposed to be private matters of politicians, even press was keeping silent.<sup>139</sup> That is why France could be categorized as conservative. Coming from a broken home, Sarkozy himself divorced twice. First, he got married with Marie-Dominique Culioli in 1982. They had two sons, Pierre (1985) and Jean (1987).<sup>140</sup> Sarkozy met his second wife Cécilia Maria Sara Isabel Ciganer-Albéniz. It did not take long and Nicolas Sarkozy married former Italian fashion model-turn-singer, Carla Bruni on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2008<sup>141</sup> at the Elysée Palace in Paris. Sarkozy's fourth child, a daughter Giulia, was born in 2011 and it happened first time that a French president has had a child while being in the Office of the President. Sarkozy's have had a significant influence on his political decisions, giving as example the doubts about Sarkozy's affinity to left party due to a notable influence of his wife Carla Bruni in 2009.

The sixth and last element of the political candidate's image according to Cichosz is 'welfare'. The author of the theory thinks that the ideal candidate should be neither poor nor rich. Richness of candidate would result in his glamorous and extravagant life style which is not positively received by majority of voters, on the other

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<sup>136</sup> Darcigel, Rafaela, „Chapter 9,“ in *Racism, Xenophobia, and Redistribution: Multi-issue Politics in Advanced*, ed. John E. Roemer, Woojin Lee, Karine Van der Straeten, Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2007, 237.

<sup>137</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009. [http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s) (accessed 24 April 2012), 24.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>139</sup> e.g. Former French president François Mitterrand and his mistress Anne Pingeot have had illegitimate daughter, Pingeot. However, the existence of this daughter of president Mitterrand was long hidden from the press.

<sup>140</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009. [http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s) (accessed 24 April 2012), 46-47.

<sup>141</sup> It was 8 months after his election to the presidential office.

hand, a poor candidate might be blamed by voters that his only interest lies in increasing the standard of living and so he or she candidates. As mentioned earlier, Sarkozy was born to family that suffered from the lack of money which resulted in Sarkozy's feelings of insecurity and humiliation. He was raised in Neuilly-sur-Seine, a wealthy suburb of Paris, and he later said that while growing up, he felt inferior to his wealthier classmates. Sarkozy admitted later on: "What made me who I am now is the sum of all the humiliations suffered during childhood." The interview with Nicolas Sarkozy led by Charlie Rose on 31 January 2007 revealed Sarkozy's early life even more in detail:

"(...) I've always had to fight throughout my life. Nothing has ever been easy to me. Nothing has ever come easily to me. Nobody has ever opened any door to me. I've had to push the doors open. And I got used to do that. Life is a struggle. (...)"<sup>142</sup>

Nevertheless, Sarkozy was fascinated by wealth and world of rich people. He has been constantly surrounded by influential people, by 'bosses'; and was able to concentrate wealth around him.

### 3.1.2 Sarkozy's presidential candidate's image according to Nimmo and Savage

First category of Nimmo and Savage's<sup>143</sup> political role of a presidential candidate is known as 'a public official', a category including mainly candidate's qualification and record. Nicolas Sarkozy's political path has started at his age of 22 when he got elected to his first political office, Municipal Councillor of Neuilly-sur-Seine where he overtook a role of a mayor six years later. He became historically the youngest mayor of any town in France with a population of over 50,000.<sup>144</sup> As a mayor of the richest city in France where many of the biggest fortunes reside he could already meet many influential persons in France like a billionaire Martin Bouygues<sup>145</sup>. Not only Sarkozy was serving as mayor of Neuilly-sur-Seine, he was also appointed to the

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<sup>142</sup> CharlieRose.com. „A conversation with French Interior Minister, Nicolas Sarkozy.“ 13 July 2007 <http://www.charlierose.com/view/interview/8593> (accessed 20 March 2013).

<sup>143</sup> Dan Nimmo and Robert Savage, *Candidates and their images: concepts, methods, and findings*. California: Goodyear Pub. Co., 1976.

<sup>144</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009. [http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s) (accessed 24 April 2012), 49.

<sup>145</sup> His group owns TV station TF1, later on he became a chairman and chief executive officer of the French telecommunication company Bouygues; He was Sarkozy's witness at his wedding in 2008 and is a godfather to one of Sarkozy's sons.

position of minister of the budget in 1993<sup>146</sup>. Two years as a Balladur's minister of the budget made him feel real taste of power for first time.<sup>147</sup> In 1995, Sarkozy supported Édouard Balladur in his bid for election as a French president at the expense of Sarkozy's mentor Jacques Chirac.<sup>148</sup> As response to this Sarkozy's betrayal, at the moment when Chirac's victory in this election, Sarkozy immediately loses his position of the minister of the budget in 1995 and suddenly finds himself out of political favour.<sup>149</sup> Despite the fact that Chirac and Sarkozy relationship was very tense, during the 2002-2004 and 2005-2007 periods Sarkozy served as minister of the interior, internal security and local freedoms in Raffarin's government and Villepin's government appointed by Chirac. Sarkozy became more and more popular which led Jacques Chirac to reshuffle his position from minister of the interior to minister for the economy, finance and industry in 2004.

Second part is a political role of a presidential candidate as a 'partisan'. It can be either a party leader, or a leader of interest group, etc. It was discussed earlier that Sarkozy was active in right-wing student organizations already at the time of his university studies. In 1999, Sarkozy became a head of the Rally for the Republic (or RPR)<sup>150</sup>, unfortunately, the party's poor results during the election to the European Parliament, forced him to step down from his leader position.<sup>151</sup> On 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2004, Nicolas Sarkozy was elected to be a leader of the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP).<sup>152</sup> In 2005, Chirac reappoints Sarkozy as minister of the interior without need to

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<sup>146</sup> 1993-95 (Sarkozy serves as a Minister of Budget); it was during the government of Édouard Balladur, and during François Mitterrand's last term.

<sup>147</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009.  
[http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s)  
(accessed 24 April 2012), 59.

<sup>148</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009.  
[http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s)  
(accessed 24 April 2012), 119.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Chirac's political party

<sup>151</sup> Dennis Abrams, eds. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009.  
[http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s)  
(accessed 24 April 2012), 119.

<sup>152</sup> Le 28 novembre, Nicolas Sarkozy est élu par les militants à la tête de l'UMP avec 85.09% des voix, contre 9.1% à Nicolas Dupont-Aignan et 5.82% à Christine Boutin (Deschamps, Caroline. "28 novembre 2004 : Nicolas Sarkozy prend la tête de l'UMP." Public Sénat. 21 June 2010, Politic section.  
<http://www.publicsenat.fr/lcp/politique/28-novembre-2004-nicolas-sarkozy-prend-tete-lump-23922>  
(accessed 15 March 2013)

resign on his leadership of the UMP. Made most headlines as minister of the interior where his media strategy and active presence on all issues made him the most clearcut presidential hopeful in the press and opinion polls, and by conquering the UMP was able to control the party machinery and elbow out any rivals such as Dominique de Villepin who had Chirac's favour.

Already before Sarkozy was elected the President of France, his both political and public life went under the incredible journey. In July 2004, Tim King published by issue of *Prospect* magazine: "If Sarkozy were a character of a science fiction, he would strain credibility."

### **3.2 Image projection of the President Nicolas Sarkozy**

Due to the several factors, such as technological innovations in the media, or/and the organizational change within politician's party, political leaders have become the centre of attention to the general public. It has also changed the way how voters evaluate their leaders.<sup>153</sup> Garzia remarks "the media's ubiquitous focus on individual leaders and on leaders as individuals have in fact provided the public with the chance to judge them as persons"<sup>154</sup> Referring Garzia's statement, politician's appeals are with the parallel to the dimensions of the voters' images that allow the application of three aspects of politician's messages; cognitive, affective, and conative; categorized already in the Aristotelian studies of rhetoric.<sup>155</sup> Cognitive aspect of messages includes, the information about the candidate's backgrounds or records; in contrast with, the affective aspect covering candidates' stands, opinions, preferences; and conative aspect which can be described as candidates striving to influence voters' expectations by appearing skilful, compassionate, decisive, appealing, honest, resourceful.<sup>156</sup> These aspects of message content should help to position an image of political leader taking into account that the image is self-portrait that he/she tries to project to voters.<sup>157</sup> The other definition

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<sup>153</sup> Diego Garzia, "The personalization of politics in Western democracies: Causes and consequences on leader-follower relationships," *The Leadership Quarterly*, 2011. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.05.010., 2.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Kenneth Hacker, *Candidate images in presidential elections*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995., 60.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

is that “image projection focuses on the mediated transmission of values, capabilities and competences in a coherent fusion of the personal and the political.”<sup>158</sup>

### 3.2.1 Personal qualities of Nicolas Sarkozy

Nicolas Sarkozy’s image projection was important part of his communication strategy long time before he was elected president. A conative aspect of message content sent from Sarkozy to public, he positioned himself as a man of firmness and authority over his entire political career. It is not as necessary for a political leader to possess personal attributes, but the main task is to let follower believe it.<sup>159</sup> The leader is particularly powerful in personality terms because, self-evidently, it is easier for voters to learn his/her personality traits than those of an inanimate entity, such as a party.”<sup>160</sup>

As a minister of interior, Sarkozy practiced some inflammatory statements covered by media.<sup>161</sup> When he was interior minister from 2002 to 2004, Sarkozy cultivated a blunt-speaking, tough-acting persona which enabled him to portray himself as a man of action who pays attention to France’s problems, but at the same time keeping the position of a 'man of change' after Chirac’s relatively inactive first presidency. It took him a while to get rid of such an authoritarian image with that of himself as an ordinary family man:

Promotion of a spouse and family – especially in the case of male politicians – can help provide a more rounded, human image, particularly to women voters who in 2007 constituted more than half of the total French electorate.<sup>162</sup>

Additionally, Sarkozy was believed to bring a new and fresh style of leadership and fresh policy reforms to the Elysée palace. During the 2007 campaign Sarkozy also showed no reluctance in presenting himself as the candidate of the Right; however, at the same time, he made references to historical figures from the French Left to widen his electoral appeal. The other Sarkozy’s presidential candidate’s projection was

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<sup>158</sup> Raymond Kuhn, “Les médias, c’est moi.’ President Sarkozy and news media management.” French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 8.

<sup>159</sup> Diego Garzia, “The personalization of politics in Western democracies: Causes and consequences on leader-follower relationships,” The Leadership Quarterly, 2011. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.05.010.

<sup>160</sup> Gareth Smith. "Conceptualizing and Testing Brand Personality in British Politics." Journal of Political Marketing 214, no. 8 (2009), <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15377850903044858> (accessed 21 February 2013), 7.

<sup>161</sup> the 2005 riots on the outskirts of Paris, were highly inflammatory in their articulation of his desire to root out the trouble makers, whom he called “scum”, and restore order by using a “pressure hose to clean out the municipal housing projects”(available from: Raymond Kuhn, “Les médias, c’est moi.’ President Sarkozy and news media management.” French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18)

<sup>162</sup> Raymond Kuhn, “Les médias, c’est moi.’ President Sarkozy and news media management.” French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 3.

registered when Sarkozy's decision to manage a series of police raids on suspected criminals with the expectation to portray Sarkozy as a politician who follows 'law and order' as it has attracted a lot of media attention. He believed that this way of projection promises his raised popularity among right-wing electorate and at the same time it could attract voters of extreme right party Front National led by Jean-Marie Le Pen.<sup>163</sup> In the marketing terminology, Sarkozy offered an attractive package for French voters in 2007, which led to positive change in the image of Sarkozy noticed amongst voters from the right, the centre, and the left, all of whom contributed to his dynamic victory.

When entering the presidential position, Sarkozy's image went through many reversals. Kuhn distinguishes that for "the incumbent to project an image consonant with the function of Head of State, for instance, the President is required to provide a symbolic presence on various mediated public occasions such as the national holiday." In France, the voters expect from the President to behave in a manner appropriate to the supreme office.<sup>164</sup>

In comparison with his predecessor, Jacques Chirac, Sarkozy was well-known as a hyperactive president who is not afraid to take risk. One might describe Sarkozy as tireless, ambitious, unafraid and hyperactive workaholic with the vision of France including the changes for his people, primarily pension and union reform, and improved relations with the United States. Badiou in his book *The Meaning of Sarkozy*<sup>165</sup> calls Sarkozy the 'Rat Man' by which he references to the President's hyperactivity and nervous tics but also to Freud's celebrated case of obsessional neurosis and Sarkozy's election victory is attributed to an "unscrupulous exploitation of the fear felt by many French citizens in a campaign that scapegoated foreigners, immigrants and youngsters from the deprived suburbs as the enemy within."<sup>166</sup>

Sarkozy was target of attacks videos shown on the internet – envisioned life in France under Sarkozy's rule – a vision of France – as Doreen Carvajal described it in the International Herald Tribune as 'riot police, burning cars, and suburbs engulfed in

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Raymond Kuhn, "Les médias, c'est moi." President Sarkozy and news media management." French Politics, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 9.

<sup>165</sup> Alain Badiou, *The Meaning of Sarkozy*. D. Fernbach, Trans. London: Verso, 2008; review of Raymond Kuhn, <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/407222.article> (accessed 3 March 2013).

<sup>165</sup> Dennis Abrams. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009.

<sup>166</sup> Alain Badiou, *The Meaning of Sarkozy*. D. Fernbach, Trans. London: Verso, 2008; review of Raymond Kuhn, <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/407222.article> (accessed 3 March 2013).



violence'.<sup>167</sup> Faced with these ad attacks, Sarkozy's election team responded with his own videos, respectively, five minutes video called 'Human Bomb' utilizing News Footage of Nicolas Sarkozy negotiating with human bomb and personally bringing children to the safety. Accompanied with the music from *Gladiator* – the video was seen by 450,000 viewers and gave a memorable and compelling human and emotional picture of Sarkozy.<sup>168</sup>

The other newspaper headlines portrayed Sarkozy as 'millionaire running his office', or 'President of the rich' that only proved Sarkozy's fascination with luxury goods and the world of the rich, he appeared with several figures from contemporary popular culture in an attempt to portray himself as an ordinary man of the people. Until recently France was considered as quite exceptional among Western democracies in terms of a clear boundary between the private and public sphere.<sup>169</sup>

### 3.2.2 Celebritization in Sarkozy's France

The desire of the French public to get the information about the intimate lives of their politicians was noticed in France (meaning private lives of public personalities and scandals linked to corruption or political racketeering).<sup>170</sup> This trend of publicization of politician's personal intimacy is also known as 'pipolisation' of politics and can significantly increase circulation figures of newspapers.<sup>171</sup> Giving the example from Sarkozy's life, the positive pipolisation turned very negative after the election. First of all, he announced his relationship with Carla Bruni at Disneyland followed by mediatisation of happy new marital life. It was at the time when France was facing 'real problems'. Apart from pipolisation, there appeared a new, 'celebritization'.

As discussed earlier, the engaging look of a presidential candidate is for voters often more important than the identification with a party program. Many authors deal with the issue of celebritization of politicians as it has roots in popular culture. For instance, Boorstin defines a celebrity as “a person who is well known for his/her well-

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<sup>167</sup> Dennis Abrams. *Nicolas Sarkozy*. New York City: Infobase Publishing, 2009.  
[http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C\(Sarkozy\)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.cz/books?id=YkKVeMIMOmOC&dq=%E2%80%9C(Sarkozy)+does+not+want+you+to+like+him%3B+he+wants+you+to+help+him+to+get+things+done.&source=gbs_navlinks_s)  
(accessed 24 April 2012), 15.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Raymond, Kuhn, “Les médias, c'est moi.' President Sarkozy and news media management.” *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 9.

<sup>170</sup> Ramonet, Ignacio. *La tyrannie de la communication*. (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 25. In Kuhn, Raymond. “Les médias, c'est moi.' President Sarkozy and news media management.” *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18.

<sup>171</sup> Jamil Dakhliya, *Mythologie de la Peopolisation*, Paris: Broché, 2010.

knowness.”<sup>172</sup> The political leader becomes easily a target of the scandal-oriented journalism. Neil Washbourne in his publication *Mediating politics* makes a distinction between expressive theories and economic model of politics when he asks: “Why do the voters vote?” He argues that “the expressive politics including celebritization suggests that voting expresses the political perspective and values of voters through their involvement in campaigning and election.”<sup>173</sup> He also points out “media and popular cultural forms of expression are crucial here as sources of ideas and images of the leader through which people may make identifications.” Also John Street draws on the issue of political representation with the main focus on the phenomenon of the ‘celebrity politician’.<sup>174</sup> Author illustrates, there are two main ways how to approach the phenomenon. Firstly, the elected politician or candidate uses elements of ‘celebrity hood’ to establish their claim to represent a group or cause. Secondly, a celebrity- a star of popular culture- uses its popularity to speak for popular opinion. Individuals are preferred to processes; psychological motives are preferred to power structures, which are also why the politicians have to take the centre stage.<sup>175</sup>

Sarkozy is considered to be a pioneer in the media exposure of his own private life in contemporary French politics. In 2004, the time when Sarkozy took over the leadership of the UMP, a politician’s young son, Louis, was helping his father to mobilize electorates. In order to do it, Louis supported Sarkozy’s ambitions through an appearance on video footage at the UMP rally.<sup>176</sup> The new media theme arrived before Sarkozy’s election, a marital status. In 2005, Sarkozy’s second wife Cecilia has left a presidential candidate and was seen in a new relationship. It was believed the beginning of media coverage in terms of Sarkozy’s private life. Sarkozy’s couples, Nicolas/Cécilia and Nicolas/Carla were often portrayed on cover pages during Sarkozy’s presidency. It was said that these portrayals were believed to show Sarkozy as an ‘authentic persona’ behind the professional politician. It makes them attractive vehicles for advertisers

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<sup>172</sup> Daniel Boorstin, *The image: a guide to pseudo-events in America*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992.

<sup>173</sup> Neil Washbourne. *Mediating Politics: Newspapers, Radio, Television and Internet*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2010.

<sup>174</sup> John Street, “Celebrity Politicians: Popular Culture and Political Representation,” *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*(4). 2004.

<sup>175</sup> Liesbet Van Zoonen, *Entertaining The Citizen: When Politics And Popular Culture Converge*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005.

<sup>176</sup> Claire Artufel, and Marlène Duroux. *Nicolas Sarkozy et la communication*. Paris: Pepper, 2006, 43–50

while allowing politicians to target sections of the electorate who are low users of general information newspapers.<sup>177</sup>

Addressing the theory of celebritization discussed earlier, for many French media outlets, Sarkozy's romance with Carla Bruni included many elements of a soap opera. It is a clever distraction, providing endless interest for the French people, and clever intrigues are set up to misdirect attention away from political blunders. In this way, Sarkozy is believed to be not only a principal character in this drama but at the same time a narrator.

Based on the discussion of the last paragraphs, it is obvious; the boundaries between private and public life in terms of mediatisation are diminishing in contemporary France. Moreover, new trends were launched and seem to be applicable on the case of Sarkozy, and so celebritization or pipolisation. They might have a significant impact on the development of Sarkozy's media image. The first hypothesis of the thesis is stated as it follows: "Sarkozy was positioned as a 'politician – celebrity' or 'le président bling-bling'<sup>178</sup> due to his permanent desire to show off by this status became unpopular among French electorate."

### **3.3 Media intervention in shaping politician's image**

Apart from the image projection practised by Sarkozy himself, a role of media in shaping Sarkozy's image must be examined. Afterthat, one is able to distinguish if the available techniques employed by the media in order to shape a politician's image were used against Nicolas Sarkozy and resulted in 'Sarkophobia' or not.

From a point of view of political communication, three media effects prevail in contemporary society that may affect how is an individual politician received by the general public; agenda-setting, framing and priming.<sup>179</sup> „By making some issues more salient in people's mind (agenda setting); mass media can also shape the considerations that people take into account when making judgments about political candidates or issues (priming).” By contrast, framing “is based on the assumption of how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by

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<sup>177</sup> Raymond Kuhn, "Les médias, c'est moi." President Sarkozy and news media management." *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18, 9.

<sup>178</sup> 'Bling' is an acronym, abbreviation or slang word which means 'Flashy Jewelry'; a person related to such an acronym admires money, gold and expensive things.

<sup>179</sup> Dietram Scheufele, and Tewksbury David. „Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models.“ *Journal of Communication*. 2007; 57: 9-20.

audiences.” Capella and Jamieson conclude that media effects - agenda-setting and media priming – might be sometimes considered as a consequence of framing.<sup>180</sup> This paper implies the theories of agenda-setting and framing. Whereas agenda-setting is particularly important to understand a quantity of messages was related to a person of Nicolas Sarkozy; 'framing' is important for the evaluating of headlines discussing Sarkozy a central theme.

### 3.3.1 Agenda-setting

McCombs and Shaw, the authors of the article *The Agenda-setting function of Mass Media* think that media's influence is indisputable; however, only in shaping the problems that the general public finds the most important.<sup>181</sup> “Editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality”. In particular, during a presidential campaign, the candidates are reflected in order to set the “agenda” of the campaign.<sup>182</sup> As discussed earlier, news media's premise is not to tell the readers what to think, but 'what to think about' or 'how' and 'what to think about it', and perhaps 'what to do about it'. Moreover, the consequences of such a process might be the impact on the peoples' behaviour and sentiment.

The focus of the agenda-setting theory is on the 'cause-effect' relationship (between media and public agendas). Therefore, quantitative methods are often used. Since media agenda reveals a position and a length of the story, by contrast, public agenda defines what electorates think are the most important issues regardless a political candidate's intervention. Despite this fact, critiques of the agenda-setting theory highlighted a problem of the media agendas that, as they explain, affect some people, on some issues, and sometimes.<sup>183</sup>

Media agenda set mainly by politicians or political candidates, media 'gatekeepers'; public relations and interest group with the aim to influence “people with high need for orientation as determined by perceived relevance of stories to their

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<sup>180</sup> Joseph N. Capella, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, eds. *Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good*. (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 1997), 54.  
[http://books.google.cz/books?id=XBd1nKS9wy0C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&ad=0#v=onepage&q=framing&f=false](http://books.google.cz/books?id=XBd1nKS9wy0C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&ad=0#v=onepage&q=framing&f=false) (accessed 20 March 2013).

<sup>181</sup> McCombs, Maxwell, and Donald Shaw. "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media". *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (2): 176, 1972, doi:10.1086/267990, 15.

<sup>182</sup> Maxwell McCombs, and Donald Shaw. "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media". *Review of Oxford Journal, Public Opinion Quarterly*. <http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/36/2/176.abstract> (accessed 16 April 2013)

<sup>183</sup> McCombs, Maxwell, and Donald Shaw. "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media". *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (2): 176 1972, doi:10.1086/267990, 15.

interests, their feelings of uncertainty about those stories, and the particular aspects of the stories that media deal with.”<sup>184</sup> Not only the media influence what we think about the issue, but also the 'way' the readers think about it, which is generally known as framing.

### 3.3.2 Framing

Goffman laid down a sociological framework for a concept of framing. He thinks that “in order to efficiently process new information, individuals apply interpretive schemas or 'primary frameworks' to classify information and interpret it meaningfully.”<sup>185</sup> The interpretative function appears to be a key in order to identify frames in comparison with the informational character of media reports. Framing can be reached through selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration that are able to determine salience of particular attributes of a story of issue.<sup>186</sup>

Shanto Iyengar, a pioneer of the research in the framing effects of news coverage on public opinion and political choice, gives an explanation that those affected by media “are sensitive to contextual cues when they reason about national affairs.”<sup>187</sup> In other words, the frames have the ability to reflect shared cultural narratives, national identity or experience, for example, newspaper headline highlighting Sarkozy's marriage with a model Carla Bruni might bring with disillusionment among French electorate that is not used to deal with the messages from politician's private life.

### 3.3.3 News framing

Considering a concept of framing will be used as a tool for analysing media content covering Nicolas Sarkozy, one must distinguish news frames apart from media frames firstly. De Vrees remarks that newsmakers employ different frames in their

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<sup>184</sup> McCombs, Maxwell. „The Agenda-Setting Role of the Mass Media in the Shaping of Public Opinion.“ University of Texas at Austin. [http://www.infoamerica.org/documentos\\_pdf/mccombs01.pdf](http://www.infoamerica.org/documentos_pdf/mccombs01.pdf) (accessed 10 March 2013), 6.

<sup>185</sup> Erving, Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974., p. 24

<sup>186</sup> Kirk, Hallahan, “Seven Models of Framing: Implications for Public Relations.” *Journal of Public Relations Research*. 11(3), 207.

<sup>187</sup> Shanto Iyengar, “Television news and citizen's explanations of national issues,” *American Political Science Review*, 1987, 828.

coverage of the issue, and so it is 'a choice in how to tell and construct story' what should be captured and analysed in order to decode news frames.<sup>188</sup>

Different journalists' perceptions of objectivity play an important role too. Here, there is a distinctive division between hard and soft facts, either the journalists express the position of each side in a political dispute and so they apply descriptive style or they decide for application of interpretative style and provide their own opinion on the issue. In the international context, Strömbäck and Dimitrova understand news framing as:

the result of various factors at work, among them commercial imperatives, the political system and its configuration, political-cultural notions and values, and frames presented by powerful elites. Since several of these factors are culture- and nation-specific, the use of different frames is expected to vary between countries.<sup>189</sup>

The same research compared U.S. and Swedish newspaper frames. These countries are enough distinctive to prove the fact that nation-specificity plays an important role in the media-framing. The resolution was as follows: the metaframe of politics as a strategic game was more common in the U.S. newspapers, while the metaframe of politics as issues was more common in the Swedish newspapers.<sup>190</sup> What does it tell us about the French exception in terms of news framing? What does it tell us about Sarkozy's exception in terms of news framing?

No doubt, the news media are money-making businesses. In marketing terminology, their main goal is to deliver a good product to their customers (readers) and by employing different media technique they try to increase the attractiveness of this product.

There are frames that guarantee readership and higher circulations, such as 'game frame' which refers to news stories that frame politics in terms of a "game, personality contest, strategy, or personal relationships between political actors not related to issue positions,"<sup>191</sup> On the other hand, 'issue frame' includes stories that focus

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<sup>188</sup> Claes H. de Vreese, „News framing: Theory and typology,“ *Information Design Journal + Documentation Design* 13(1) 51-62. <http://www.tveiten.net/futurelearninglab/menu4/1233468300.pdf> (accessed 15 May 2013)

<sup>189</sup> Jesper, Strömbäck, and Daniela V. Dimitrova, "Political and Media Systems Matter: A Comparison of Election News Coverage in Sweden and the United States," *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 2006; 11; 131. DOI: 10.1177/1081180X06293549, 135.

<sup>190</sup> Jesper, Strömbäck, and Daniela V. Dimitrova, "Political and Media Systems Matter: A Comparison of Election News Coverage in Sweden and the United States," *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 2006; 11; 131. DOI: 10.1177/1081180X06293549, 131.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid*, 138.

on political issues or positions to the problem. Scholars think that a good example of such 'game frame' (also known as 'strategic frame') is the U.S. media, however, this trend becomes more and more widespread worldwide at the expense of the frame called as 'politics of issues'.<sup>192</sup>

The other important feature of a strategic frame as it can be applied in the quantitative analysis of this paper is the additional effect that encourages political cynicism among citizens. According to Patterson, this particular frame is a result of commercialized, market-driven nature of media system.<sup>193</sup>

Observing the context of specific frames, one might define subcategories of media frames, such as 'news management frame' (it is able to display Sarkozy's news management activities discussed in the Chapter 2), 'political strategy frame', a 'conflict frame', a 'sensational frame', a 'horse race frame', a 'politician as an individual frame' (candidate-centeredness) - all these frames belong to the category of 'strategy frame' and so, they promise the increased readership.

One of the most important framing effects is the connotation which is transmitted through media message. Obviously, negative headline language connotations affect readers differently than positive or neutral one, namely, positive framing of a politician's image tends to increase his/her level of support.

Referring to the above discussed framing theory, the second hypothesis of the thesis is stated: "The negative image of Nicolas Sarkozy was achieved through the overexposure of mostly negative media messages about Nicolas Sarkozy."

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid, 142.

<sup>193</sup> Thomas Patterson, "The United States: News in a Free-Market Society." *Democracy and the Media. A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Richard Gunther and Anthony Mughan. (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2000).

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Media content analysis

History of media content analysis dates back to the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century when one of the key theorists of this discipline Max Weber concluded that media content can be considered as a means of monitoring the 'cultural temperature' of society.<sup>194</sup> However, a media content analysis was firstly introduced by Harold Lasswell in *Propaganda techniques in the world war*, as it reveals the book title; this form of analysis was formerly used to study propaganda.<sup>195</sup> Later on, he stated what media content analysis is about: "Who says what through which channel to whom with what effect."<sup>196</sup>

Media content analysis proliferated as a research methodology due to its interdisciplinary character. In terms of political communication, this method has found a wide application as well. Helmut Scherer sees a media content analysis as a key concept of a political communication research. In his paper *Content Analysis: An introduction to its methodology*<sup>197</sup>, he works with the two ways of approaching media content, qualitative (sometimes also called "hermeneutic") and quantitative analysis. Scherer sees the biggest difference between the two ways of analysis, in the degree of structuring and openness of the analytical process.<sup>198</sup>

Qualitative analysis aims to understand the textual interpretation as well as mutual relationships of individual messages in detail. Qualitative analysis is able to reveal hidden meanings behind specific arguments, but at the expense of detailed and time consuming elaboration on a particular media unit, it lacks the objectivity and certain degree of structuring. Moreover, the background of a person responsible for qualitative analysis plays an important role and as the consequence of that the final outcome differs from researcher to researcher. To provide the example of such factors which are able to affect the analysis, it can be evaluator's age, political ideology, position in society; or/and evaluator's knowledge of the issue, understanding the research questions, etc.

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<sup>194</sup> Anders Hansen et al., *Mass communication research methods*. (London: Macmillan, 1998), 92.

<sup>195</sup> Harold Dwight Lasswell, *Propaganda techniques in the world war*. (New York: Knopf, 1927).

<sup>196</sup> Harold Dwight Lasswell, *Power and Personality*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1948), 12.

<sup>197</sup> Helmut Scherer, "Úvod do metody obsahové analýzy," in *Analýza obsahu mediálních sdělení*, ed. Winfrid Schulz et al. (Karolinum: Charles University in Prague, 2004), 29.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*



On the other hand, the problem of low objectivity can be partially eliminated when we decide to analyse it quantitatively. Quantitative analysis is thus characterized by a high degree of credibility and structuring.<sup>199</sup> Nevertheless, when it comes to the method chosen for quantitative analysis, there is a place for having biased quantitative analysis.

A large number of the media units are able to be analysed in a relatively short time period when using quantitative analysis. Additionally, each step of the analysis goes through explicitly defined rules, it is also the reason why the results obtained from the analysis can be processed simply and clearly in tables or graphs.<sup>200</sup> Later on, the results interpreted in tables and graphs; provoke a better discussion or eventually criticism.

Taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods mentioned above, the ideal way would be to use their combination to achieve the most objective results. It was also agreed by Hansen et al. (1998) that the usage of both analyses is often necessary to understand not only the meanings, but also possible impacts of media units.<sup>201</sup>

## 4.2 Media corpus

In general, newspapers employ different 'genres' than for example radio and television, e.g. reporting, the interviews, the column, etc. In particular, newspaper headlines are structured in such way that readers are able to interpret them in their own story, they are able to bring with the hidden meaning. It is what is known as 'press news rhetoric', it provides with narrative.

Media corpus includes 256 cover pages of weekly news magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* and 256 cover pages of weekly news magazine *Le Point* issued over the period 16<sup>th</sup> May 2007 – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012. The analysis of press release will cover both politically left-centred (*le Nouvel Observateur*) and right-centred (*Le Point*) media. It will assure a balance and objectivity to this research. The cover pages portraying President Nicolas Sarkozy a central theme were selected and analysed in a closer detail; in fact, there are 59 cover pages of *Le Nouvel Observateur* and 67 cover pages of *Le Point*.

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>201</sup> Anders Hansen et al., *Mass communication research methods*. (London: Macmillan, 1998), 92.

A cover page is considered an ideal media unit for this type of research because it is able to attract a potential reader.. In France, the newsstand purchase is considered as a determinant of the financial health of a magazine. It also gives the additional value to this kind of research since it can reveal readers' interest in the topic as well as the special attention is provided from the part of editorial team of newspaper magazine. The analyzed cover pages of *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* were found online in specific archives and collections of French newspaper such as *Journaux Collection* or online shops selling the old issues of particular newspaper. The method of searching for individual items was processed as each issue number was searched via Google search.

### **4.3 Quantitative analysis**

To measure the quantity, the theory of agenda-setting is applied. In addition, the theory of media framing must be used in order to understand why do media portray a figure of Nicolas Sarkozy in such way.

A coding sheet has been elaborated in the Microsoft Excel Sheet and included several categories which were evaluated and coded on a scale 1-7 depending on the amount of variables (for instance, the category "headline connotation" included three variables coded as 0=neutral, 1=positive, 2=negative). At the end of the coding process, a tool 'filter' available in Microsoft Excel was used in order to select the required values within or between categories. It allowed creating many combinations that served as the analytical framework later on. On its basis, the tables, graphs or print screens were elaborated to present them as a product to be described in the analytical part.

First of all, the cover pages were coded and listed as follows: the number of issue, the exact dates of issue (day, month, and year), the full length of headline and sub headline in the original French language provided with English translation. Later, the process of main headlines' selection when distinguishing between the cover pages portraying exclusively a person of Nicolas Sarkozy either directly or indirectly. The rest of headlines was left aside while only defining their focus on French, European or International issue and the theme such as politics, social issues, economy, foreign affairs, culture, history or travel. The purpose of such definitions is to get the general overview of what themes do the selected French newspaper magazines cover, and to distinguish what portion is devoted solely to politics in general, and the President Nicolas Sarkozy in total volume of cover pages. Obviously, the cover pages with a key

theme of President Nicolas Sarkozy were generally in the category French (or domestic) Politics, with the exception of cover pages linking Sarkozy with international relations, such as Sarkozy's relations to the United States of America, European Union issues, etc.

Later on, it was decided whether the "Sarkozy cover pages" portray him directly or indirectly. In case, Sarkozy was captured as a central figure or theme, meaning the headline and sub headline talk solely about his person, it was considered as direct coverage. On the other hand, it happened that Sarkozy was covered indirectly, which means some other figure/s related to him (family or other politician, etc.) were considered as a central theme. It could also be the affair Sarkozy was linked with and the French electorate associate with him.

Followed by the coding of main themes Sarkozy was linked with the most (Sarkozy's domestic policies; social policies, Sarkozy's relationship with Carla Bruni, Sarkozy's relations to the United States of America, etc.) Narrative master character of such a categorization let the readers to interpret a given story on their own, to find hidden meaning. They can distinguish between hard news and soft news.

The roles in which Sarkozy was portrayed by journalists (politician, celebrity, personality; and specifically, president, UMP politician, presidential candidate, father, husband, etc.); also, the language the journalists have used to address Sarkozy with only his surname, full name, nick name, function, or not defined; or journalists language in general, either descriptive or interpretative. The important aspect of the analysis was to distinguish whether the headline provide negative, positive or neutral (according to the adjectives, phrases or specific words with negative or positive character, when bearing in mind that when the headline was written in the descriptive way, it has normally had a neutral connotation). This categorization is very important to evaluate the phenomenon of 'Sarkophobia'.

Also, the predefined media frames used in headline and sub headline were examined. Firstly, the main categorization divided between frames as strategic game or thematic frames. Then different subfields of media frames were defined, so called contextual frames, such as horse-race frame, sensational frame, celebrity frame, conflict frame, news management frame, political strategy frame, politician as individual frame. From where, the news management frame was more categorized as fulfilling the

requirements of Mancini and Negrini model described as a part of the Chapter 2: News Management.<sup>202</sup>

## **4.4 Qualitative analysis**

### **4.4.1 Semiotic analysis**

To explore the visual part of every cover page and work of photographs in newspaper in order to interpret the possible impact of images on readers, a semiotic analysis, a subfield of content analysis, was employed.

Cover pages were categorized as: those that offer the visual portrayal of Nicolas Sarkozy exclusively, those that cover at least some political figure if not Sarkozy himself, those that demonstrate the visual portrayal of Sarkozy together with other political figure; and two last options considered the options that Sarkozy is portrayed with everyone but political figure, or there is no political figure on cover. Also, it was examined what facial expression had Sarkozy on the photograph, ranging from positive (smiling, content, etc.), neutral, to negative (angry, concerned, sad, etc.).

The other interest lies in the size of the photograph which is associated with the way how the shot is taken. It is an important part of reader's coding, it is able to signify the relevance of the story and the image itself. For example, when the photograph is taken up from a distance (so called long shot), it does mean that the figure is not in such a dominance of the shot. On the other hand, close up shot focusing on a politician's face in large tends to bring the reader closer to the story. Middle shot, in between close up and long shot describes such a photograph captures the upper body of the figure, maximally till the level of 'knees'. Additionally to the photograph, the other techniques might be employed in terms of attraction the reader with visual part of the cover page. The editorial team works with several programs that are able to transform a politician's portrayal into caricature, drawing, silhouette, etc. which is considered as the other was the journalists can frame the story. All the signifiers such as shot size (described above), composition of the photograph (taken in a real scenario, the one with the artificial background, or metaphor), focus (some of the background of photographs were blurred

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<sup>202</sup> Paolo Mancini, Ralph Negrine, Christina Holtz-Bacha, and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, *The Professionalization of Political Communication*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007).

to give rise a figure even more), colouring (it goes hand in hand with metaphors, for example, the black background together with negative headline can even stress the negative feeling perceived by looking at the cover page). All of these signifiers are able to connote meaning that can be related to text as a whole producing a combination of signs.<sup>203+204</sup>

#### 4.4.2 Rhetoric analysis

It was understood that a major story of newspaper is always portrayed on the cover page. In general, the space on cover or front page is divided between both the image and the written text, so called headline. In general, the visual part of front page is associated with written part in two step process, first of all, “the headline intrigues the reader into looking at the photograph” and consequently, “the photograph intrigues the reader to read about the story further using the text. Gitlin defined framing of journalist language as a way to “organize the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports.”<sup>205</sup> In terms journalist language, frames are able to be drawn upon several tools of language, such as metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, etc.

Taking into consideration that language should be used in conjunction with the intersection between journalists and their public in order to frame a figure of President Nicolas Sarkozy, the centrality of language and specific expressions used by journalists must be specified. In relation to Nicolas Sarkozy, the language used to portray politician works differently in certain settings. When journalists decide for mentioning the politician’s name, function, nick name or any kind of attribute which associate reader directly with a person of Nicolas Sarkozy, it means that journalists try to frame or position such a politician in some way while using language rhetoric. It is why it was decided to include a specific categorization in coding sheet which is able to distinguish whether the journalists called Sarkozy with his full name, surname, nick name (e.g. Sarko, “the American”, etc.), function (the President) or if he was not mentioned in words.

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<sup>203</sup> Paul Carter, “A Semiotic Analysis of Newspaper Front-Page Photographs,” <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/pmc9601.html> (accessed 16 May 2013)

<sup>204</sup> Jonathan Bignell, *Media Semiotics: An Introduction*, (Manchester: Manchester Press, 1997), 28.

<sup>205</sup> Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 7.

## 5. NEWS COVERAGE OF LE POINT AND LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR 2007-2012

The editorial teams of both selected magazines, Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur, are responsible for the choice of the main theme outlined on the cover page of their respective publications. Different external factors have the capacity to affect such a choice, mainly the desire to sell the product itself. To reach a high turnover, one must understand the target audience and cultural specificities of the country in question. Thus, in terms of France, one notices a greater proportion of news dedicated to domestic issues in comparison with news focusing on European or non-European issues. (see Table 2 and Table 3).

It is clear that domestic political issues are the principal focus in Le Point, comprising 46 % (119 out of 256) of total volume in contrast with the cover pages outlining other themes that will be closely analysed below. Those themes count for less on average, with 39 % (101 out of 256) discussing themes other than 'politics'. Regarding the prevalence of European and world issues on the front pages of Le Point, such issues were presented only minimally. European issues were documented in about 4 % of cases (10 out of 256); none of them were interested in European politics. News items portraying international affairs accounted for 10% (26 out of 256) of the total volume of Le Point issues in the analysed period of time, with only 3 cover pages interested in world politics. It is important to highlight that all three of these cover pages, issued in 2008, 2009, and 2010, focused on American issues, particularly Barack Obama. This nicely demonstrates where France's interests lie in terms of non-European politics, taking into consideration newspapers with a centre-right focus.

Table 2: Le Point News Coverage from May 2007 to May 2012

Coverage Le Point (May 2007 - May 2012)	France		Europe		World		SUM
	Politics	Others	Politics	Others	Politics	Others	
2007	13	14	0	3	0	1	31
2008	22	21	0	2	1	6	52
2009	24	25	0	0	1	1	51
2010	21	21	0	2	1	7	52
2011	27	14	0	2	0	7	50
2012	12	6	0	1	0	1	20
<b>SUM</b>	<b>119</b>	101	0	10	3	23	256

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

By contrast, in the left-oriented newspaper *Le Nouvel Observateur*, domestic issues belonging to categories such as 'social issues' (unemployment, social differences, the status of hospitals in France, etc.), 'culture, education and science' (issues related to the status of universities in France, French inventions and products, literature or religious issues, etc.), 'economy' (purchasing power, real estate, economic crisis, etc.), 'history' (Francs-Maçons or French leaders from the past), 'travel', and 'foreign affairs' are dominant, representing 41% of total volume (106 out of 256 issues) which is a slightly higher proportion 'domestic politics', which account for 39.8 % (102 out of 256) of article topics. Only 3% of articles concerned European issues (7 out of 256), and the non-European world was responsible for 16 % of total volume (41 out of 256). 'World politics'-related articles were present three times more often on the front page of *Le Nouvel Observateur*'s (9 cover pages) than that of *Le Point* (3 cover pages). Seven cover pages concerned the theme the United States of America, mainly with regard to President Barack Obama. Only one cover page examined the Obama-Sarkozy relationship.

Table 3: *Le Nouvel Observateur* News Coverage from May 2007 to May 2012

Coverage <i>Le Nouvel Observateur</i> (May 2007 - May 2012)	France		Europe		World		SUM
	Politics	Others	Politics	Others	Politics	Others	
2007	17	9	0	1	0	5	32
2008	20	19	0	1	3	9	52
2009	15	23	0	2	3	8	51
2010	15	28	0	1	2	5	51
2011	23	22	0	2	1	3	51
2012	12	5	0	0	0	2	19
SUM	102	<b>106</b>	0	7	9	32	256

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

To further develop categories other than 'politics', *Le Point*'s cover pages covered issues from the fields of 'culture, education and science' in 34% of cases (46 out of 134) followed by social issues in 26% of cases (35 out of 134), 'history' in 16% of cases (22 out of 134), and 'economy' in 11% of cases (15 out of 134). The cover pages covering the categories 'Travel' and 'Foreign Affairs' were given 6% of coverage (8 out of 134). In the case of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the category 'social issues' came in first position with 32.4% (47 out of 145) when comparing cover pages covering stories other than political issues. This was followed by the categories 'culture, science and education' in 28% of cases (40 out of 145), 'economy' in 17% of cases (24 out of 145),

and 'history' in 10% of cases (14 out of 145). The categories 'foreign affairs' and 'travel' experienced the lowest representation on the cover pages of Le Nouvel Observateur. (See Table 4)

Table 4: Others but political issues covered by Le Nouvel Observateur and Le Point

<b>Le Nouvel Observateur: Others</b>		<b>Le Point: Others</b>	
<b>Social issues</b>	<b>47</b>	Social issues	35
Economy	24	Economy	15
Foreign Affairs	13	Foreign Affairs	8
Culture, Science, Education	40	<b>Culture, Science, Education</b>	<b>46</b>
History	14	History	22
Travel	7	Travel	8
SUM	145	SUM	134

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

Some of the themes included in the analysis of issues other than the political themes covered by the two weekly newsmagazines are considered more important not only due to their higher occurrence, but also due to the fact they appear regularly, generally on a yearly basis. In particular, hospitals in France are compared every year and the final ranking is published on the cover page of Le Nouvel Observateur such as mentioned on the following cover page from 24 November 2011: “*Le Palmarès National 2011; Hopitaux Cliniques*”<sup>206</sup> (National list of winners 2011; Clinical hospitals). Also, *Le Nouvel Observateur* regularly compares university degrees offered in France and their potential of increasing the chance of graduates obtaining employment, such as the example of the cover page from 10 February 2011: “*Les diplomes qui donnent travail*”<sup>207</sup> (The degrees which lead to job). *Le Nouvel Observateur* favours the issue of real estate too: the special edition on real estate is issued every year.

*Le Point* issued a similar series highlighting top hospitals in France. Additionally, its readers could benefit from a special issue on, wine released every September, as well as its yearly ranking of French university degrees. Lastly, the weekly newsmagazine

<sup>206</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „Le Palmarès National 2011 : Hopitaux Cliniques,“ Cover page, Issue N°2455 (24 November 2011) [http://live.nouvelobs.com/Event/TCHAT\\_A\\_quoi\\_sert\\_le\\_classement\\_des\\_hopitaux\\_](http://live.nouvelobs.com/Event/TCHAT_A_quoi_sert_le_classement_des_hopitaux_) (accessed 10 March 2013)

<sup>207</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „Les diplomes qui donnent travail,“ Cover page, Issue N°2414 (10 February 2011) <http://www.madeinpresse.fr/le-nouvel-observateur-n2414-622926.html> (accessed 11 March 2013)



repeatedly included the word 'riches' (meaning rich people in France) on its cover page, such as in the issue from 26 July 2007: “*Spécial Riches*”<sup>208</sup> (Special edition on the rich).

Both French news magazines prioritize domestic issues over European or international ones. In the ‘domestic’ category, political issues were the most covered, followed by social issues and issues related to French culture, education and science. A good proportion of cover pages can be categorised as 'history' and 'economy'. This dominance of certain topics of interest in the media gives a clear idea about what issues are of greatest interest among French population.

## **5.1 The coverage of Nicolas Sarkozy by Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur**

Bearing in mind the overall number of cover pages which focus on political issues in France – 46% (Le Point) and 39.8% (Le Nouvel Observateur) – one might approach the cover pages portraying exclusively the person of President Nicolas Sarkozy as a central theme during the period of his presidency (16th May 2007 – 15th May 2012).

Le Point portrayed Nicolas Sarkozy as a key theme in 26% of cases (67 out of 256) of the total volume of issues. Obviously, all the cover pages with the key theme of President Nicolas Sarkozy were in the category 'French politics'. This also means that Sarkozy was dominating political news coverage in France considering Le Point’s coverage of this term, portrayed on 67 out of 119 cover pages on domestic policy (56%).

Le Nouvel Observateur presented Nicolas Sarkozy on its cover page in 23% of cases (59 out of 256) over the analysed period. Of the total volume of Le Nouvel Observateurs’ cover pages covering politics in France, Sarkozy was portrayed in 58% of cases (59 out of 102). These high ratios signify the news magazine’s fascination with Nicolas Sarkozy.

The above mentioned ratios include both the cover pages covering Sarkozy 'directly' and 'indirectly'. (see Graph 4) Nicolas Sarkozy was included as a central theme directly – meaning the headline and sub headline directly referred to him – in 61% (Le Point) and 73% (Le Nouvel Observateur) of cases. On the other hand, it happened that Sarkozy

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<sup>208</sup> Le Point, „Spécial Riches,“ Cover page, Issue No°1819 (26 July 2007) <http://www.priceminister.com/offer/buy/56859540/Collectif-Le-Point-N-1819-Special-Riches-Revue.html> (accessed 10 March 2013)

was covered indirectly in 35% (Le Point) and 27% (Le Nouvel Observateur) of cases, meaning that somebody related to him other person related to him (family, other politician, Sarkozy's political advisor, etc.) or a topic associated with his person were considered a central theme. Concerning the examples of cover pages that are related to Sarkozy indirectly, one must mention an issue of Le Nouvel Observateur from 2 August 2007: "*L'énigme Cécilia*"<sup>209</sup> (The Cécilia Conundrum). This gives an example of a representative from Sarkozy's family who dominated the main theme of the cover page. Similarly, Sarkozy's political advisors are portrayed by the media as the principal theme in the issue from 17 September 2009: "*L'homme qui parle à l'oreille de Sarko; Exclusif: Un entretien avec Nicolas Hulot; Récit: les secrets d'une influence*"<sup>210</sup> (A man who advises Sarko; Exclusively: an interview with Nicolas Hulot; story: the secrets of one influence). The level of attention given to Sarkozy's advisors is understandable since they are considered to be key figures in Sarkozy's behaviour and decision-making. Finally, several political affairs such as that of Liliane Bettencourt were included in the list of cover pages covering Sarkozy indirectly. For instance, on 4 February 2010, Le Point released on the "*Affaire Bettencourt: comment gagner un Milliard?*"<sup>211</sup> (The Bettencourt Affair: how to earn a billion). Even if Nicolas Sarkozy's name is not directly mentioned in this instance, he is generally associated with the Bettencourt affair as it involves Liliane Bettencourt's illegal payments<sup>212</sup> to members of the French government in 2010.

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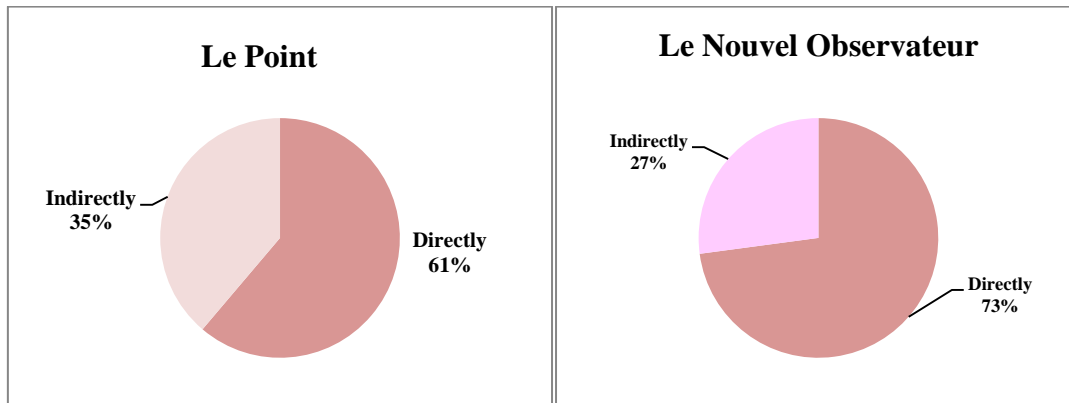
<sup>209</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „L'énigme Cécilia ,“ Cover page, Issue N° 2230 (2 August 2007) <http://www.priceminister.com/image?action=slideshow&imagetype=PRODUCT&prdimageid=682811103&productid=56663431> (accessed 3 March 2013).

<sup>210</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „L'homme qui parle à l'oreille de Sarko,“ Cover page, Issue N°2341 (17 September 2009) <http://madeinpresse.fr/le-nouvel-observateur-n2341-83948.html> (accessed 10 March 2013)

<sup>211</sup> Le Point,“Affair Bettencourt: comment gagner un Milliard?“ Cover page, Issue N° 1951 (4 February 2010) <http://www.priceminister.com/offer/buy/94470454/le-point-n-1951-bettancourt-badinter-vancouver-marseille-bhl-revue.html> (accessed 3 March 2013).

<sup>212</sup> Liliane Bettencourt, a French businesswoman who was listed as the wealthiest woman in France

Graph 4: Nicolas Sarkozy's 'direct' and 'indirect' coverage in *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*.

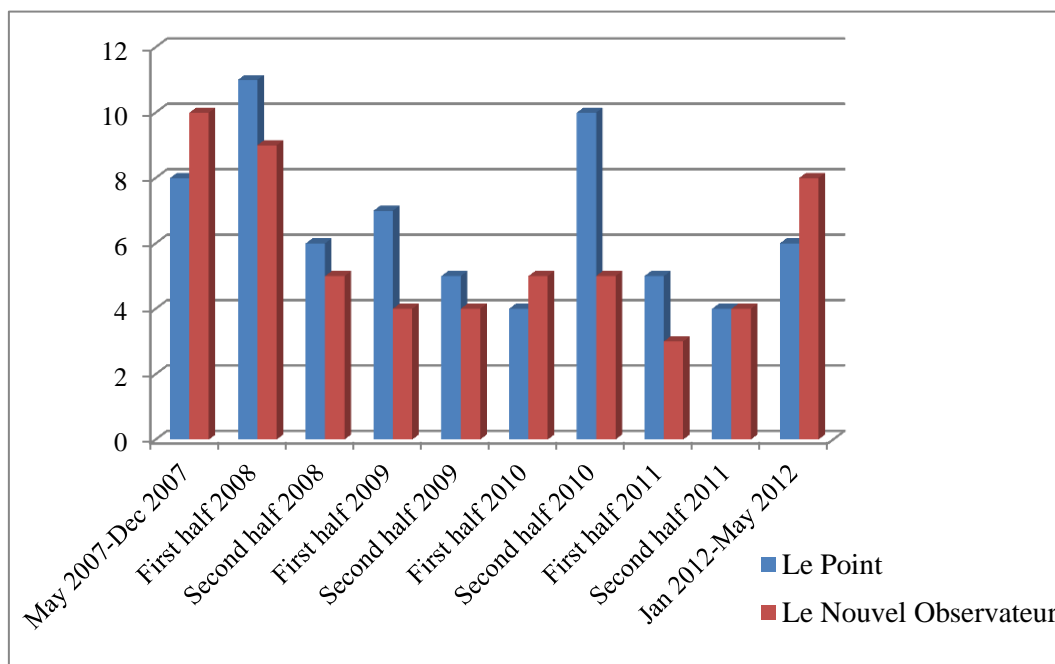


Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

Over the 256 cover pages studied from the middle of May 2007 to the middle of May 2012, the frequency of observations on Nicolas Sarkozy in the weekly newsmagazines *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* can be observed in Graph 5. Sarkozy's appearance in *Le Point* experienced a peak during his first year of presidency, followed by a slow decline from the second half of 2008 until the first half of 2010.

This stands in contrast to the year 2011 and first half of 2012, where Sarkozy was covered twice less often in comparison with the period of Sarkozy's highest occurrence. In terms of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, most observations about Sarkozy were noticed the first year of his presidency (May 2007-December 2007) and last half year of his presidency (January 2012-May 2012). A significantly lower number of cover pages portraying Sarkozy were registered between the second half of 2008 and the second half of 2011.

Graph 5: Occurrence of articles discussing Sarkozy in Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur in the period 2007-2012 (absolute values, interval of half a year).



Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

In general, media attention directed towards a newly elected president is highest shortly after he/she is appointed. In such a way, the media keeps the general public informed about a figure in his/her new position. Nicolas Sarkozy was not the exception: he became omnipresent at newsstands after his election. No notable difference was noticed in the frequency of cover pages dealing with Sarkozy between the left and right-leaning newsmagazines. This means that newspapers did not stress their personal political identification, but more importantly they employed the marketing strategy of providing readers with a 'new product' until the market was unsaturated. The same conclusion can be drawn when explaining the rise in the number of cover pages mentioning Sarkozy during the first half of 2012, shortly before the 2012 presidential elections in France. In this instance, the newspapers behaved almost like bookmakers benefiting from a horse race during the presidential election.

### 5.1.1 Narrative analysis

The messages conveyed by Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur shortly after Sarkozy's election in May 2007 were a combination of investigation about 'Sarkozy's

system<sup>213</sup>, Sarkozy's political advisors, private life, and his relations with owners of mainstream commercial media outlets. However, the majority of headlines newspapers was dedicated to the investigation on Sarkozy's system. On 14 June 2007, Le Nouvel Observateur released cover page with headline saying: "*Ce que va faire Sarkozy (qui perd, qui gagne)?*"<sup>214</sup> (*What is Sarkozy going to do?...Who loses? Who gains?*). Le Point contributed to the same issue on 6 December 2007 with cover page declaring: "*Enquête sur l'état Sarkozy: Train de Vie, Résidences, Voyages, Nominations*"<sup>215</sup> (Investigation about Sarkozy's state: lifestyle, residences, travels, nominations).

The omnipresence of Sarkozy's person in media was not only result of high amount of cover pages focusing on Sarkozy during his first year of presidency. Sarkozy's character, specially his desire to get more and more power and benefit from his position stemmed from many commentaries of different newspapers. On 19 July 2007, Le Point released cover page whose headline was saying: "*Super-Sarko - en fait-il trop?*"<sup>216</sup> (Super-Sarko - does he do too much?).

Sarkozy's interventions to domestic politics generated more Le Nouvel Observateur and Le Point attention for the whole year 2008. Despite the fact that Nicolas Sarkozy married Carla Bruni on 2 February 2008, Sarkozy's personal life was almost pushed out from the newsstands as the main issue remained the President's attitude to the social policies, environmental issues or human rights in the country. The frequently used phrases, such as employment contract, purchasing power, and reduction in working hours, retirement, health, pollution or energy were repeated by the journalists of both newspapers over the year 2008. The exceptional cover page related to Sarkozy's new wife was published on 5 June 2008 by Le Point: "*La Présidente; notre enquête et des extraits de « Carla et Nicolas, la véritable histoire » par Yves Azéroual et Valérie Bénéïm*"<sup>217</sup> (The president; our investigation and extracts of „Carla and Nicolas“, a true story” from Yves Azéroual, and Valérie Bénéïm). Sarkozy's

<sup>213</sup> Meaning Sarkozy's position to domestic policies.

<sup>214</sup> Le Point, "Ce que va faire Sarkozy (qui perd, qui gagne)," Cover page, Issue N°2223 (14 June 2007) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/-numero-1818-newsmagazines-3600-13.html> (accessed 12 March 2013).

<sup>215</sup> Le Point, „Enquête sur l'état Sarkozy: Train de Vie, Résidences, Voyages, Nominations; Cover page, Issue N°1838 (6 December 2007) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/-numero-1838-newsmagazines-5276-13.html> (accessed 12 March 2013).

<sup>216</sup> Le Point, „Super-Sarko (En fait-il trop?)," Cover page, Issue N°1818 (19 July 2007) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/-numero-1818-newsmagazines-3600-13.html> (accessed 12 March 2013).

<sup>217</sup> Le Point, "La Présidente: Notre enquête et des extraits de « Carla et Nicolas, la véritable histoire » par Yves Azéroual et Valérie Bénéïm," Cover page, Issue N°1864 (5 June 2008) <http://www.priceminister.com/offer/buy/69932046/Point-Le-N-1864-Du-05-06-2008-Revue.html> (accessed 12 March 2013).

relationship with Carla Bruni was mentioned in the context of Sarkozy's new wife and her influence on the President's leadership. Carla Bruni's, leaning towards the Socialist Party has brought with it much confusion to the Elysée and has been diffidently accepted by general public at the same time.

The antipathy towards Sarkozy in terms of political issues was on the rise as one could recognize from the headline of *Le Nouvel Observateur* issued on 28 January 2008: "*Pourquoi ils deviennent Sarkophobes ?*"<sup>218</sup> (Why are they becoming "Sarkophobes"?) and *Le Point*'s headline from 28 February 2008 stating: "*L'Homme cerné : la leçon d'histoire de Max Gallo aux Sarkophobes; les coulisses d'une dégringolade – la spirale des couacs*"<sup>219</sup> (The man surrounded: a lesson of story of Max Gallo about "Sarkophobes", the behind the scene of one tumble - a spiral of hiccups)

The next two important narratives about Sarkozy involved his relations to the famous and influential people in France such as Vincent Bolloré, or Martin Boyugues; and the revelations about who are the 'real leaders' of the France acting in the shadow of president. Xavier Darcos, was considered to be Sarkozy's 'horseman' on cover page of *Le Nouvel Observateur* from 15 May 2008<sup>220</sup> due to the fact that he implemented education reform which resulted in 13,500 job losses in teaching and decrease the number of hours spent on several subjects, such as history and geography.<sup>221</sup> The argument about Sarkozy's way of approaching social policies in France was stressed in the second half of the year 2008, particularly, *Le Point*'s headline appeared on 21 November 2008: "*Les Colères de Sarkozy (Banquiers, journalistes, magistrats, diplomates, militaires, intellos...ce qu'il dit d'eux)*"<sup>222</sup> (The anger of Sarkozy: bankers, journalists, judges, diplomats, soldiers, intellectuals... what he said about them)

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<sup>218</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, "Pourquoi ils deviennent Sarkophobes: Decus, Humilies, Moralistes, Republicains, Laics," Cover page, Issue N°2255 (24 January 2008) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=527106> (accessed 12 March 2013)

<sup>219</sup> *Le Point*, „L'Homme cerné: La leçon d'histoire de Max Gallo aux Sarkophobes ; les coulisses d'une dégringolade – la spirale des couacs," Cover page, Issue N°1850 (28 February 2008) <http://www.priceminister.com/offer/buy/62305807/Le-Point-N-1850-L-homme-Cerne-Revue.html> (accessed 10 March 2013)

<sup>220</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, "Xavier Darcos - Le Hussard de Sarkozy: ses réformes de l'école provoquent la mobilisation des enseignants et des lycéens," Cover page, Issue N°2271 (15 May 2008) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=545775> (accessed 4 April 2013).

<sup>221</sup> Alex Lantier, and Senthoran Ravee, "France: high school students protest education reform," World Socialist Web Site. <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2008/12/demo-d19.html> (accessed 11 April 2013).

<sup>222</sup> *Le Point*, „Les Colères de Sarkozy: Banquiers, journalistes, magistrats, diplomates, militaires, intellos...ce qu'il dit d'eux," Cover page, Issue N°1888 <http://www.priceminister.com/offer/buy/74376283/Le-Point-N-1888-Les-Coleres-De-Sarkozy-Banquiers-Journalistes-Magistrats-Diplomates-Militaires-Intellos-Ce-Qu-il-Dit-D-eux-Revue.html> (accessed 4 April 2013).

An examination of the dominant narratives about Nicolas Sarkozy 2009, it finds that Le Nouvel Observateur's journalists stay with the issue of Sarkozy's way of leadership, the implementation of social policies and future expectations in terms of domestic politics. Le Nouvel Observateur's No. 1 narrative about Sarkozy was that he is doing 'dirty politics' and as a result of it, he must be working on the improvement of his image as it is obvious from the headline of Le Nouvel Observateur on 25 June 2009 which says: "*Les habits neufs du President Sarkozy* (New clothes of President Sarkozy) complemented by sub headline: "*Paroles, paroles...les actes suivront-ils ? A-t-il vraiment changé ? Peut-il financer ses réformes?*"<sup>223</sup> (Words, words...do his deeds follow him? Has he really changed? Is he able to finance his reforms?).

Throughout the year 2009, Sarkozy is repeatedly<sup>224</sup> related to unfair political practices as cronyism or revolving door policy. The 'Clearstream affair' is refreshed as the name of François Pérol is mentioned on the cover page of Le Nouvel Observateur from 5 March 2009. On 24 September 2009 next headline presents Sarkozy in the uncomplimentary context. Nicolas Sarkozy as well as other French ex-presidents or Prime Ministers featured on the French political scene in the past 50 years (Jacques Chirac, François Mitterand, Georges Pompidou or Dominique de Villepin) are compared to "*tontons flingueurs*"<sup>225</sup> (Crooks in Clover). Lastly, Sarkozy is performed as one to be compared with Éric Besson, a former socialist and a politician who has been a Deputy Secretary-General of the UMP since 2009 and who is known as a leader of the 'debate on national identity', formerly initiated by President Nicolas Sarkozy as a means to win the far right's voters.<sup>226</sup> Together these four narratives make up half (4 out of 8 headlines of Le Nouvel Observateur in 2009) of all the statements about Sarkozy's record and the negative side of the argument outweighs the positive and neutral coverage. (1 headline about Sarkozy has a positive connotation the same year, 3 headlines can be considered as neutral statements).

Additionally to the main issue of the year 2009, Sarkozy as a politician practicing dirty tricks in politics, two minor narratives were presented that year. First of

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<sup>223</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „Les habits neufs du President Sarkozy (Paroles, paroles...les actes suivront-ils ? A-t-il vraiment changé ? Peut-il financer ses réformes ?) Cover page, Issue N°2329 (25 June 2009) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=598105> (accessed 10 March 2013).

<sup>224</sup> In a quarterly interval (March, September, December in 2009)

<sup>225</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „50 ans de coups tordus et de cabinets noirs (La République des tontons flingueurs)“ Cover page, Issue N°2342 (24 September 2009) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=621103> (accessed 10 March 2013).

<sup>226</sup> Besson's image was significantly harmed as a result of the “debate on national identity”, Sarkozy's image suffered as well

all, the French-American relationship was mentioned on a cover page from 2 April 2009 portraying Nicolas Sarkozy together with Barack Obama. The issue of Sarkozy's communication advisors was again reminded in September 2009 as it is obvious from headline: "*L'homme qui parle à l'oreille de Sarko*"<sup>227</sup> (A man who advises to Sarko). Interview with Nicolas Hulot, Sarkozy's advisor in terms of the environmental issues, was mediated by Le Nouvel Observateur.

On the other hand, Le Point's interest lies in Sarkozy's political identification. Sarkozy's affinity to left party coming from the influence of Sarkozy's wife is stressed by Le Point many times over the year 2009. On 15 January 2009, Le Point's cover pages declares: "*La Conscience de Gauche de Sarkozy: Comment elle influence son mari; les confidences de Président sur son épouse*"<sup>228</sup> (The awareness of the Left for Sarkozy: how she influences her husband, confidence of President about his wife). In 2009, Le Point also devotes two of its cover pages to President's son, Jean Sarkozy. One of them from 14 October 2009 states: "*L'Affaire Jean Sarkozy*"<sup>229</sup> (The affair Jean Sarkozy).

In 2010, the narratives as part of Le Nouvel Observateur's cover pages were discussing Sarkozy's intervention into social or environmental policies (pensions in particular) in France, his personal life and family background, rumours about private life of Nicolas Sarkozy and Carla Bruni, and also firstly, on 25 March 2010, Le Nouvel Observateur published the issue whose cover page already mentions the upcoming presidential election in France in 2012 as it represents headline: "*Qui peut battre Sarko?*"<sup>230</sup> (Who can beat Sarko?). However, one of the themes stood out as a major, Sarkozy's personal narrative. The two personal narrative themes that appear to be breaking through to voters are Sarkozy's elitism as he was identified as one fascinated by the rich, power, elites, out of touch with average French, and at the same time he was portrayed as an untrustworthy or even dangerous politician. One headline associated

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<sup>227</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „*L'homme qui parle à l'oreille de Sarko*,“ Cover page, Issue N°2341 (17 September 2009) <http://madeinpresse.fr/le-nouvel-observateur-n2341-83948.html> (accessed 10 March 2013)

<sup>228</sup> Le Point, „*La Conscience de Gauche de Sarkozy; Comment elle influence son mari; les confidences de Président sur son épouse*,“ Cover page, Issue N°1896 (15 January 2009) <http://www.peuples.net/post/Carla-Sarkozy%3A-je-suis-de-gauche-mais...j-ai-un-boulot> (accessed 10 March 2013).

<sup>229</sup> Le Point, „*L'Affaire Jean Sarkozy*,“ Cover page, Issue N°2368 (14 October 2009) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/l-affaire-jean-sarkozy-numero-1935-newsmagazines-16834-13.html> (accessed 10 March 2013)

<sup>230</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „*Qui peut battre Sarko? (Le choix de nos lecteurs)*,“ Cover page, Issue N°2368 (25 March 2010) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=644593> (accessed 10 March 2013).



Sarkozy with a highly mediatized affair, so called 'Karachi gate'<sup>231</sup>. Not surprisingly, mostly negative connotations prevailed in the headlines.

By contrast, *Le Point*'s headlines in 2010 were predominantly dedicated to Sarkozy's unpopularity, a rise of Sarkophobia and political affairs related to President, mainly 'Bettencourt affair'. On 4 November 2010, *Le Point* released an issue titled: "*L'Effet Bettencourt*" (The effect Bettencourt) complemented on subtitle: „*Coups tordus dans la justice; Ce que l'affaire a coûté à l'Elysée; Banier : histoires secrètes d'un grand manipulateur*“<sup>232</sup> (Dirty tricks in justice; how much the affair cost the Elysée; Banier: secret stories of one big manipulator). First signs of Sarkozy's candidature for presidential election in 2012 were noticed in two headlines. Additionally, the relationships Sarkozy-Fillon (President-Prime Minister) and Sarkozy-Chirac (incumbent French presidents and his predecessor) were closely developed.

In 2009 and 2010, one could notice not only decline in number of issues considering Sarkozy as a key theme, but also the change in content and character of narratives. Moreover, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* approached the issue of French president differently, they have chosen their proper agenda and firstly party politics played a role. Giving as example the development of *Le Point*'s cover pages in 2009 when there were doubts about Sarkozy's affinity to left party due to a notable influence of his wife Carla Bruni. Of course, some of the issues were overlapping, such as the one of Sarkozy as a presidential candidate for French presidential election 2012. Both newsmagazines covered various political affairs; however, the choice was different. Bettencourt affair was predominantly stressed by *Le Point*, whereas Karachi gate only by *Le Nouvel Observateur*.

At the beginning of the year 2011, *Le Nouvel Observateur* related two of its cover pages to the issue of Sarkozy and his functioning as centre-right politician. As it is understood from first of them Sarkozy actually helped the extreme-right party to rise.<sup>233</sup> Only in two weeks, Sarkozy was adjudged to lose not only as President of

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<sup>231</sup> Families of the victims killed in the 2002 bomb attack in Pakistan's former capital Karachi have reportedly kick-started a legal campaign against ex-French President Nicolas Sarkozy

<sup>232</sup> *Le Point*, „*Coups tordus dans la justice; Ce que l'affaire a coûté à l'Elysée; Banier : histoires secrètes d'un grand manipulateur*“ 1990, “ Cover page, Issue N°1990 (4 November 2010) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/l-affaire-qui-fait-peur-l-effet-bettencourt-numero-1990-newsmagazines-22000-13.html> (accessed 3 March 2013)

<sup>233</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, „*Le piège, Comment Sarkozy a fait monter le FN*“, Cover page, Issue N°2418 (10 March 2011) <http://www.priceminister.com/image?action=slideshow&imagetype=PRODUCT&prdimageid=874343417&productid=120194647> (accessed 2 March 2013).

France, but predominantly as an UMP politician. However, in 2011, the most prevalent narrative about Sarkozy was the one predicting early end of his political career. Firstly, this narrative appeared in March 2010 when *Le Nouvel Observateur* published an issue whose cover page declaring: “SARK.O.”<sup>234</sup> This play on words demonstrated “the end”<sup>235</sup> of Sarkozy’s political career. Overall, all headlines brought with negative connotations and all in one sense or another summarized Sarkozy’s presidential term will finish soon. The main aim of the headlines was to reveal the reality of Sarkozy’s presidency like the one from 29 September 2011: “*Les coulisses d'une fin de règne*”<sup>236</sup> (The behind the political scene at the end of one reign). By this issue, 'Leftist' journalists of *Le Nouvel Observateur* have made efforts to construct the reality through predictions what enabled them to lead their smear campaign. At the end of this year *Le Nouvel Observateur* already released the issue presenting on its cover page possible Sarkozy’s opponents from the Left-wing party. Two last headlines were talking about Sarkozy as a dirty politician in a similar vein as one could notice in 2010. One of the headlines reminded all affairs Sarkozy was into like Karachi, Bettencourt, Bourgi, Takieddine affairs.<sup>237</sup>

In 2011, *Le Point*’s headlines were predominantly negative in terms of Nicolas Sarkozy. There was a notable trend of headlines bringing the recapitulation of Sarkozy’s years in his leader position. *Le Point*’s headline from 14 April 2011 declared: “*Élysée: tous contre Sarkozy; La chasse est ouvert*” (Elysée: everyone against Sarkozy: Hunting is open) by which journalists predict the early defeat of Sarkozy at the upcoming presidential election. *Le Point*’s editorial team pays attention to numerous personalities from French domestic political scene who were humiliated by Sarkozy during the time of his presidency as demonstrated in the headline issued on 7 April 2011: “*Les Humiliés de Sarkozy: de Borloo à Dati, comment ils préparent leur revanche*”<sup>238</sup> (People humiliated by Sarkozy: from Borloo to Dati, how they prepare their revenge).

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<sup>234</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, „SARK.O.“, Cover page, Issue N°2367 (18 March 2010) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=644592> (accessed 28 March 2013)

<sup>235</sup> K. O. are initial letters of „knock out“

<sup>236</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, „Les coulisses d'une fin de règne,“ Cover page, Issue N°2447 (29 September 2011) <http://madeinpresse.fr/le-nouvel-observateur-n2447-638356.html> (accessed 29 March 2013)

<sup>237</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, „KARACHI; Chirac, Balladur, Sarkozy, Villepin - les dessous du scandale qui secoue la République,“ Cover page, Issue N°2403 (29. September 2011) <http://library.madeinpresse.fr/samples/MPTX0Qw7oG9k-f> (accessed 3 March 2013).

<sup>238</sup> *Le Point*, „Les Humiliés de Sarkozy: de Borloo à Dati, comment ils préparent leur revanche,“ Cover page, Issue N°2024 (30 June 2011) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/les-humilies-de-sarkozy-numero-2024-newsmagazines-25472-13.html> (accessed 3 March 2013).

Last round of headlines in *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* covering Nicolas Sarkozy a central theme, have been issued during the first half of the year 2012.<sup>239</sup> The vast majority of headlines introduced as a key narrative President Nicolas Sarkozy as an incumbent candidate for the next Presidential term. Media narrative regarding horse-race was accompanied with the one summarizing Sarkozy's previous tenure and his character of someone who never gives up as it was clear from the issue of *Le Point* on 29 March 2012: "*L'homme qui ne renonce jamais; l'histoire secrète de sa contre-attaque*" (A man who never gives up; a secret story of his counter-attack). The peak of revelations about the candidates for the presidential office occurred immediately at the beginning of the year when *Le Nouvel Observateur* published an issue with its cover page presenting French presidential candidates as little child dreaming about being the president.<sup>240</sup> Additionally, Sarkozy's advisors were also objects of journalists' attention due to the fact that Sarkozy's communication advisors have had a significant impact on Sarkozy's way of leadership during 2007-2012.

### **5.1.2 Headline language connotations**

In a look across the headlines and the connotations they bring with, in sum, 64.18 % of assertions about Sarkozy in *Le Point* were negative, in comparison with 26.87 % which were considered as neutral and only 8.96 % of headlines have been presenting Sarkozy in a positive way. (see Table 5)

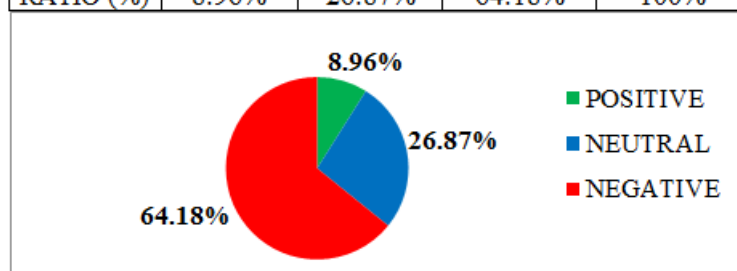
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<sup>239</sup> The analysed period was limited by the date of the presidential election in 2012; the last analysed headline was the one from 3 May 2012.

<sup>240</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, „L'enfance des chefs (Exclusif: « Je serai président »)“, Cover page, Issue N°2461 (5 January 2012) <http://www.priceminister.com/image?action=slideshow&imagetype=PRODUCT&prdimageid=924062721&productid=154274500> (accessed 3 March 2013).

Table 5: Connotation of Sarkozy's narratives in Le Point

	POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	SUM
2007	1	4	3	8
2008	1	7	9	17
2009	1	3	9	13
2010	0	0	14	14
2011	2	2	5	9
2012	1	2	3	6
SUM	6	18	43	67
RATIO (%)	8.96%	26.87%	64.18%	100%



Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

Negative themes related to Sarkozy outnumbered positive and neutral in Le Point. In fact, the most negative period is in the middle of Sarkozy's presidential term, 14 out of 43 negative cover pages were registered in 2010. The portrayal of Nicolas Sarkozy was more negative not only for single theme. First of all, Le Point's character narratives about Sarkozy were portrayed negatively when approaching Sarkozy as indestructible monarch, often compared to his predecessors as proves the headline from 8 January 2009: *“Nicolas Bonaparte: les Ressemblances qui intriguent ou amusent ; Des extraits de « La marche consulaire d'Alain Duhamel » ; La satire de Patrick Rambaud, autour de la « Deuxième chronique du règne de Nicolas I.,<sup>241</sup> (Nicolas Bonaparte: the similarities that intrigue or amuse; the extracts from 'consular work' of Alain Duhamel; the satire of Patrick Rambaud, the author of the 'chronicle of reign of Nicolas I.'). Secondly, overall disenchantment with Sarkozy's leadership and his approach to domestic politics gave the idea to many headlines elaborated by Le Point. Coming from Sarkozy's most negative coverage, the headline issued on 25 March 2010 was stated as: *“La Tragédie de Sarkozy: histoire d'un désamour; pourra-t-il se représenter en 2012;**

<sup>241</sup> Le Point, “Nicolas Bonaparte; Les Ressemblances qui intriguent ou amusent, Des extraits de « La marche consulaire d'Alain Duhamel », La satire de Patrick Rambaud, autour de la « Deuxième chronique du règne de Nicolas I.,” Cover page. Issue N°1895 (8 January 2009) <http://www.priceminister.com/offer/buy/75725235/Le-Point-N-1895-Nicolas-Bonaparte-Les-Ressemblances-Qui-Intriguent-Ou-Amusent-Revue.html> (accessed 4 November 2012)

*deux ans pour sa refaire*<sup>242</sup> (The tragedy of Sarkozy: history of disenchantment; will he be presented in 2012 election, 2 years to be reborn). The other important source of Sarkozy's negative performance in the Le Point's cover pages was his connection to political affairs, such as the one including Liliane Bettencourt, etc.

Every year (with the only exception of the year 2010) Le Point's headline portrayed Sarkozy positively. 5 out of 6 positive headlines were narratives about Sarkozy's character as it can be seen on 17 February 2011 when Le Point released an issue saying: „*L'incroyable: Pourquoi il y croit toujours; le récit de trois mois meurtriers; ce qu'il dit en privé*“<sup>243</sup> (The Indestructible: Why he believes he still has chance; A story of three crucial months; What he says in private) or on 29 March 2012: „*L'homme qui ne renonce jamais: l'histoire secrète de sa contre-attaque*“<sup>244</sup> (A man who never gives up: a secret story of his counter-attack). Last mentioned headline belongs to the last period of Sarkozy's presidential term, first half year of 2012, when there was a mobilization around the least worst candidate, Nicolas Sarkozy, who tended to neutralize the negative image.

Neutral headlines were mostly those introducing facts about Sarkozy's way of leadership, investigation on the life of the President without journalist's aim to frame it in order to attract more readers. For example, on 6 December 2007 Le Point released the following headline: „*Enquête sur l'état Sarkozy: Train de Vie, Résidences, Voyages, Nominations*“<sup>245</sup> (Investigation about Sarkozy's state: lifestyle, residences, travels, nominations).

Majority of what France's readers could hear about Nicolas Sarkozy coming from Le Nouvel Observateur over the selected period of time had a negative connotation (64.41 %) (see Table 6). The headlines with negative connotation in relation to the President were outreaching neutral (30.51 %) and positive (5.08 %) messages.

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<sup>242</sup> Le Point, „La Tragédie de Sarkozy: histoire d'un désamour; pourra-t-il se représenter en 2012; deux ans pour sa refaire,“ Cover page, Issue N°1958 (25 March 2010) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/la-tragedie-de-sarkozy-numero-1958-newsmagazines-18964-13.html> (accessed 1 March 2013).

<sup>243</sup> Le Point, „L'incroyable: Pourquoi il y croit toujours; le récit de trois mois meurtriers; ce qu'il dit en privé,“ Cover page, Issue N°2005 (17 February 2011) Available from: <http://www.relay.com/le-point/l-incroyable-numero-2005-newsmagazines-23465-13.html> (accessed 3 March 2013).

<sup>244</sup> Le Point, „L'homme qui ne renonce jamais: l'histoire secrète de sa contre-attaque,“ Cover page, Issue N°2063 (29 March 2012) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/l-homme-qui-ne-renonce-jamais-numero-2063-newsmagazines-33931-13.html> (accessed 3 March 2013).

<sup>245</sup> Le Point, „Enquête sur l'état Sarkozy: Train de Vie, Résidences, Voyages, Nominations“ Cover page, Issue N°1838 (6 December 2007) <http://www.relay.com/le-point/-numero-1838-newsmagazines-5276-13.html> (accessed 3 March 2013).

Table 6: Connotation of Sarkozy's narratives in Le Nouvel Observateur

	POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	SUM
2007	0	5	4	9
2008	0	3	11	14
2009	1	3	4	8
2010	0	3	8	11
2011	0	1	8	9
2012	2	3	3	8
SUM	3	18	38	59
RATIO (%)	5.08%	30.51%	64.41%	100%

A pie chart illustrating the distribution of connotations for Sarkozy's narratives. The chart is divided into three segments: a large red segment representing 'NEGATIVE' at 64.41%, a blue segment representing 'NEUTRAL' at 30.51%, and a small green segment representing 'POSITIVE' at 5.08%. A legend to the right of the chart identifies the colors: green for POSITIVE, blue for NEUTRAL, and red for NEGATIVE.

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

Negative themes related to Sarkozy were mostly concentrated during Sarkozy's first and second year of presidency (in 2008). The other way of negativism addressed by Le Nouvel Observateur arrived in 2010 and 2011. Some of the themes considered as negative were similar to those by Le Point, such as considering Sarkozy as an unstoppable leader who is not afraid of anything or anyone. This Sarkozy's feature is demonstrated in the headline from 20 September 2007 where is Sarkozy titled as "*Le Président Cannibale*"<sup>246</sup> (The president Sarkozy, cannibal.). Moreover, Le Nouvel Observateur meets the other theme also covered by Le Point, and so, Sarkozy's leadership and his approach to politics as it was found in the headline from 19 June 2008 "*Sarko La Poisse: Il attendait la croissance, le pouvoir d'achat, et ...l'Europe*"<sup>247</sup> (Sarko bad luck: he expected the growth, the purchasing power and ....Europe).

<sup>246</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „Le président cannibale (Pourquoi il avale François Fillon, court-circuite ses ministres, fait la leçon à Angela Merkel et à l'Europe entière,“ Cover page, Issue N°2237 (20 September 2007) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=523555> (accessed 3 February 2013).

<sup>247</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, „Sarko La Poisse: Il attendait la croissance, le pouvoir d'achat, et ...l'Europe,“ Issue N°2276 (19 June 2008) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=547238> (accessed 2 February 2013).

Throughout the year 2009, Sarkozy is repeatedly related to unfair political practices as cronyism or revolving door policy which obviously brings the negative connotation to headline. On 5 March 2009, *Le Nouvel Observateur*'s headline was saying: "*Le système Sarkozy: Copinage, Pantouflage, fait du prince: ce que révèle l'affaire Péro!*"<sup>248</sup> (The system Sarkozy: connections, 'revolving door', act of government: what reveals the affair). Sarkozy's links to media proprietors was grateful source to elaborate on Sarkozy in a negative way.

In both newsmagazines, the highest ratio of Sarkozy's presentation in negative language was noticed in 2008. Referring in absolute numbers, 17 out of 67 cover pages were bringing the negative headlines and sub headlines about Sarkozy in 2008 through *Le Point*; and 14 out of 59 *Le Nouvel Observateur*'s cover pages were portraying the president Sarkozy negatively in 2008.

The way Sarkozy is portrayed, to great extent, is affected by subjective factors, and so the political ideology of specific media and a concrete persons, journalists and editors. The imbalance in the ratio of negative, neutral and positive narratives for Nicolas Sarkozy is equally obvious in both newsmagazines no matter political leaning. Both newsmagazines coming from different political ideology background where scored nearly identically in terms of negative connotations, 64.18% (*Le Point*) and 64.41 % (*Le Nouvel Observateur*). The overall coverage presenting Nicolas Sarkozy in a positive way was minor in both newsmagazines; six cover pages in *Le Point* against three cover pages in *Le Nouvel Observateur*. However, one must have noticed that *Le Nouvel Observateur* placed 2 out of 3 positive headlines in the last year of Sarkozy's presidential term, close to the presidential election 2013. This is surprising finding considering the political identification of the newsmagazine. Understanding the consequences of particular cover pages portraying Sarkozy positively, the power of positive notion is reduced in at least one of *Le Point*'s headlines since it belongs to the category of messages portraying Sarkozy indirectly because it introduces all presidential candidates for the upcoming election in 2012, including Nicolas Sarkozy and three other candidates.

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<sup>248</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, "Le système Sarkozy: Copinage, Pantouflage, fait du prince: ce que révèle l'affaire Péro!" Cover page, "Issue N°2313 (5 March 2009) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=583831> (accessed 4 November 2012).

### 5.1.3 Journalists language

As discussed above, in Chapter 4: Methodology, the journalists adopt several ways in which they tend to describe a figure of Nicolas Sarkozy. First of all, it must be decided in how many headlines was Sarkozy mentioned in words (in any variation) and on the other hand, in how many headlines a name of Sarkozy was not used at all. The selection resulted in creation of two main categories. Firstly, Sarkozy was not mentioned in words, 40% (27 out of 67) in terms of Le Point headlines, 46% (27 out of 59) considering only headlines of Le Nouvel Observateur. The rest of the headlines were mentioned a name of Sarkozy as follows: a surname ('Sarkozy'), a full name ('Nicolas Sarkozy'), a nick name ('Sarko', 'American', etc.), and a position ('a President' or 'President Sarkozy') (See Table 7)

Table 7: Journalist expressions in relation to Nicolas Sarkozy

<b>Journalists language</b>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
Surname (Sarkozy)	25	19
Full name (Nicolas Sarkozy)	2	1
Nick name (Sarko; "American", etc.)	8	7
Function (President or President Sarkozy)	5	5
Not mentioned in words	27	27
<b>SUM</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>59</b>

*Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis*

Journalist intervention was noticed when approaching Sarkozy's name. He was presented with his surname in 37% of cases (25 out of 67) in Le Point and in 32% of cases (19 out of 59) in Le Nouvel Observateur. In contrast with a minor representation of Sarkozy's full name (two headlines in Le Point, and only one headline in Le Nouvel Observateur). The equal result was brought in terms of defining Sarkozy's function (five headlines per each newsmagazine). Quite a few headlines have been portraying Nicolas Sarkozy with some nick name, eight headlines in Le Point and seven headlines in Le Nouvel Observateur. The most frequently used nick name was 'Sarko', used in three headlines in some alternation in Le Point and five times in Le Nouvel Observateur.

### 5.1.4 Nicolas Sarkozy's roles

A list of media frames was introduced in previous chapter (Chapter 3: Image Projection). It defined different types of frames, such as 'strategic game frame', a



'conflict frame', a 'horse race frame' or an individual politician as a frame. This research considers that a vast majority of cover pages considering Sarkozy a central theme are more likely to be politician-centred frames where a former French president plays a key role. However, a frame portraying him as an individual politician can be further divided; for instance, according to the roles in which the president is presented. Main categorization distinguishes between a politician, a celebrity (Sarkozy portrayed with the members of his family, or at places which are not typical for a role of the President, etc.), and a personality (meaning that Sarkozy's character is preferable to political agenda; it is a moment when a political personality becomes a centre of the attention). Moreover, the research is also interested in subcategories understanding Sarkozy's political role as a public official (President), or a partisan (a former leader of UMP, a right-wing politician, or a presidential candidate). In terms of a celebrity role, subcategories include roles of a husband or a father. Lastly, a role of personality described Sarkozy's personal qualities, such as tireless, ambitious, omnipresent, hyperactive, etc.

To begin with the observation of Sarkozy's roles discussed in the headlines of *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*. *Le Point* portrayed Nicolas Sarkozy as a politician in 57% (38 out of 67); compared to a role of celebrity or personality that were equally registered in 9% of cases a news magazine (6 out of 67). *Le Nouvel Observateur* attributed him a role of a politician in 66% of cases (39 out of 59), but comparably much lower scores were noticed in terms of Sarkozy's role as a celebrity, 1.7% (only 1 cover) and his portrayal as a personality in 5% of cases (3 out of 59). By contrast with Sarkozy possessing one role, there were few cases which could prove the fact that the boundaries between private and public life are diminishing in France. Both newsmagazines have been presenting Sarkozy in three different combinations, a politician – personality, a politician – celebrity, politician - celebrity – personality. In sum, *Le Point* noticed any kind of combination in 25% of cases (17 out of 67) from those a majority (12 headlines) were portraying Sarkozy at the same time as a politician and a personality. Two headlines of *Le Point* mixed up with a role of politician and a role of celebrity. Three headlines of *Le Point* portrayed him all three roles at the same time. *Le Nouvel Observateur* scored similarly to its competitive newsmagazine. In total, the combined headlines counted on 27% of cases (16 out of 59), from those were 11 headlines mixing up with Sarkozy's roles of a politician and a personality; 4 headlines

as a politician and a celebrity and the only one headline included the attributes of Sarkozy as a politician, a celebrity and a personality at the same moment. (See Table 8)

Table 8: Sarkozy's roles

<i>Roles of Sarkozy</i>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
<b>POLITICIAN</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>
President	40	38
Incumbent president, presidential candidate	11	6
Partisan	3	2
President + Husband	2	4
President + Partisan	5	4
President + Husband + Partisan	1	0
Husband + Partisan	1	0
<b>CELEBRITY</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
Husband	2	1
Father	2	0
Others	0	3
<b>PERSONALITY</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Politician + Celebrity + Personality</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Politician + Personality</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Politician + Celebrity</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>COMBINATION</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>SUM</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>59</b>

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

Undoubtedly, the most explored category was related to Sarkozy's role as a politician. Concretely, Le Point has portrayed Sarkozy mostly as a president or public officer (40 headlines or 60%), followed by a role of a presidential candidate (11 headlines), a partisan (3 headlines) and multiplied role of president-partisan (5 headlines). Additionally, Le Point headlines offered combinations of Sarkozy's roles across categories, such as president-husband (2 headlines), partisan-husband (1 headline), and president-partisan-husband (1 headline). Celebrity roles of Sarkozy were much less represented since Le Point portrayed Sarkozy twice as a husband and twice as a father.

Le Nouvel Observateur portrayed Sarkozy in a role of a president in 64 % cases (38 headlines). A combination of Sarkozy's presidential role with a role of partisan was include in 4 headlines which was equally times as in terms of a combination president-husband. Sarkozy was represented solely as a partisan only two cases by Le Nouvel Observateur. In respect of a category Sarkozy as a celebrity, this newsmagazine mentioned him as a husband in only headline, any of the headlines was focused on Sarkozy's role as a father. (see Table 8)

With regards to subcategories distinguishing specific roles that Sarkozy possessed in headlines of Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur; French journalists did

not hesitate to interpret the message where was Sarkozy identified in multiple roles; a politician, a celebrity, a personality. It means that the boundaries between private and public life in terms of media projection of a politician's image are diminishing in contemporary France. French electorates do not accept it positively. French were used to receive political news based on a political situation in France rather than on private life of politician. The combination of different roles of Nicolas Sarkozy could result in confusion about legitimacy of Nicolas Sarkozy's role as a president.

### 5.1.5 Media frames

Of the messages about Sarkozy, during the time of his presidency, Le Point's most prevalent frame related to Sarkozy was 'a politician as an individual' portraying him with some personal qualities, in 25% of cases (17 out of 67). The most used Sarkozy's character qualities portrayed by newsmagazine have been that he is a an ambitious leader and omnipresent politician who craves for having even more power and benefits that presidential post could offer to him. On the other hand, Le Nouvel Observateur has issued cover pages in 25% of cases (15 out of 59) with a majority theme 'Sarkozy and his presidential and/or political strategy' followed by a 'sensational frame' (13 headlines) mentioning scandals or affairs, such as Bettencourt Affair, KARACHI Gate. Those headlines were distributed equally in both news magazines, in 5 headlines per each analysed news magazine. (see Table 9)

Table 9: Contextual media frames

<i>Contextual media frames</i>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
<b>Sensational</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>
Affairs, Scandals (Bettencourt affair, etc.)	5	5
Revelations about Sarkozy, Secrets	3	4
<b>Celebrity</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>
Divorce with Cecilia	1	2
Life with Carla	5	2
Jean Sarkozy	2	0
<b>Political Strategy</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Politician as individual</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>
Powerful, omnipresent, ambitious	7	5
<b>News Management</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Horse race</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
Francois Hollande	3	0
<b>Conflict</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Historical</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SUM</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>59</b>

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

The second important theme included in sensational frame was the one with headlines portraying any kind of revelation or secret story about Sarkozy revealed either on his own or by second part (journalists, politicians, Sarkozy's communication advisors). Celebrity frame goes hand in hand with a previous subchapter presenting the roles of Sarkozy employed by *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*. Generally, the celebrity frame was mostly used in order to highlight Sarkozy's relationship with Carla Bruni in comparison with theme of Sarkozy's divorce with Cecilia at the beginning of the presidential term. However, it must be considered that Carla Bruni was presented alongside her husband Sarkozy over nearly his whole presidential term. Also, the issue of Sarkozy's son Jean, his political activities and mutual cooperation in a way 'father-son' was underrepresented, in particular, only *Le Point* incorporated this issue in 2 out of 67 headlines. Among other observed frames, the media coverage of selected newsmagazines was quite active in the employment of horse race frame (however, it was noticed only close to the presidential election in France in 2012). In order to frame these headlines, *Le Point*, associated 3 headlines to a person of François Hollande, and so to a relationship Sarkozy-Hollande. *Le Nouvel Observateur* did not pay attention to such a relationship and rather presented Sarkozy in contrast with the other presidential candidates.

Other frames were entitled as news management, conflict frame and historical frame. First of them, news management will be closely developed still later in this chapter. Thus, let us move to conflict frame. *Le Point* has scored quite high (6 headlines) concerning a portrayal of Sarkozy being in conflict with 'others'. Others can be defined as other politicians, respectively Sarkozy's Prime Minister François Fillon, or Dominique de Villepin (a former Prime Minister who served under Jacques Chirac's presidency. Moreover, a headline was classified as a conflict frame in terms of Sarkozy's conflicts with French citizens, officers, general public. One of the headlines described Sarkozy's unpopular interventions to domestic politics that brought a wave of indignation among state employees and consequently strikes in November 2007.

Journalists quite frequently used a historical frame (5 times in *Le Point*'s headlines and 3 times in *Le Nouvel Observateur* headlines) to shape President Sarkozy. In most of the cases, journalists' intention was to compare Sarkozy with past leaders like Jacques Chirac or Napoleon Bonaparte and their way of leadership in contrast with Sarkozy's qualities as leader.

### 5.1.6 Visual portrayal

The other part of the research analyses the visual part of the analysed cover pages in closer detail. First categorization was tending to provide the analysis of the composition of the photograph; secondly, technical parameters of the photograph or visual part of cover page will be analysed. In order to stress the Sarkozy-centeredness, the editorial teams of *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* were capturing the cover pages as follows: those that offer the visual portrayal of Nicolas Sarkozy exclusively; those that cover at least some political figure if not Sarkozy himself; those that demonstrate the visual portrayal of Sarkozy together with other political figure; and two last options considered the options that Sarkozy is portrayed with everyone but political figure; or there is no political figure on cover. (See Table 10)

Table 5.16: Visual portrayal: Who is captured on the cover?

<i>Visual portrayal: Who is captured on the cover?</i>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
Only Sarkozy	34	25
Sarkozy with other political figure	9	12
Sarkozy with everyone but political figure	4	10
Sarkozy with both political and not a political figure/s	2	1
Political figure/s but Sarkozy	7	4
No political figure	11	7
SUM	67	59

*Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis*

The majority of cover pages were portraying only Sarkozy, 51 % (34 out of 67) in *Le Point* and 42 % (25 out of 59) in *Le Nouvel Observateur* followed by cover pages capturing Sarkozy with other political figure 13 % in *Le Point* and 20 % in *Le Nouvel Observateur*. *Le Point* have projected Sarkozy two times François Fillon, two times with Nicolas Hollande, and only once with Dominique Villepin, Cohn-Bendit, Claude Guéant and Dominique Strauss-Kahn. On the other hand *Le Nouvel Observateur* projected him twice with Marine Le Pen, twice with all the presidential candidates of French election in 2012, once with Barack Obama, Claude Guéant, Édouard Balladur, Henri Guaino and François Pérol.

The technical parameters of photographs are able to complement photograph's composition and to highlight the importance of Nicolas Sarkozy and to frame him. Facial expression of Nicolas Sarkozy was reconsidered and evaluated as positive, negative, or neutral. The results revealed that similar amount of cover pages capturing

Sarkozy's face in the positive way (happy, content) and negative way (sad, angry, concerned, etc.).

Table 11: Visual portrayal of cover pages (technical parameters)

<b>Facial expression</b>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
positive	12	11
negative	14	11
neutral	9	11
not visible	14	14
Sarkozy not present on cover	18	12
<b>SUM</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>The way how the shot is taken</b>		
<b>The way how the shot is taken</b>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
Close shot	22	15
Medium shot	19	19
Long shot	6	8
Carricature/Drawing	1	1
Sillouette	1	4
Sarkozy not present on cover	18	12
<b>SUM</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>The style of cover page</b>		
<b>The style of cover page</b>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
Sarkozy in real scenario	20	17
No real scenario	20	13
Methaphor	9	17
Sarkozy not present on cover	18	12
<b>SUM</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>59</b>

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

Three cover pages of Le Nouvel Observateur and Le Point portraying Sarkozy in different positions were selected for closer qualitative analysis.

First cover page issued by Le Nouvel Observateur in September 2010.<sup>249</sup> From the visual point of view, designers were very creative when preparing this cover page. It is done in the style of “wanted” as he would be “jailbird”. The author of cover page intentionally did not mention Sarkozy’s name and rather used neutral statement “*Cet homme est-il dangereux?*” (Is this man dangerous?) There are only three colours; black and white mode is accompanied with red color



which in an aggressive way poses the question about Nicolas Sarkozy positioned right in the middle of the page, so it covers politician’s nose. The Sarkozy’s face should attract the viewers, so it is pictured in the largest way possible. Therefore, the name of the newspaper has to be spread on Sarkozy’s forehead.



What catch the reader’s eyes first on the second cover page, issued by Le Point during Sarkozy’s second year of presidency (January 2009)<sup>250</sup>, is possibly not picture of Sarkozy represented in Napoleon Bonaparte’s uniform, but big yellow letters saying 'Nicolas Bonaparte', it is a combination of both names (Nicolas Sarkozy, Napoleon Bonaparte) to even more stress the similarities in character of two compared persons and amuse the viewers. The colour palette used on this cover is limited, no brightening colours except for the

mentioned yellow title to give stand out this information. The picture captures Nicolas Sarkozy in the very centre of this shot, even if the larger part of him is covered by the dominating title and it summarizes what the reader can find inside the magazine. However, the rest of writing is done in not disturbing way to not take away the attention

<sup>249</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, “Cet homme est-il dangereux ?” Cover page. Issue N°2392 (9 September 2010) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=667306> (accessed 4 November 2012)

<sup>250</sup> Le Point, “Nicolas Bonaparte; Les Ressemblances qui intriguent ou amusent, Des extraits de « La marche consulaire d’Alain Duhamel », La satire de Patrick Rambaud, autour de la « Deuxième chronique du règne de Nicolas I, ” Cover page. Issue N°1895 (8 January 2009) <http://www.priceminister.com/offer/buy/75725235/Le-Point-N-1895-Nicolas-Bonaparte-Les-Ressemblances-Qui-Intriguent-Ou-Amusent-Revue.html> (accessed 4 November 2012)

of the main title. Sarkozy has a strict facial expression and his face is slightly turned right so he does not keep the eye contact with viewer, rather he is looking away. It is expected that this manoeuvre was done by designers of the picture to stress the authenticity and similarity in the characters of Sarkozy and Napoleon.

Third cover page was issued by Le Nouvel Observateur in February 2008.<sup>251</sup> For the visual part, the colour palette used on this cover is limited, no brightening colours except for the word “*pschitt*” which is written in red to give stand out the main important information. The picture portrays Nicolas Sarkozy and his 'new' wife Carla Bruni walking hand in hand and captioned from the back site. A couple is centred in the middle of the page as it is common front cover news pages. The colour of title and the colour of



picture seem to compliment. Designers tried to be consistent when creating the cover to let stand out the main argument of this cover. Three dots kept in red font are there to invite readers to complement the phrase and come up with their conclusions. It may also indicate, you find the information inside the newspaper, so it may motivate readers to keep reading and elaborate on the issue.

### 5.1.7 News management

However, Nicolas Sarkozy’s news management activities have been projected indirectly; some of the features summarized in the model of Mancini and Negrini in Chapter 2 were noticed in headlines discussion Nicolas Sarkozy in Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur.<sup>252</sup> Two features of Sarkozy’s media strategy were portrayed in Le Nouvel Observateur in 2007. First of all, Sarkozy’s close links to the owners of mainstream commercial media outlets, for instance, it was stressed in first analysed issue of Le Nouvel Observateur, right after he has become the president of France. Among others, the headline attracts readers of this issue of newsmagazine to reveal

<sup>251</sup> Le Nouvel Observateur, “Le président qui fait pschitt...,” Cover page. Issue N°2257 (7 February 2008) <http://www.journaux-collection.com/fiche.php?id=529647> (accessed 2 November 2012).

<sup>252</sup> Paolo Mancini, Ralph Negrine, Christina Holtz-Bacha, and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, *The Professionalization of Political Communication*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007).



Sarkozy's connection to 'big bosses'. Secondly, Sarkozy's reliance on having communication advisors, such as the example of the cover page from 15 November 2007: „*Henri Guaino, Le gourou du président*”<sup>253</sup> (Henri Guaino, a guru of the president). Henri Guaino was Sarkozy's speechwriter and special adviser (from the beginning of his presidency until Sarkozy's defeat in May 2012). In 2008, Sarkozy's news management activities were discussed in the only one cover pages of *Le Nouvel Observateur*. The most numerous year 2008 in terms of number of cover pages with Sarkozy as a central figure, brought with only one cover page presenting the issue of Sarkozy who keeps fostering his links with influential people in France. (see Table 12)

Table 12: Sarkozy news management activities covered by *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*

<i>Sarkozy's news management activities covered by...</i>	<b>Le Point</b>	<b>Le Nouvel Observateur</b>
Sarkozy and communication advisors	0	4
Links with owners of media outlets	1	3
Reassertion of political control over public broadcasting	1	0
Fostering of relations with political journalists	0	0
Initiatives designed to occupy media space	0	0
<b>SUM</b>	2	7

Source: author's own elaboration on a basis of quantitative analysis

<sup>253</sup> *Le Nouvel Observateur*, “Henri Guaino, Le gourou du président,” Cover page. Issue N°2245 (15 November 2007) <http://www.amazon.fr/NOUVEL-OBSERVATEUR-2245-2007-PRESIDENT/dp/B004EBP9K2> (accessed 1 March 2013)

## 6. CONCLUSION

To evaluate the results of both quantitative and qualitative analysis, Sarkozy's media coverage during his presidency term might be divided into two periods: 'Sarkozy: a sold product' and 'Sarkozy: perishable'.

### 6.1 Sarkozy: a sold product

First of all, the media attention given to Sarkozy is the highest shortly after he was appointed. Nicolas Sarkozy became omnipresent at newsstands. There was no noticeable difference between left and right newspapers on the frequency of issued cover pages. It means, the newspapers did not employ their political identification but more importantly they employed the marketing strategy of bringing readers a 'new product' until the market was saturated. In marketing terms, Sarkozy became an object of fascination, a very well sold product and a guarantee of high circulation for news media assuming the marketing strategy of *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* was employed. The amount of cover pages of analysed news magazines conveying messages related to the person of Nicolas Sarkozy was, 56% (*Le Point*) and 58% (*Le Nouvel Observateur*) in a category of 'French politics'; or 26% (*Le Point*) and 23% (*Le Nouvel Observateur*) from a total coverage over the analysed period of Sarkozy's presidency (May 2007 – May 2012).

Whereas, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* were benefiting from a well-chosen strategy of focusing on Nicolas Sarkozy, his omnipresence was surely part of the activities led by Sarkozy himself and his team of communication advisors at the Elysée. Sarkozy's news management activities as well as his image projection proved the fact he understood the importance of public communication in order to shape public perceptions.

The phrase 'hypervisible president' could be used to summarize Sarkozy's media image over the time of his presidential term. However, overexposure alone, could not necessarily lead to the phenomenon of 'Sarkophobia' unless the image is shaped by media in a way that brings a profit for the politician. The quantitative analysis confirmed the opposite trend.

## 6.2 Sarkozy: perishable

Sarkozy's second and third years of presidency were accompanied by the negative coverage from the part of the analysed news magazines, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*. The imbalance in the ratio of negative, neutral and positive narratives for Nicolas Sarkozy is equally obvious in both newsmagazines regardless of their political leaning. Both newsmagazines coming from different political stances where scored nearly identically in terms of negative connotations, 64.18% (*Le Point*) and 64.41% (*Le Nouvel Observateur*). In both newsmagazines, the highest ratio of Sarkozy's presentation in negative language was noticed in 2008 which can be explained by the change of the top master narrative in 2007 which was Sarkozy all-powerful and omnipresent due to his desire to influence everyone in France to the one in 2008, Sarkozy unpopular due to his implementation of Sarkozy's domestic policy.

In 2009 and 2010, one could notice not only decline in the number of issues having Sarkozy as a key theme, but also the change in content and character of narratives. Moreover, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* approached the issue of French president differently, they have chosen their own agenda and firstly party politics played a role in the way of shaping Sarkozy as a partisan. Giving as an example the development of *Le Point*'s cover pages in 2009 when there were doubts about Sarkozy's affinity to the left party due to a notable influence of his wife Carla Bruni. Both newsmagazines gave some space for political affairs which Sarkozy was linked to. In 2011 and 2012, again, news magazines benefited from the hype around the presidential election and were releasing more issues related to presidential candidates in order to increase profit and sell more products.

Moreover, the demand of the French public for information about the intimate lives of their politicians was noticed over Sarkozy's presidential period (2007-2012). Referring the quantity of issues portraying Sarkozy in the only role, either as a celebrity, *Le Point* (9%) and *Le Nouvel Observateur* (1.7%) and Sarkozy's role of a politician, *Le Point* (57%), *Le Nouvel Observateur* (66%)<sup>254</sup>, there were noticed few cases portraying Sarkozy in a multiple role: a politician – personality, a politician – celebrity, politician – celebrity – personality. Regarding image projection it is now apparent that the previously well delineated boundary between public and private spheres no longer

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<sup>254</sup> The rest of the cover pages portrayed Sarkozy as a „personality“

exists in France, neither in politicians' controlled communication nor in political journalism.<sup>255</sup>

The combination of private and public life of a politician is a very new phenomenon in contemporary France which could also lead to the confusion among French electorate.

### **6.3 'Sarkophobia'**

Towards the end of his presidential term, Sarkozy's main focus was to improve his damaged reputation. Despite the proactive news management activities run by Sarkozy, his media image was largely driven by factors outside of his control, such as the French media's portrayals of him, respectively *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* French news magazines. This included the usage of sensationalised material in order to focus on the President's private life (either independently<sup>256</sup> or in combination with the political field), which has led to gradual elimination of the borders between the private and public life of politician, projected by the French media. The bad reputation arose partially as the response to the overexposure of Sarkozy in the French media, shaping his image in a vast majority of cases in a negative way - referring to the analysis of language connotation of news magazines headlines.

Sarkozy presented himself as a modern communicator, centred on his image. It has been observed that the engaging look of Nicolas Sarkozy has played an important role, especially, for right-wing news magazine *Le Point* that has been portraying as 'a politician as an individual' in 25% of its headlines. And so, the rise of Sarkophobia could be partly a result of the French media presenting Sarkozy's personal characteristics. The prevailing image was the one defined as 'le président bling-bling', the omnipresent, and the president in need of showing off. It has brought further negativity in relation to the name of Nicolas Sarkozy, as the French dislike the celebrity like behaviour of their politicians. These factors in conjunction with Sarkozy's failure to resolve pressing domestic problems and unfair political practices resulted in the critical projection by the French media.

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<sup>255</sup> Kuhn, Raymond. "Les médias, c'est moi." President Sarkozy and news media management." *French Politics*, no. 8 (2010), doi:10.1057/fp.2010.18.

<sup>256</sup> Cover pages portraying Sarkozy purely as a celebrity

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## 9. LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS

Graph 1: Trustability of Nicolas Sarkozy during the presidential term (06/2007-05/2012)

Graph 2: The least liked presidents in France (popularity of French presidents from the start of their office; % polled)

Graph 3: Communication channels used by French voters to follow the presidential election in 2012

Graph 4: Nicolas Sarkozy's 'direct' and 'indirect' coverage in Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur.

Graph 5: Occurrence of headlines discussing Sarkozy in Le Point and Le Nouvel Observateur in the period 2007-2012 (absolute values, interval of half a year).

Table 1: Presidential candidate's image

Table 2: Le Point News Coverage from May 2007 to May 2012

Table 3: Le Nouvel Observateur News Coverage from May 2007 to May 2012

Table 4: Others but political issues covered by Le Nouvel Observateur and Le Point

Table 5: Connotation of Sarkozy's narratives in Le Point

Table 6: Connotation of Sarkozy's narratives in Le Nouvel Observateur

Table 7: Journalist expressions in relation to Nicolas Sarkozy

Table 8: Sarkozy's roles

Table 9: Contextual media frames

Table 10: Visual portrayal: Who is captured on the cover?

Table 11: Visual portrayal of cover pages (technical parameters)

Table 12: Sarkozy news management activities covered by Le Point and Le Nouvel

Observateur

## 10. ANNEXES

Headlines issued in Le Point 24 May 2007 - 26 April 2012

Issue N°	Issue date			Headline (Subheadline)	
	Day	Month	Year	French	English
1810	24	May	2007	<i>Enquête sur le système Sarkozy</i>	The investigation on the Sarkozy's system
1818	19	July	2007	<i>Super-Sarko (En fait-il trop?)</i>	Super-Sarko - does he do too much?
1823	23	August	2007	<i>(Les coulisses d'un système) Sarkozy (vu par Yasmina Reza)</i>	Behind the scene of the Sarkozy's system (as it is seen by Yasmina Reza)
1826	13	September	2007	<i>Les "Amis" de Sarkozy (Ses vraies relations avec Martin Bouygues, Arnaud Lagardère, Vincent Bolloré, Anne Lauvergeon, Serge Dassault, et les autres)</i>	The "Friends" of Sarkozy (his real relations with Martin Bouygues, Arnaud Lagardere, Vincent Bollore, Anne Lauvergeon, Serge Dassault and the others)
1828	27	September	2007	<i>Gouvernement: Histoires secrètes des premiers couacs</i>	Government: Secret stories of the first hiccups
1830	11	October	2007	<i>Enquête sur le cas Rama Yade (Pourquoi Sarkozy mise sur elle)</i>	About the case of Rama Yade: Why Sarkozy puts on her?
1832	25	October	2007	<i>La Solitude du Président</i>	The loneliness of the President
1838	6	December	2007	<i>Enquête sur l'état Sarkozy (Train de Vie, Résidences, Voyages, Nominations)</i>	Investigation about Sarkozy's state (Lifestyle, residences, travels, nominations)
1843	10	January	2008	<i>L'Acrobate (Le style, Carla Bruni, Les riches, Pouvoir d'achat)</i>	The acrobat (the style, Carla Bruni, the rich, purchasing power)
1844	17	January	2008	<i>(Le Sarkozysme, est-il une monarchie?) La Cour (Notre enquête et des extraits de « Chronique du règne de Nicolas Ier » de Patrick Rambaud)</i>	(Sarkozysm - is it a monarchy?) Courtyard (Our investigation and the extracts from "chronicle of reign of Nicolas I." of Patrick Rambaud)?
1847	7	February	2008	<i>Ce qui cloche?(L'histoire d'un décrochage, les gamberges de l'Elysée, les analyses de Jean François Kahn, Alain Finkielkraut et Jacques Marseille)</i>	What is wrong? (History of one's dropping out, dream up in the Elysée, the analysis of Jean François Kahn, Alain Finkielkraut and Jacques Marseille)
1850	28	February	2008	<i>L'Homme cerné (La leçon d'histoire de Max Gallo aux</i>	The man surrounded (a lesson of story of Max Gallo about

				<i>Sarkophobes ; les coulisses d'une dégringolade – la spirale des couacs)</i>	“Sarkophobes”; the behind the scene of one tumble - a spiral of hiccups)
1852	13	March	2008	<i>(Après l'avertissement du premier tour) Ce qu'il mijote (Son calendrier de réformes, le recours Juppé, le remaniement des équipes)</i>	(After the warning of the first tour) What he prepares (His calendar of reforms, the resort Juppe, the reorganization of his team)
1853	20	March	2008	<i>(Après le vote sanction contre Nicolas Sarkozy) Peut-il changer?(L'histoire secrète de la semaine qui a ébranlé le pouvoir ; le bloc-notes de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing ; des extraits du livre-charge de Laurent Joffrin : « Le roi est nu »)</i>	(After the sanction vote against Nicolas Sarkozy) Can he change himself? (A secret story of one week that moved off power, notes of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the extracts from book-load of Laurent Joffrin: “the King is born”)
1854	27	March	2008	<i>(A la tête du combat anti-Sarkozy) Ségolene Royal (A-t-elle vraiment changé ? Qui peut l'arrêter ? Son projet enfin dévoilé)</i>	(Segolene Royal: Head of the "anti-Sarkozy" movement ) Ségolene Royal (Has she really changed Who is able to stop her? Her project was finally revealed)
1857	17	April	2008	<i>La vie quotidienne a l'Elysée (Comment Sarkozy a changé, les chouchous du président, les ratés et les succes ; SPECIAL : un an après)</i>	Daily life at the Elysée Palace: (How Sarkozy has changed, darlings of President, failures and successes; SPECIAL: one year after)
1863	29	May	2008	<i>(Psychoscopie du président) Sarkozy et les pys (Pourquoi il intrigue et fascine les psychanalystes ; Leurs commentaires sur la personnalité de Sarkozy ; De Gaulle, Mitterand, Chirac, la singularité des chefs)</i>	(Insight into president's psyche) Sarkozy and psychologists (why he intrigues and fascinates psychoanalysts, their comments on Sarkozy's personality; De Gaulle, Mitterand, Chirac – peculiarity of leaders)
1864	5	June	2008	<i>La Présidente (Notre enquête et des extraits de « Carla et Nicolas, la véritable histoire » par Yves Azéroual et Valérie Bénéïm)</i>	The president (our investigation et extracts of « Carla and Nicolas, a true story” from Yves Azéroual, and Valérie Bénéïm)
1865	12	June	2008	<i>Sarkozy, contrôle-t-il les médias?(Comment PPDA a été débarqué ; La galaxie Sarkozy dans les médias)</i>	Sarkozy, does he control the media? (How has been PPDA disembarked; The galaxy Sarkozy in the media)
1868	3	July	2008	<i>Sarkozy off (Ce qu'il dit en privé sur...François Fillon, L'argent, Napoléon, Carla, l'Allemagne, la Comédie-Française, la télé,</i>	Sarkozy off: what he says in private about... François Fillon, money, Napoléon, Carla, Germany, French Comedy, TV,

				<i>Ségolène Royal, François Bayrou, les livres...et « Le Point »</i>	Ségolène Royal, François Bayrou, books...and “Le Point” )
1871	24	July	2008	<i>L’Omni President (Nominations, médias, Constitution, économie, Euro) L’Homme qui veut tout faire</i>	The Omnipresident (Nominations, media, Constitution, economy, Euro) The man who wants to do everything
1880	25	September	2008	<i>Ce qu’il ne peut pas dire...et ce qu’il va faire (Crise financière, économie, réformes,...)</i>	What he can’t say but prepares to do (financial crisis, economy, reforms,...)
1883	16	October	2008	<i>Sarkozy et la crise (Les coulisses de son succès européen ; Crise financière : les gagnants et les coupables ; le nouveau capitalisme raconté par le philosophe Peter Sloterdijk)</i>	Sarkozy and crisis (behind the scenes of his European success; Financial crisis: winners and culprits; new capitalism told by philosopher Peter Sloterdijk)
1888	21	November	2008	<i>Les Colères de Sarkozy (Banquiers, journalistes, magistrats, diplomates, militaires, intellos...ce qu’il dit d’eux)</i>	The anger of Sarkozy (Bankers, journalists, judges, diplomats, soldiers, intellectuals... what he said about them)
1891	11	December	2008	<i>(Ses coups de tête, Sa nouvelle vie après Sarkozy) L’extravagante Mme Dati</i>	(Her head-shots, her new life after Sarkozy) The extravagant Mrs. Dati
1895	8	January	2009	<i>Nicolas Bonaparte (Les Ressemblances qui intriguent ou amusent ; Des extraits de « La marche consulaire d’Alain Duhamel » ; La satire de Patrick Rambaud, autour de la « Deuxième chronique du règne de Nicolas I »</i>	Nicolas Bonaparte (The similarities that intrigue or amuse; the extracts from “consular work” of Alain Duhamel; the satire of Patrick Rambaud, the author of the “chronicle of reign of Nicolas I.”
1896	15	January	2009	<i>La Conscience de Gauche de Sarkozy (Comment elle influence son mari; les confidences de Président sur son épouse)</i>	The awareness of the Left for Sarkozy (How does she influence her husband? The confidence of President about his wife.)
1903	5	March	2009	<i>Est-il dépassé? (Les chiffres qui font peur a l’Elysée; Ce qu’il gamberge?)</i>	Is he outdated? (Numbers that scare in the Elysée; what he is up to?)
1904	12	March	2009	<i>Les Francs-Maçons de Sarkozy (Les révélations du livre qui dérange; un extraits de "Un état dans l'état" de Sophie Coignard)</i>	The Sarkozy’s "Francs-Maçons" (the revelations of the inconvenient book, the excerpts from "A state within a state" from Sophie Coignard)
1909	16	April	2009	<i>Et si on s’en sortait ... (Économie: Notre dossier: Les chiffres qui</i>	What if finally everything went right? (Economy, our files: The



				<i>font espérer, Les Analyses de Jacques Marseille, Pascal Lamy,... et Jean-François Kahn)</i>	numbers that are expected; the analysis of Jacques Marseille, Pascal Lamy...and Jean-François Kahn
1911	30	April	2009	<i>Bayrou: Pourquoi il fait peur a Sarkozy?(Exclusif : des extraits de son livre-événement « Abus de pouvoir »)</i>	Bayrou: Why does he scare Sarkozy? (Exclusively: the extracts of his event book “Abuse of power”)
1914	21	May	2009	<i>Monsieur le dauphin (Enquête: l'irrésistible ascension de Jean Sarkozy)</i>	Mr. Dolphin (Survey : the irresistible rise of Jean Sarkozy)
1917	11	June	2009	<i>Enfin Seul (La débandade du PS, Le déroute de Bayrou, L'Exploit de Cohn-Bendit)</i>	Finally alone (the disarray of SP, Bayrou's debacle, the exploitation of Cohn-Bendit)
1920	1	July	2009	<i>(Elle leur ouvre le porte) Les Copains de Carla (Frédéric Mitterand, Marin Karmitz, Phillipe Val,...)</i>	(She opens door to him) Friends of Carla (Frédéric Mitterand, Marin Karmitz, Phillipe Val,...)
1927	19	August	2009	<i>Sarkozy: Est-il de gauche? (Comment il asphyxie le Parti Socialiste, ses nouveaux amis de gauche, Eric Besson: le transfuge devenu le favori)</i>	Sarkozy: Is he a Left party politician? (How he decreased the influence of Socialist party, his new friends from the Left. Eric Besson: a defector who became his favourite)
1930	9	September	2009	<i>(Sarkozy - Villepin) Histoire secrete d'une haine</i>	(Sarkozy-Villepin) A secret story of the hatred
1935	14	October	2009	<i>L'Affaire Jean Sarkozy</i>	The affair Jean Sarkozy
1940	19	November	2009	<i>Mais que lui arrive-t-il?</i>	But what is happening to him?
1947	6	January	2010	<i>Les mystères de la Cour (Les nouvelles intrigues ; les disgrâces ; les favoris de 2010 ; des extraits du livre de Patrick Rambaud)</i>	The mysteries of the court (new plots; the disgraces; the favourite ones of 2010; the extracts from a book of Patrick Rambaud)
1951	4	February	2010	<i>Affaire Bettencourt: comment gagner un Milliard?(sans se fatiguer)</i>	The Bettencourt Affair: how to earn a billion? (without getting tired)
1958	25	March	2010	<i>La Tragédie de Sarkozy (Histoire d'un désamour; Pourra-t-il se représenter en 2012; Deux ans pour sa refaire)</i>	The tragedy of Sarkozy (history of disentanglement; will he be represented in 2012, 2 years to be reborn)
1970	17	June	2010	<i>(Les sondages sont au plus bas et les critiques s'accumulent) Est-il si NUL? (Notre enquête: ses vrais</i>	(the opinion polls are the lowest and critics are cumulating) Is he as bad? (Our investigation : his

				<i>succès, ses vrais échecs ; Les analyses de Max Gallo, Marcel Gauchet, Jean-François Kahn et Alain Minc)</i>	real successes, his real defeats, the analysis of de Max Gallo, Marcel Gauchet, Jean-François Kahn et Alain Minc)
1972	1	July	2010	<i>(De Lilianne Bettencourt à Eric Woerth) Une Affaire d'État (Nouvelles Révélations ; Pouvoir, Justice, Argent : les liaisons dangereuses)</i>	(From Lilianne Bettencourt to Eric Woerth) State's affaire (New revelations: Power, Justice, Money: dangerous links)
1973	8	July	2010	<i>L'été meurtrier (Affaire Bettencourt; Etat d'urgence a l'Elysée, Le récit de l'incroyable série noire de Nicolas Sarkozy)</i>	Murderous summer (the Bettencourt Affair; state of emergency in the Elysée; the story of incredible run of bad luck of Nicolas Sarkozy)
1980	26	August	2010	<i>A-t-il déjà perdu? (Présidentielle 2012)</i>	Has he already lost? (Presidential elections 2012)
1981	2	September	2010	<i>Peuvent-ils continuer ensemble? (Sarkozy-Fillon: Le grand récit de quarante mois de tensions secrètes)</i>	Could they move forward together? (Sarkozy-Fillon: a story of forty months of secret tensions)
1983	16	September	2010	<i>Le temps de révélations (Carla et le président ; Des extraits du livre « Carla et les ambitieux » ; soupçons, affaires, sondages : la série noire)</i>	The time of revelations (Carla and President; The extracts from a book "Carla and the ambitious"; Suspicion, affairs, surveys: run of bad luck)
1986	7	October	2010	<i>(Comment il prépare) Sa Revanche (Remaniement, Fiscalité, Sarkophobie, Présidentielle)</i>	How does he prepare his revenge (Reorganization, Taxation, Sarkophobia, Presidential election)
1988	21	October	2010	<i>Le Jacquerie Anti-Sarko (Les bastions de la revolte; Les impostures de la France protégée, Nos archaïsmes vus de l'étranger)</i>	the " Jacquerie" Anti-Sarko; (the Strongholds of the revolt; Protected impostures of France; Our archaisms seen from abroad)
1990	4	November	2010	<i>(l'affaire qui fait peur) L'Effet Bettencourt (Coups tordus dans la justice ; Ce que l'affaire a coûté à l'Elysée ; Banier : histoires secrètes d'un grand manipulateur)</i>	(the affair that scares) The effect Bettencourt (Dirty tricks in justice; how much the affair cost the Elysée; Banier: secret stories of one big manipulator)
1992	18	November	2010	<i>(Sarkozy: a-t-il perdu la main?) La comédie du pouvoir (Révélations sur le « putsch » de Fillon ; L'histoire secrète de remaniement; Le Mystère Rama Yade)</i>	(Sarkozy - has he lost his hand?) The comedy of power (The revelations about Fillon's "putsch"; A secret story of reorganization; Mysterious Rama Yade)

1994	2	December	2010	<i>(Face à la tempête financière) Sarkozy-DSK: Le match a commencé (La France sous la pression des marches, Pourquoi Ségolène Royal accélère)</i>	(Facing the financial storm) Sarkozy-DSK: the match has started (France under the markets' pressure; Why Ségolène Royal accelerated)
2005	17	February	2011	<i>L'incroyable (Pourquoi il y croit toujours; Le récit de trois mois meurtriers; ce qu'il dit en privé)</i>	The Indestructible (Why he believes he still has chance; A story of three crucial months; What he says in private)
2006	24	February	2011	<i>(L'invité surprise de 2012) L'Homme qui fait peur à Sarkozy? ...et à Strauss-Kahn</i>	(the uninvited guest) The man that scares Sarkozy (...and Strauss-Kahn)
2012	7	April	2011	<i>La Malédiction (La récit secret de 4 années à l'Elysée) (Exclusif : Les extraits du livre de Franz-Olivier Giesbert « M. le Président » ; Les réactions de Claude Allègre, Jean-François Kahn et Yann Moix)</i>	Malediction: A secret story of 4 years at the Elysée (Exclusively: the extracts from the book of Franz-Olivier Giesbert "Mr. President"; the reaction of Claude Allègre, Jean-François Kahn and Yann Moix
2013	14	April	2011	<i>Élysée: tous contre Sarkozy: La chasse est ouvert (Nos révélations sur tous les nouveaux candidats : Borloo, Hulot, Villepin, Mélenchon, etc.</i>	Elysée: everyone against Sarkozy: Hunting is open (our revelations about all new candidates: Borloo, Hulot, Villepin, Mélenchon, etc.
2024	30	June	2011	<i>Les Humiliés de Sarkozy (de Borloo à Dati, comment ils préparent leur revanche)</i>	Those humiliated by Sarkozy (From Borloo to Dati, how they prepare their revenge)
2033	1	September	2011	<i>Et si c'était (encore) lui?</i>	And what if it was (again) him?
2036	22	September	2011	<i>CRISE: Peut-il faire mieux que Sarkozy?</i>	Could he do better than Sarkozy?
2037	29	September	2011	<i>Un parfum de fin de règne (Affaires, Crise, Charivari: la récit secret de sept jours ravageurs)</i>	Perfume of late reign (Affairs, Crisis, Pandemonium: the secret story of seven devastating days)
2044	17	November	2011	<i>Sarko II: L'Incroyable retour (ce qui le menace, ses bottes secrètes)</i>	Sarko II: Incredible return (it is what threatens him; his assets)
2052	12	January	2012	<i>Sarkozy: Le complexe de Zorro (Son tête-à-tête avec le romancier Richard Millet ; Dette : le brûlot de Mélanie Delattre et Emmanuel Lévy ; Les confidences du Président ; Les extraits du livre iconoclaste de Claude Allègre)</i>	Sarkozy: the Complex of Zorro (Private meeting with novelist Richard Millet ; Debt: a red-hot essays of Mélanie Delattre et Emmanuel Lévy; President's confidence; The extracts from the iconoclastic book of Claude Allègre)

2057	16	February	2012	<i>Le Dernier Combat (Les secrets de sa campagne éclair)</i>	Final battle (the secrets of his superquick campaign)
2058	23	February	2012	<i>(La polémique de la campagne) Qui ment le plus?</i>	(Controversy of the campaign) Who lies more?
2063	29	March	2012	<i>L'homme qui ne renonce jamais (L'histoire secrète de sa contre-attaque)</i>	A man who never gives up (a secret story of his counter-attack)
2064	5	April	2012	<i>(ÉLYSÉE 2012) Le diagnostic des psys</i>	(ÉLYSÉE 2012) The diagnosis of French presidential candidates by psychiatrists
2067	26	April	2012	<i>(mur de la dette et reformes inéluctables...et le 7 Mai) Bonjour les ennuis (ce qui attend le vainqueur ; les vraies exigencesdes marchés ; les plans B ; La France en colère)</i>	(the wall of debts and inevitable reforms ... and May 7th) Hello troubles (what the winner expects; the real market demand; the plans B; Angry France)

Headlines issued in Le Nouvel Observateur 17 May 2007 - 3 May 2012

Issue N°	Issue date			Headline (Subheadline)	
	Day	Month	Year	French	English
2219	17	May	2007	<i>Sarkozy et l'argent (Sa conception de la réussite, ses rapports avec les grands patrons, sa réforme de l'héritage, ses projets fiscaux, son patrimoine)</i>	Sarkozy and the money (His concept of success, his links with the big bosses, his heritage reform, his tax plans, his patrimony)
2222	7	June	2007	<i>(Après l'Elysée, l'Assemblée) Les Risques du pouvoir absolu</i>	(After the Elysee, the Assembly?) Risks of the absolute power
2223	14	June	2007	<i>Ce que va faire Sarkozy (Immobilier, Heures sup, Succession, Fiscalité, Education, Justice... Qui perd ? Qui gagne ?)</i>	What is Sarkozy going to do? (Real Estate, Extra working hours, Succession, Taxation, Education, Justice ... Who loses? Who gains?)
2230	2	August	2007	<i>L'énigme Cécilia</i>	Mysterious Cécilia
2233	23	August	2007	<i>Exclusif: La face cachée de Sarkozy (par Yasmina Reza)</i>	Exclusively : The hidden face (mask) of Sarkozy (by Yasmina Reza)
2237	20	September	2007	<i>Le président cannibale (Pourquoi il avale François Fillon, court-circuite ses ministres, fait la leçon à Angela Merkel et à l'Europe entière)</i>	The president cannibal (Why he swallows up François Fillon, bypass his ministers, gives the lesson to Angela Merkel and the entire Europe)
2241	18	October	2007	<i>(Grève, ADN, rugby, Cécilia) L'octobre noir de Sarkozy</i>	(Strike, DNA, Rugby, Cécilia) Black October of Sarkozy
2245	15	November	2007	<i>Henri Guaino, Le gourou du président (Jusqu'où s'étend son influence dans une situation sociale de plus en plus tendue)</i>	Henri Guiano, guru of the president (How far his influence extends in more and more fraught social situation...)
2246	22	November	2007	<i>(Cheminots, étudiants, fonctionnaires, magistrats,...) Voyage dans la France du refus</i>	(Railway workers, students, officers, judges,...) Trip to France of refusal
2253	10	January	2008	<i>(Licenciement, Contrat de travail, Flexibilité) Ce qu'il nous prépare</i>	(Termination, Employment contract, Flexibility at work) What he is going to do
2255	24	January	2008	<i>Pourquoi ils deviennent Sarkophobes (Déçus, Humiliés, Moralistes, Republicains, Laïcs)</i>	Why are they becoming "Sarkophobes"? (Disappointed, Humiliated, Moralists, Republicans, Laics)
2257	7	February	2008	<i>Le président qui fait pschitt...</i>	A president who will fizzle out...
2258	14	February	2008	<i>Dieu et la République</i>	God and the Republic
2260	28	February	2008	<i>(Municipales, Crise économique, Querelles de pouvoir) La grande peur de la droite (Et si ça finissait ma) (Le livre-pamphlet de François Leotard)</i>	(Municipalities, economic crisis, power of quarrels) A big fear coming from the Right (and what if it's going to come to a bad end)(The book of François Leotard)
2263	20	March	2008	<i>Peut-il entendre ?</i>	Can he hear it?
2271	15	May	2008	<i>Xavier Darcos - Le Hussard de Sarkozy (ses réformes de l'école provoquent la mobilisation des enseignants et des lycéens)</i>	Xavier Darcos - "the horseman" of Sarkozy (his education reforms has caused the mobilization of teachers and high-school students)
2274	5	June	2008	<i>Opération reconquête (Secrets,</i>	Recovery operation (secrets,

				<i>Manips et Flops)</i>	manipulations, reversals)
2276	19	June	2008	<i>Sarko La Poisse (Il attendait la croissance, le pouvoir d'achat, et ...l'Europe)</i>	Sarko Bad Luck ( he expected the growth, the purchasing power and ....Europe)
2287	4	September	2008	<i>(Contrat de travail, Emploi, Salaire, Pouvoir d'achat, RTT, Retraite, Santé, Ecole, Pollution, Energie, Droits du Citoyen...) Ce qui va changer pour vous</i>	(Employment contract, Employment, Salary, Purchasing power, Reduction in working hours, Retirement, Health, School, Pollution, Energy, Human Rights) What he is going to change for you
2288	11	September	2008	<i>(Tapie, Clavier, Bouygues, Bolloré...) Les Amis du President</i>	(Tapie, Clavier, Bouygues, Bolloré...) Friends of the president
2298	20	November	2008	<i>Le vrai gouvernement de la France (Ils tiennent les renés dans l'ombre de Sarkozy)</i>	The real government of France (They hold reins in the shadow of Sarkozy )
2300	4	December	2008	<i>Special crise : Qui va trinquer, Qui s'en tire, Qui en profite (ce que peut changer le plan de relance)</i>	Special Crisis: Who is going to suffer, who is going to lose, who gains? (what changes the recovery plan)
2302	18	December	2008	<i>Fonctionnaires - ce que Sarkozy leur prepare</i>	Officers - what Sarkozy prepares for them
2310	12	February	2009	<i>Où il nous embarque (peut-il relancer l'economie ? Le banc d'essai des reformes. Ce qu'il a promis et ce qu'il a vraiment fait ; EXCLUSIF SONDAGE : Pourquoi les Français n'ont plus confiance.</i>	Where he leads us (Is he able to restart the economy? The test rig of the reforms. What he promised and what he really did; EXCLUSIVE SURVEY: Why the French do not have confidence in him anymore.)
2313	5	March	2009	<i>Le système Sarkozy (Copinage, Pantouflage, fait du prince: ce que révèle l'affaire Péro)</i>	The system Sarkozy (cronyism, revolving door policy, act of government: what reveals the affair Péro)
2317	2	April	2009	<i>Peuvent-ils s'entendre (Les coulisses de leurs relations, leur plan contre la crise, leur façon de gouverner, leur style, leur communication...)</i>	Can they get along with each other (behind the scenes of their relations, their anti-crisis plan, their way of governing, their style, their communication,...)
2329	25	June	2009	<i>Les habits neufs du Président Sarko (Paroles, paroles...les actes suivront-ils ? A-t-il vraiment changé ? Peut-il financer ses réformes ?)</i>	New habits of President Sarko (Words, words...do his deeds follow him? Has he really changed? Is he able to finance his reforms?)
2330	2	July	2009	<i>Nicolas Sarkozy face à l'obs</i>	Nicolas Sarkozy faces to the "Obs" ( <i>Le Nouvel Observateur</i> )"
2341	17	September	2009	<i>L'homme qui parle à l'oreille de Sarko (Exclusif : Un entretien avec Nicolas Hulot ; Récit: les secrets d'une influence)</i>	A man who advises to Sarko (Exclusively: interview with Nicolas Hulot; Story: secrets of one influence)
2342	24	September	2009	<i>50 ans de coups tordus et de cabinets noirs (La République des tontons flingueurs)</i>	50 years of dirty tricks and black rooms (the Republic of "Crooks in Clover")
2353	10	December	2009	<i>(Le nouveau visage du Sarkozysme) Jusqu'où ira Besson (Les dessous de l'opération identité nationale ; La stratégie de la trahison ; Ceux qui'il irrite – ceux à qui il fait peur)</i>	The new visage of Sarkozysm) How far Besson will go (hidden operation of national identity; those who he irritates – those who are afraid of him)
2360	28	January	2010	<i>Les plans secrets de Sarkozy (Retraites, Justice, Emploi, Taxe Carbone, Services Publics,</i>	Sarkozy's secret plans (pensions, justice, employment, Carbon tax, Public services, Taxation..)

				<i>Fiscalité..)</i>	
2363	18	February	2010	<i>La vraie histoire de la famille Sarkozy (Salonique, la Hongrie, la France)</i>	True story of Sarkozy's family (Salonique, Hungary, France)
2367	18	March	2010	<i>SARK.O.</i>	SARK.O.
2368	25	March	2010	<i>Qui peut battre Sarko? (Le choix de nos lecteurs)</i>	Who can beat Sarko?(Choice of our readers)
2371	15	April	2010	<i>Les secrets d'une étrange affaire (Enquête sur la rumeur, L'énigme Carla, Dati dans la tourmente, L'Elysée en folie)</i>	Secrets of one strange affair (Survey about rumours, mysterious Carla, Dati in upheaval, the Elysée in madness)
2383	8	July	2010	<i>(Le président, la comptable, et la milliardaire) Comment l'Elysée veut étouffer l'affaire</i>	(President, accountant, and the billionaire) How Élysée wants to suffocate the affair
2384	15	July	2010	<i>Comment il en est arrivé là (2 Français sur 3 ne lui fait pas confiance)</i>	How did he get there (2 out of 3 French do not have a confidence in him)
2391	2	September	2010	<i>Les riches, le pouvoir et la Droite</i>	The rich, the power and the Right
2392	9	September	2010	<i>Cet homme est-il dangereux ?</i>	Is this man dangerous?
2394	23	September	2010	<i>Ce que Sarkozy peut lâcher...Retraites</i>	What Sarkozy can release... Pensions
2403	25	November	2010	<i>KARACHI (Chirac, Balladur, Sarkozy, Villepin - les dessous du scandale qui secoue la République)</i>	KARACHI (Chirac, Balladur, Sarkozy, Villepin - big scandal about weapons transactions)
2418	10	March	2011	<i>Le piège (Comment Sarkozy a fait monter le FN)</i>	Trap (How Sarkozy made rise the FN)
2421	31	March	2011	<i>2012 A-t-il déjà perdu? (Comment la droite prépare l'après Sarkozy)</i>	2012 Has he already lost? (How right party prepares for the time "after Sarkozy")
2431	9	June	2011	<i>Chirac juge Sarkozy (Extraits; le second tome de ses mémoires est très critique envers son successeur)</i>	Chirac judges Sarkozy (the second volume of his memoirs is very critical to his successor)
2441	18	August	2011	<i>Présidentielle: Les Francs-Maçons en campagne</i>	Presidential election : "Francs-Maçons" in campaign
2444	8	September	2011	<i>Les Flingueurs (Comment l'Elysée met au pas ceux qui dérangent)</i>	The gunslingers (How Elysée brought to heel those who disturb)
2446	22	September	2011	<i>Les dossiers qui font peur à Sarkozy (Karachi, Bettencourt, Bourgi, Takieddine)</i>	The files that frighten Sarkozy (Karachi, Bettencourt, Bourgi, Takieddine)
2447	29	September	2011	<i>Les coulisses d'une fin de règne</i>	The behind the political scene at the end of one reign
2456	1	December	2011	<i>(Révelations sur les petits et les grands frauders) L'autre affaire Bettencourt</i>	(Revelation about small and big frauds) The other affair Bettencourt
2449	13	October	2011	<i>Quelle gauche contre Sarko ?</i>	Which representant of the left party will stand against Sarko?
2461	5	January	2012	<i>L'enfance des chefs (Exclusif: « Je serai président »)</i>	Childhood of leaders ((Exclusively : "I will be president ")
2462	12	January	2012	<i>Ils ont travaillé avec Sarkozy. Ils disent tout! (Dati, Morin, Hirsch, Boutin, Albanel, Karoutchi, Laporte, Alliot-Marie, ...)</i>	They have been working with Sarkozy. They say everything! (Dati, Morin, Hirsch, Boutin, Albanel, Karoutchi, Laporte, Alliot-Marie,..)
2465	2	February	2012	<i>Les confessions de Sarkozy (Ce qu'il dit en privé)</i>	Sarkozy's confession (what he said in private)
2467	16	February	2012	<i>Révélation sur le gourou de Sarkozy (Comment Patrick</i>	Revelation about Sarkozy's guru (How Patrick Buisson carried

				<i>Buisson a fait triompher sa ligne droite)</i>	through his right-wing line)
2473	29	March	2012	<i>Au secours, Sarkozy revient!</i>	Help, Sarkozy is back!
2474	5	April	2012	<i>On a testé leurs programmes (Les bonnes idées, les bobards, les tabous)</i>	Presidential programmes have been tested (good ideas, fibs, taboos)
2477	26	April	2012	<i>“Je sens la vague”</i>	“I feel the wave”
2478	3	May	2012	<i>La Faute (les secrets d'une folle dérive les premières fissures à droite)</i>	Fault (the secrets of one craziness drifting the first fissures of the Right)