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"Understanding the French Yellow Vests Movement through the lens of mixed methods"

A French Touch in Social Movement studies?

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Abstract for the Special Issue and Introduction

This first special issue on the Yellow Vests Movement (YVM) published in English has three objectives. First, we advocate that this puzzling movement proved to be an insightful research field for scholars to make a plea for mixed-methods. By so doing, we bridge the usual gaps between positivist and constructivist approaches. Second, after four years of research, this publication is also a first milestone to provide empirical data and analysis of the movement, to better understand its evolution, significance and effects on French society. By combining case-studies and national based comparison, regional face-to-face surveys, national online surveys and in-person surveys, the nine articles provide a clearer and more precise picture of the movement's composition and its evolution over the months. In addition to a detailed description of the social and political components of the movement, several articles propose to establish bridges between the values and opinions of the Gilets Jaunes or Yellow Vests (YVs), the cultural practices of the social groups from which they come, and the modalities of mobilization and form of politicization, inscribed in space and in time. In this way, they provide the debate with valuable keys to understanding the dynamics of the movement. Third, this special issue consequently further analyses how the YVM challenges contemporary social movements studies, the understanding of uprisings and assumptions about contentious politics. The first article introduces the major analytical issues and mixed methods approaches of the 9 articles and their contributions as whole to scholarship on the study of the YVM and social movements in France and from a comparative perspective.

Keywords : France– Methodology – Contention – Mixed-Method – Social Movement – Yellow Vests – Representation – Democracy – Populism – Politicization

Bringing Mixed Methods In: A French Touch on Social Movement studies?

Is there a such a thing as a « French touch » in Social Movement Studies (Elgie, Grossman, and Mazur 2016)? French scholarship in political science has long been characterized by qualitative approaches whereas North American scholars tend to use more quantitative analysis (Billordo 2005; Lewis-Beck and Bélanger 2015). Indeed, a « French Touch » in the sub-field of social

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movement distinguishes French scholarship by its theoretical options, in- depth case studies, qualitative methodologies and ethnography (Fillieule 2017). Nevertheless, surveys have long been used in French collective research on social movement (Favre, Fillieule, and Mayer 1997; Agrikoliansky and Sommier 2005). This special issue aims to bridge a « language gap » that has been observed in some areas of Political science.

It is part of the attempt to cross-fertilize scholarship in both English and French, but also methods (Mayer 2008), to understand an "unexpected" and "peculiar" social movement that has been now in action for : the Yellow Vests. When it emerged in Autumn 2018, the Yellow Vests movement (hereinafter referred to as YVM) surprised pundits and academics alike. Rarely in recent years has a movement sparked so much debate on the background of its participants and supporters, their main claims and expectations and its meaning in the French political space. The protest started as a reaction against a fuel tax and initially revolved around purchasing power issues, before developing critiques about social and fiscal inequalities, and the larger socio political institutions. Yet, what seemed to be a protest movement travelled to the mainstream with more democratizing aspirations in general with the citizen initiated referendum "RIC" becoming quickly a central demand over-time Meanwhile as efforts to stop the YVM became stronger, the issue of violence revealed cleavages within the movement about tactics and strategy (Elalaoui et al. 2021).

As in most contemporary social movements, the street and roundabout protest follows a period of exchanges and calls for mobilization on the Internet and social networks. However, the story retains the date of November 17, 2018, when more than 280,000 people gathered on France's traffic circles.[1] It still seems almost impossible to give the movement a precise end date, since participants disagree on the ongoing movement: some keep on occupy some

[1]. Figures from the Ministry of the Interior, which can be thought to underestimate the level of mobilization. The movement's innovative mode of mobilization made it difficult to count the number of people mobilized and quickly gave rise to a traditional battle of figures between the government's discourse and that of the mobilized.

roundabouts, as in Sainte-Eulalie (Gironde), Montpellier (Hérault) or Revel (Tarn) and occasionally join Saturday marches. Other considerer that the YVM has run its course

A Plea for Mixed-Methods

From the very beginning, the social movement has given rise to multiple and sometimes contradictory analyses. For many , it was "elusive" (Le Bart 2020) and led to a "quarrel over interpretations" ("Les gilets jaunes : une querelle des interprétations" 2019). The first English publications insisted on the challenge for democracy, underlining violent tactics, and question the political orientation of the movement, as well as its populist feature; mostly relying on opinion and press content (Chamorel 2019; Grossman 2019), on YV Facebook Pages (Cointet et al. 2021; Froio et al. 2020), or on informal discussions with a small group of Parisian people living in the so-called Asian neighborhood during demonstrations or joggings in Paris or few qualitative data (Lem 2020). French scholarship provides conflicting interpretations of the YVM based on different data. In a first review Bendali and Rubert (2020) identify three issues addressed by social sciences scholarship: participation, protest-rising and politicization. The first part of the research characterizes the participants and produced hypotheses to understand the motives and contexts of the protest. A second part of the literature sought to understand the emergence and evolution of the movement by questioning the relationship of participants to the political arena (in particular elections and political parties, and political elites in the state) as well as more broadly to the democratic and representative system. The last part of the research focuses on the dynamics of mobilization, particularly in terms of its spaces and repertoires of action, as well as on the consequences of engagement by seeking to understand the effects of socialization on those involved. In this issue, the articles return to these three lines of questioning. We add a fourth part of the literature (Levain and al. in this volume), addressing the articulation of the YVM with other social movements such as the Climate marches, blurring

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usual distinctions between old and new social movements, by its evolution from an anti-austerity protest toward a multi-issues movement. Another hallmark of the scholarship on the YVM published between 2018 and 2020 is that one third was published in a peer review outlet; mostly with taking theoretical considerations about the YVM. Less than a third of this work was based on empirical data, mostly qualitative and ethnographic (33), and very little on quantitative data. Our special issue contributes to fill this empirical gap by gathering contributions that seek to test hypotheses about the YVM with grounded data collected by a variety of methodological tools and approaches.

Indeed, the YVM proved to be the perfect laboratory in which to apply calls for "triangulation" of different kinds of data and a combination of methods (Tarrow 2019) . Increasingly, social science has been characterized by methodological blending that challenges the conventional wisdom about national methodological traditions. (Della Porta and Keating 2008, 4). Mixed-methods have become more mainstream and represent a pragmatic stance in social science (Timans, Wouters, and Heilbron 2019). As stated by Della Porta, social movement studies can be considered as a "pluralist field" (Della Porta 2014, 2). Recently the *Revue française de Science politique* offered a convincing issue for "3.0 methodology" i.e. mixed-methods in political science (Aguilera and Chevalier 2021a; 2021b). Indeed, by comparing different methodologies – qualitative, quantitative – at the same time (triangulation) or consecutively to analyze various empirical material, social movement scholars aimed to adjust their methods to their epistemology (Klandermans, Staggenborg, and Tarrow 2002; Philipp M. Ayoub, Wallace, and Zepeda-Millan 2014; Tarrow 2019). In this perspective, are we not witnessing a reconsideration of the 'French Touch' observed a few years ago in political science by current attempt to articulate units and levels of analysis, methods and sometimes epistemologies? Without ignoring each author's paradigm and sub-disciplinary specificity, our special issue provides a convincing attempt of blending methods. Most of the contribution are

based on different level and unit of analysis: they refer to single case study or comparative cases studied from qualitative perspective and articulate them with macro-level analysis based on quantitative data. By so doing it sheds a fresh light on a multi-faced movement that still goes on. Rather than adopting "methodological dogmatism", we consider in this volume that qualitative and quantitative methodologies can complete each other (Becker 1996). Confronted to a national-broad social movement marked with heterogeneity in values, actions and sequences, our research design was based on triangulating methods and collecting data ranging from survey to on-line publications, with ethnographic material. This volume goes beyond the usual dichotomy between qualitative/constructivist vs quantitative/positivist approach by providing articles offering a wide range of epistemology, from single case driven research to variable driven research, methods and data on the TVM, and for some of them combining them.

Grounded insights on an "elusive" social movement

The special issue brings together nine article's proposals covering a wide range of topics, from mobilization processes and politicization, spatial dimensions, sociography and on-line activism to values and attitudes toward ecology or democracy. By so doing it aims to build up a common knowledge on an "unpredictable movement". This special issue has two others objectives.

First, it aims to provide a fresh insight on the current scholarship on the Yellow Vests. After four years of research, this publication is a first milestone to provide empirical data and analysis of the movement, to better understand its evolution, significance and effects on French society.

Time matters

All present contribution address specific sequences and episodes of the movement that affect participation itself but also contextualize our findings. The mobilization knew several phases that we propose to summarize very briefly here (Elalaoui et al. 2020; Della Sudda 2021). Following Wahnich, the first "impetus" stage started in November (Wahnich 2020). From 17

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November to the beginning of January 2019, the most intense phase of the movement took place, in terms of the number of people mobilized, the intensity of the actions and the setting up of camps and continuous occupations on the roundabouts. The actions are diversified: opening of tolls, economic blockades and contentious performances in the city center every Saturday - the "Acts" - which oscillate between "savage" demonstrations without public authorities agreement, and more routinized demonstrations. From November 29th 2018, coercion and repression characterized authorities' response, in particular in Paris. The occupied roundabouts were systematically destroyed at the beginning of 2019. It opened a new phase that corresponds both to a decline in participant number and to internal shifts, following the usual pattern of social movement dilemmas about strategy and tactics. The weekly Acts continue and attempts at structuring are developing beyond the local level, notably an Assembly of Assemblies at the national level (there will be 5 between January 2019 and March 2020). Many YV groups kept occupation to private land adjacent to the initial roundabout. For some, the period at the beginning of spring 2019 corresponds to institutionalization – with formal associations and for some of them involvement in party politics for the European elections - and the diversification of activities (boycott, farmers markets, for example, or actions in support of precarious people, vegetable gardens). The movement gradually lost its centrality in social conflicts. In the autumn and winter of 2019, some of the Yellow Vests continue to mobilize through the occasional presence on the roundabouts. This is also the time when movements of convergence of struggles take place, with the left-wing Yellow Vests going to support other movements, in particular the important mobilization against the pension reform in the winter of 2019-2020. Following the global pandemic, the confinement imposed from March 2020 onwards marks an almost definitive halt for the group that remained active. The on-line retreat favored the influence of radical-right frames and issues through virtual networks and social-media, leading to the ousting of many social justice tenants. Nevertheless, in the summer of

2021, the strong mobilizations against the "green-pass" pushed many YV to come back in the street along with opponents to the pass and anti-vaccine groups. After September, though, tensions between anti-vaccine and individual freedom and social justice participants lead to the departure of many YV. 2022, some groups, small in number and scattered across the country, continued to meet on the roundabouts. If many conflicts have marked the movement, many yellow vests have nevertheless formed and maintained links within the movement making it an abeyance structure in spite of its long-lasting, polycentric and inclusive features (Taylor 1989; Della Sudda, Godefroy, and Lucas 2022), be it strong friendships or organizational ties, abeyance maintained in particular via social networks.

Who participate in the YVM?

The first question we address here is the composition of the YVM. Empirically-based researches have shown the heterogeneous sociology of the YVM. The initial opposition to the carbon tax has brought together individuals and groups ranging from working-class blue and pink collars to small-business, and civil servants. This has led to divergent interpretations of the movement as an expression of territorial, class or political conflict formulated in terms of unified people against the elites. The YVM indeed gathered members of the working class and lower-middle class from rural and peri-urban area (Le Lann et al. 2018; Alexandre et al. 2019; Boyer et al. 2020; Dormagen, Michel, and Reungoat 2021). Some scholars also insist on a common experience of social insecurity and rejection of party politics (Alexandre et al. 2019). Studies also underlined the unusual proportion of first-time activists, making their first experience of protest in the movement. The papers presented in this volume document accurately the sociological and political diversity of the YVM based on the "Jaune Vif Database", the Ministor of Interior data (Blavier and Walker 2020 and in this volume) and a regional Barometer "Baroc" (Reungoat, Dormagen, and Michel 2021 in this volume) or

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Facebook groups surveys (Gonthier et al. 2019; Fillieule et al. 2021 in this volume). Quantitative data are also combined with qualitative data gathered at micro-level such as observations, in-depth interview in specific sites of protest (Bordiec et al.; Della Sudda et al.; Devaux et al.; Reungoat & al. in this volume). As the YVM took part on site and on-line, some contributions also rely on cultural production that shaped the protests such as "lives" (Baisnée et al. in this volume). Indeed, the diversity of the contributions presented in this volume document accurately with original and first-hand data the sociological and political diversity of the YVM and its evolution over the months. The articles reveal underestimated scale of participation in the movement and bring news results to understand how it held together (or alongside) these participants, but also of its duration and internal dynamics.

A new challenge to the sociology of social movements

Second, this special issue further analyses how the YVM challenges contemporary social movements studies, the understanding of uprisings and assumptions about contentious politics. Because of its unusual territories, duration and the low level of prior organizational resources, the movement is a new challenge to the sociology of social movements. In this sense, this issue first of all contributes to the analysis of the recent evolution of social movements.

A spatial turn in social movement studies

Occupation is a major feature of anti-austerity protest that arose after 2008 worldwide economic crisis. Space became salient as the arena of protest, issue and material expression of social and symbolic conflict (Combes, Garibay, and Goirand 2016). In connection with theoretical debates evoking a phenomenon of politicization of the near and relocation of the political (Dechezelles and Olive 2017; Jeanpierre 2019) and related to methodological debates, several contributions in the issue address the question of the most relevant level of analysis to grasp the ongoing mutations.

The YVM has made salient spatial dimension of social movements. Many observers saw a revenge of suburban France – « la France périphérique ». The article « Shedding light on the Yellow Vests movement through its spatial dimension, from the gathering places to the origins of the participants » aims to get things straight among all the available sources and data which document the spatial dimension of the YV movement during the first months of the contestation. Combining a national database « Jaune Vif » with a monograph in Normandy, maps and a geostatistical study of YV gatherings at a national scale, Etienne Walker and Pierre Blavier highlight YV appropriations of different strategic spaces in the margins of small towns, before massive and repeated central gatherings. Daily-life spaces and lifestyles shaped by mobilities are articulated with set of actions, demands and displacements toward city centers as time goes by. The article underlines the crucial dimensions of time and space in politicization of the movement, the withdrawal of non-disengaged first-comers and the growing presence of more experienced urban activists. Indeed, the centralization of the movement appears to be coupled with a centralization of the protestors, who were gradually more metropolitan and used to social movements, structuring the movement at a broader scale.

The evolution of sites of mobilisations led to a shift in YVM composition, with an unexpected gendered dimension. Many observers noted the presence of women in the YVM. As scholars pointed out, horizontality and leaderless organization favored the representation of the movement by women. Jean-Baptiste Devaux, Marion Lang, Antoine Lévêque, Christophe Parnet, Valentin Thomas examine the paths of three women in the YVM. « From the roundabout to the city center: Women's agency and division of militant labor in the YV movement » intends to highlight the variation of activist experiences within a social movement and how space and specific configuration favor the presence of women. The case study allows them to compare three kinds of women's activism. By simultaneously studying the background of each woman and the interactions in which they are caught during their engagement, the

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authors show how they succeed or fail to negotiate their roles or positions and avoid or escape from situations experienced as uncomfortable or simply unsatisfying from what they consider to be their rightful place in the movement. The argument draws on several months of observation on various mobilization sites (roundabouts, demonstrations, general assemblies, blocking sites) in a French city, and a series of biographical interviews. The concept of "division of militant labor" proved heuristic to shed light on the "processual analysis" of the three women's commitment in the movement. By highlighting the agency capacity of these three activists, this paper sheds light on the internal heterogeneity of social movements and underlines the evolving nature of power relations according to the spaces of mobilization.

While offering an undoubtedly singular composition by the place of women, the share of novices and certain categories of working class people, the movement shares many formal characteristics with the post-2011 street-level protests (Spire et al. 2019). Although the articles do not propose comparative studies in the strict sense of the term, the analyses developed in this issue offer elements of comparison with occupy-place movements (Shihade, Fominaya, and Cox 2012). The YVM can be considered as a wave of anti-austerity protests by its moral economy and the centrality of occupation in its repertoires (Piven and Cloward 1978). Spontaneous and relying on social networks, polycentric and advocating horizontality, innovative in its forms of action and occupation and organized alongside, or even in opposition to, the classic organizations of social movements and political parties, the mobilization of the yellow vests contributes to questioning some aspects of resource mobilization theory. Through the weakness of its prior organizational resources and the singularity of the profiles of some of participants, the Yellow Vests movement also echoes the analysis of the mobilization of low-resource groups, in France of improbable mobilizations (Hmed 2007; Mathieu 2001), or a "sociological miracle" (Maurer and Pierru 2001). By taking into account the temporality and geography of the movement, it offers a new opportunity to grasp the process of construction

and perpetuation of protest movements, and the work of agglomeration of distinct population groups.

Processual analysis, Politicization and electoral participation

Another main contribution of the current issue is to shed light on temporality in social movement and the ways it affects politicization (McAdam and Sewell 2001). By its exceptional duration and the low level of experience of a significant part of its activists, it invites us to take seriously the processual dimension of a social movement. In its composition, its demands and the values held by some of the participants, the movement stands in sharp contrast to the new social movements of the 1960s. It is marked by the strong and puzzling presence of categories of people not commonly visible in protests: people with low levels of education and little political experience, women from working-class backgrounds, and people living in rural or suburban areas. In this sense, the movement goes far beyond the typical profiles of mobilizations since the 1960s and invites us to update our analyses of the relationship of working-class people and dominated social groups to political protest.

Thus, the context of the mobilization has offered an excellent opportunity to re-examine the construction of the relationship to politics within a social movement. In « From Uprising to Secession », Olivier Fillieule, Alexandre Daflon, Zakaria Bendali, Maite Beramendi and Davide Morselli, make « A Plea for a Localized and Processual Approach to the Avatars of the Yellow Vests Movement ». The authors develop a localized and longitudinal study in the South East rural province. To do so, they use innovative methodological tools combining life history calendar, social media data and fields research (participant observation and biographical interviews). fine analysis of the evolution of the most mobilized over time. Based on their data, they describe the socio-professional composition of the local movement, of the experiences (notably of economic harshness) shared by the participants and of the related worldview. The

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on-going politicization is marked, for those who remain mobilized, by a process of political awareness and radicalization in the face of government repression and contempt. This new political involvement makes these Yellow Vests 'vigilant' citizens, as opposed to more deferential forms of citizenship based on trust in the government, experts and elites.

Indeed, the YVM offers a case study for examining the logics and effects of the avoidance of institutional politics among first-time protesters, *i.e.* "social actors who not only have never previously taken part in any collective action or expressed any political commitment (partisan, trade union or community) but have even tended to steer clear of institutional politics altogether". In "Becoming political while avoiding politics: a study of yellow vests first-timers" Emmanuelle Reungoat, François Buton et Cécile Jouanneau argue that the avoidance of institutional politics might, under certain circumstances, foster politicization among the most disenfranchised groups. Drawing on in-depth ethnographic biographical interviews conducted with the latter, they show that, paradoxically, avoiding institutional politics was a condition of possibility for the entry and continuation of first-timers in the mobilization. Moreover, the mobilization was thus a context for the politicization of novices in various dimensions. First, they became political insofar as they acquired or reinforced a binary homogeneous social worldview that opposes the 'little people' and the political elites, reinforcing, as a whole, a distance from politics that was often already present. Second, they became political because they developed a new sense that they were entitled to speak about politics, to discuss necessary reforms, to imagine the general organization of society and to act like citizens. In other words, subjective political competence and a new appetence for current affairs. And third, they became political through the reinforcement, albeit unequal and relative, of their objective competence: knowledge of institutional politics and political categories.

Could this politicization lead to more institutionalized participation, such as electoral participation? The case of Bordeaux, a hotspot of the YVM (Fourquet 2019), confirms the

politicization process and emphasizes the divided among the YVM on institutional participation. Despite their rejection of political institutions, the French municipal elections of 2020 led some of the participants to embrace "conventional politics" as candidates. Relying on "Jaune Vif" survey to determine YV participants attitudes towards institutions and politics, and the specificity of local participants, and in-depth interviews to understand YV candidates biographies and motivations, Magali Della Sudda and Nathan Gaborit examine under which circumstances can social movement participation lead to electoral participation. "From Yellow Vests to City Council: understanding the electoral success and failure of social movement activists in a local election" provides an explanation of the electoral participation of social movement activists and the different outcomes of local elections. Two lists of candidates both claiming to be part of the Yellow Vest movement competed with each other. While the only Yellow Vests list – "Bordeaux Democracy" – failed to stand, the radical-left and social movement coalition "Bordeaux in Struggle" was able to maintain itself and eventually achieved unexpected electoral success with three local councilors. Even in local context political parties and organizations seemed reliable resources even in local election, favoring seasoned activists and marginalizing new comers, following an iron law of oligarchy. These findings can be related to analyses that tackle the issue of the political subject of the YV.

Addressing heterogeneity and cleavages in social movements

A further contribution illuminated the understudied issue of heterogeneity and cleavages in social movements. As many other movements, whereas it has often been presented as unified around the "people", the YVM is actually characterized by its social and political heterogeneity and constellations of groups. At an individual level, participants do express a wide range of values and political preferences. Based on the first sampled and representative survey carried out on the YVM in the French region of Occitania, Jean-Yves Dormagen, Laura Michel and

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Emmanuelle Reungoat explore the movement's internal diversity. « United in Diversity. Understanding what unites and what divides the Yellow Vests » provides key insights into its dynamics and highlights a relatively overlooked dimension of social movements whose internal cohesion is often overstated. First, their survey reveals the unprecedented scale of the movement in relation to the French population: it can be estimated that nearly three million people took part at least in one action. To better understand the drivers and dynamics of the mobilization, the article sets out to assess the actuality of an underlying class logic, a rejection of the political order and common ideological views among the protestors. They confirm and document the movement's social and political heterogeneity, and suggest that both objective socio-demographic and economic categories as well as subjective social identifications did indeed favor involvement in roundabout rallies or demonstrations, whilst remaining insufficiently predictive of such involvement to establish a 'class' logic. The analysis of the participants' profiles confirms that the working and lower middle classes are over-represented in the movement. But it also highlights reveals the broad and mixed coalition formed by the Yellow Vests who are, in fact, fairly representative of the French working and salaried middle classes in all their diversity, including the upper-middle class. Only the upper classes are not part of the movement. In a second part, the study of the Yellow Vests' systems of opinion allows us to understand the cleavages that unite the Yellow Vests as well as those that divide them. Here again, new classifications seem to operate on the basis of homogeneous positions between the different participants through the opposition of the 'people' versus the system and, in particular, versus a minority represented by the political elites and the 'rich'. While they are also cohesive on economic issues, the Yellow Vests are nevertheless highly divided on identity and cultural issues. The results shed light on the forms and dynamics of the movement. Indeed, the variety of ideological and social profiles, as well as grievances, is reflected in the partially

differentiated spatial distribution of the participants across the various protest sites and accounts the difficulty in translating the movement into the political and electoral arena.

It then becomes clear that such an unconventional social movement is, in fact, based on a vast coalition of very heterogeneous groups among which the diversity of profiles and motivations largely prevails. The barometers results confirm the mixed-methods findings exposed in « Control or participate? The Yellow Vests' democratic aspirations through mixed methods analysis ». Stéphanie Abrial, Chloé Alexandre, Camille Bedock, Frédéric Gonthier and Tristan Guerra investigate the YV attitudes to democracy. They draw on three complementary data sources. First, to put the preferences of the YV in perspective with those of the French population, they use two mirror surveys: the *Populism in Europe Survey* (PopEuropa) conducted in April 2019 among a national representative sample and a convenience sample of Yellow Vests interviewed between September and December 2019 (*Yellow Vest Values Survey*, hereinafter YVVS) (Guerra, Alexandre, and Abrial 2021). With this material, they analyze the influence of commitment to the YV movement and populist attitudes on preferences for various democratic innovations, comparing YV participants and their French counterparts. Additional data sources are then used to understand how internal political differences within the YV movement translate into competing discourses on elected representatives and democratic institutions. An open-ended question administered in the YVVS survey allows an inductive quantitative textual analysis and disentangle the varieties of discourses about ordinary citizens, their democratic aspirations and the relationship with the political elites. Finally, this textual analysis is supplemented with a qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews conducted with YV activists in Spring 2019 so as to better delineate ideal-typical discourses on political institutions and democracy. Levels of politicization are key in explaining their preferences for different types of democratic reforms. It draws on quantitative analyses to demonstrate that the YV are supportive of innovations aiming to discipline elected representatives, and that populist

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attitudes enhance support for direct public control. These findings are refined by means of quantitative textual analysis and analysis of the in-depth interviews providing evidence of contrasted discourses about democracy within the movement according to social status and former political experience.

Another way of addressing heterogeneity and cleavage within a movement is to focus on shared visions among participants. One way to engage the discussion could be, as Antoine Bernard de Raymond and Sylvain Bordiec suggest, to analyze what participant share. Family, as well as the "people", was a unifying motto and a decisive social structure to determine YV participation. In "Family as a vehicle", the authors point out the importance of the family prism for understanding mobilization. The article highlights a dimension that would benefit from being better taken into consideration by the sociology of social movements. Using a methodology that combines a questionnaire survey captured through the prism of discourse analysis, with ethnographic observation and comprehensive interviews, the two authors examine the weight of the family in mobilization. Family understood as an economic unit, as a concrete configuration of action and as a space for determining cultural practices. The family is a key element in understanding the reasons for commitment linked to the real or feared effects of fiscal measures. By not supporting the small middle classes, these measures reinforce dependence on intra-family solidarity while feeding the fear of downgrading and concern for the future of children. The strong presence of women and pensioners in the movement is partly linked to this. The family is also a key element in facilitating or hindering commitment, and the authors examine through this innovative approach how family configurations reinforce or prevent participation in the mobilization.

How the YVM affected French politics: putting Environmental Justice and Police Violence on the agenda

Finally, last but not least contribution to the sociology of social movements is to examine the remains of the movements. If interpretations vary according to the value of the observer, the place and the time of the analysis, we can identify two major issues that have been politicized through the YVM in public sphere. The first issue is ecology and social justice. Although it was mostly depicted as anti-ecologist, the YVM reveals a shared concern about environment and an unprecedented demand of environmental justice in France. Alix Levain, Simon Persico, with Chloé Alexandre, Christèle Dondeyne, Charif Elalaoui, Nathan Gaborit, Yann Le Lann, Emmanuelle Reungoat and Magali Della Sudda, provide an insight in a review of popular ecologies. The YV movement was born out of the opposition to an increase in carbon taxation; it was initially depicted as an anti-environmental protest, i.e. indifferent to environmental degradation and hostile to any form of environmental policy. This review article discusses the relationship between YVs and the environment, by comparing the literature on the environmental values, actions and mobilizations of underprivileged citizens with burgeoning work on YVs, which depicts a more complex relationship with environmental protection. A first section provides an overview of the different studies that have grasped the YVs' main characteristics and their relationship to the environment. The second section shows the coexistence, within the YV, of a distance from "institutional ecology" and a level of environmental concern comparable with the general population's values and behaviour. In the third section, we shed light on both the heterogeneity of the YVs' environmental attitudes and their gradual transformation during the course of the movement itself, towards and environmental justice frame. Finally, the article discusses three major analytical frameworks characterizing the relationship to environmentalism of dominated social groups, to show how working-class early socialization and the daily experience of coping with scarce resources are enhanced and cultivated by the politicization process operating during the course of the movement.

The second issue raised by the YVM is representation by activists and their concern with political violence. Olivier Baisnée, Alice Cavé, Cyriac Gousset, Jérémie Nollet and Fanny Parent's article investigates a core practice of the Yellow Vest Movement in France: its publicizing through social media. The efforts of some individuals to provide an alternative public image of the demonstrations on social media became popular within the movement, especially the productions of videographers emanating from (or sympathizers of) the YVs. These videographers, though diverse in terms of their social backgrounds and concerns, generally all occupied devalued social positions while also possessing a necessary cultural capital (broadly intended) and a degree of politicization that fuelled their self-confidence and ability to raise their voices. The aims of their heterogeneous forms of expression evolved over time, gradually coalescing around the issue of protecting people by tracking and denouncing police violence.

This double special issue offers original contributions based on empirical material to better understand the Yellow Vests through the lens of Mixed-Methods analysis.

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