



YELLOW VESTS (GJ): déjà vu?

Comparative analysis of two social movements:
GJ (Gilets Jaunes) and LKP (Liyannaj Kont Pwofitasyon)

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Fred Reno

Professeur de science politique

Université des Antilles

fredreno7@gmail.com

The Characteristics of a Social Movement

- **Three structuring principles**
 - The principle of totality
 - The Principle of Identity
 - The Principle of Opposition
 - The Principle of opposition
-
- Cf Touraine 1974, Pour la sociologie Paris Edit. Seuil

Origins and similar social demands

Yellow vests (GJ)

- Appeared on November 17, 2018 in France.
- Social movement against rising oil prices
- profound social discontent,
- six deaths, mostly from accidents on the dams, and more than 1,400 wounded

Liyananj Kont pwofitasyon (LKP)

- December 2008 in Guadeloupe: Reactions against rising oil prices
- First Appearance of the LKP which launches in January 2009, a general strike that lasted 44 days
- LKP: 49 organizations (trade unions, independent political parties and associations)
- Mobilization against the cost of living
- 3 dead on the sidelines of the mobilization, including 1 trade unionist in suspicious circumstances

A heterogeneous social base

GJ: an exploded social space •

- Overrepresentation of the petty bourgeoisie:
- Employees : (33%)
- artisans, traders and entrepreneurs (10.5%)
- the strong presence of workers (14%) and pensioners (25%)
- average age of 45

LKP: a strong popular base •

- The main unemployed victims of the expensive life
- Low wages (employees, workers))
- Craftsmen and small bosses including construction (costs of materials)
- The middle classes (or petty bourgeoisie) favorable to a change of society

How to explain the extent of the mobilization of these heterogeneous social movements?

- **Hypothesis:**
- Aggregation to a social movement owes as much, if not more, to the "affinities of habitus" as to shared material interests
- GILETS JAUNES Compte-rendu de Patrick Farbiaz, Les Gilets jaunes. Documents et textes, Vulainessur-Seine, Éditions du Croquant, 2019 Joseph Confavreux (dir.), Le fond de l'air est jaune. Comprendre une révolte, Paris, Éditions du Seuil 2019 Sylvain Bourmeau (dir.), « Gilets jaunes » : hypothèses sur un mouvement, Paris, Éditions la Découverte, 2019 Gérard Mauger Editions du Croquant | « Savoir/Agir » 2019/1 N° 47 | pages 109 à 117

The foundations of the sense of belonging

GJ: social conditions and habitus of proximity

- Proximity of working conditions and salary of employees and workers
- frequency of their matrimonial alliances
- close to the habitus of the workers and employees ,
- Near the habitus of artisans and small traders
- Yellow vest: emblem of road safety, metaphor of the visibility of the mobilized people

LKP: a performative identity discourse

- An appropriate song created for the occasion
- Unifying call to "NOU" versus "YO "
- *La Gwadeloup sé ta NOU, la Gwadeloup a pa ta YO*
- (Guadeloupe is ours, Guadeloupe is not theirs)

GJ: A form of unexpected mobilization: the weight of social networks

Priscilla Ludosky

- May 2018, Priscilla Ludosky, self-entrepreneur from Martinique, launches a petition for the lowering of oil prices at the pump on Change.org
- The petition quickly exceeds the threshold of one million signatures



Act I of GJ Mobilization

- October 10, 2018, two truck-drivers launched a call on Facebook for a "national blockade against rising oil prices"
- November 17, 2018: :
 - Act 1" of the mobilization
 - 2,034 occupied sites,
 - **287,710 protesters** according to the Ministry of the Interior,
 - According to a survey published on December 5, 72% of French people support the movement

Maxime Nicolle et Éric Drouet

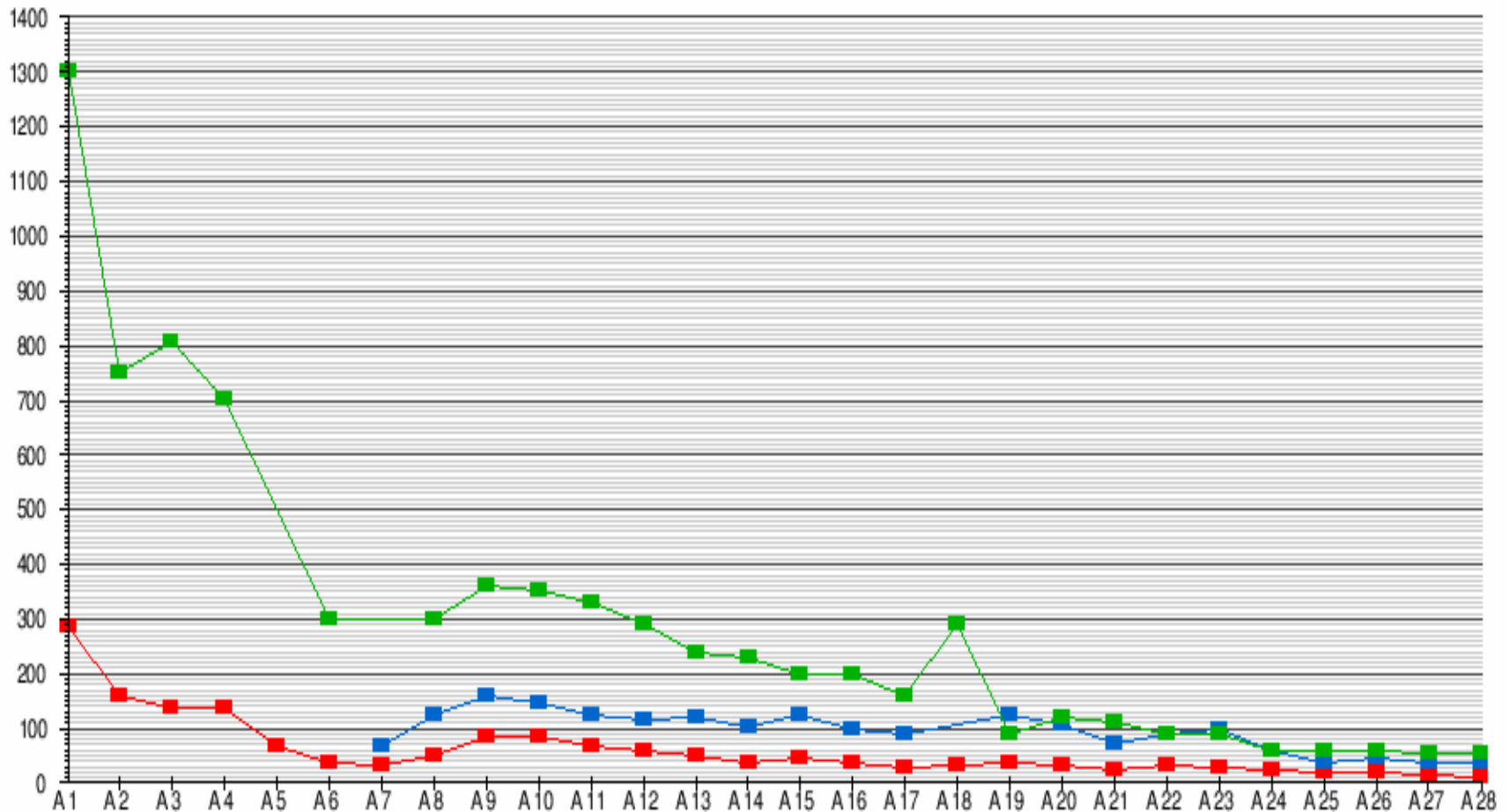


GJ: 28 days of mobilization between November 24, 2018 and May 25, 2019

- 1st December: "acts III » the Arc de Triomphe is vandalized
- December 8, "Act IV" is widely commented abroad: **126,000 protesters**
- December 15: "Act V", fewer people on the streets: the Ministry of the Interior counted 66,000 demonstrators throughout France,
- Saturday, December 22: mobilization down: **40,000 participants** •
- December 29th Act VII 32,000 protesters for the ministry, 68,110 for the yellow vests •
- April 27, 2019 Act 24 23,600 protesters according to the ministry, 60,710 according to the GJ •
- May 25, 2019 Act 28, **12,500 participants according to the ministry, 40,240 according to the GJ**

Graph showing the number of protesters (in thousands) per act

- Ministère de l'Intérieur
- Le Nombre jaune
- France Police - Policiers en colère



LKP: a 44-day general strike



LKP: A new popular movement

- Initiative of the UGTG (General Union of Guadeloupean Workers)
- Gathering around a platform of 137 claims
- Unprecedented movement in magnitude, duration and intensity
- Broad popular support and strong legitimacy

LKP: Ka Nou Vlé (what we want)

- Increase of at least 200 Euros, low wages,
- Tax cuts based on tax justice.
- Significant decrease in all taxes and margins on basic necessities
- Lower fuel tax rates.
- Hiring priority for Guadeloupeans.
- Maintenance and development of agricultural land
- Boosting and valuing islands based on their cultural identity
- Consideration in the programming of the media of the Guadeloupean language and culture
- Stop abominations against foreign workers

From a social claim to a demand for a change of society

GJ: from the petrol to the citizens' initiative referendum

- Questioning the tax system
- Reinstatement of the wealth tax
- Citizen Initiative Referendum
- Displacement of the employers' claim to the state

LKP: a platform of demands

- The social
- Education
- The cultural
- The marginalization of local elected representatives
- A privileged interlocutor: The State

Democracy and social justice claim

GJ:

- Abolition of the privileges of political actors
- Revocation mandate
- Citizen Assemblies
- Weekly mobilization on Round Points

LKP:

- «The People's Aspiration for more justice and social equity »
- LKP and the Guadeloupean people continue to demand the transformation of social relations, the respect of all fundamental freedoms, ... in short the stopping of all pwofitasyon »
- "Fight for A social transformation and the eradication of the capitalist and colonialist system" (Domota 9 January 2009) • Daily mobilization

Political actors, main targets

GJ: «: "an apolitical and non-union movement"

- "we deplore the maneuvers initiated by the various political parties that take advantage of the situation to maintain and fuel their political party wars. [...]
- politicians are not welcome [...]
- The support of the unions is accepted on the sole condition that it does not serve the interests of the trades they represent but that of the citizen protesters »
- See the website "France en colère"

LKP: criticism of local and state political actors

- « Elected officials, community presidents, mayors and parliamentarians have shown the limits of and their mandates and of their skills".
- "The State ... displays its contempt for the people of Guadeloupe. But in front of it stand the sons and daughters of Guadeloupe "
- (Domota, Declaration February 5, 2009)



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The relationship with the media: between control and ambivalence

GJ: Dependence on Facebook and the media

- Multiplication of self-proclaimed spokespersons by "followers"
- Selection of leaders operated by the media: "good customers" against "undesirables"

LKP: control and strategic use of the media

- Multiplication of *Bik a pawol*
- January 24, 2009 negotiations broadcast live on a private TV Canal 10:
- "The images of the negotiations meetings were terrible ... we scored points for 4 days, we could show that we knew our records better than the representatives of the State ... we could show point by point what was pwofitasion »
- (William p.105)



LKP a claim for equality

- "It's amazing: we suffer exclusion at work, employment discrimination ... we are treated as" ultra-peripheral "and when we ask for social equality, we are called racist.
- Yet, at no time in our history have we sought to dominate anyone. Nothing has changed in terms of class and race relations.»
- (Elie Domota le Monde 24 mars 2009)



A request for Respect and Recognition

- "We would be good for music, for football, and even for the Miss France contest, but when it comes to accessing managerial positions, there is a problem. We ask for respect "(Domota, Le Monde 24 March 2009).).
- "What I believe is that nothing is done for the economic development of Guadeloupe. Everything is done to make it a land of consumption of surpluses of the European Union. Everything is done so that the Guadeloupeans are zombies in Guadeloupe. ...
- And if we do not remedy this situation very quickly, starting by restoring the sociological, professional and economic balance that corresponds to the demographic distribution of the different components of Guadeloupean society ... it will be chaos ". (E. Domota, Le Figaro

The Responses of the State

GJ: Social Responses and Great Debate

- TV broadcast on December 10th, by Emmanuel Macron
- an increase of 100 euros per month for employees
- The cost of the measures announced by the executive is estimated at 10 billion

LKP: Social Responses and « Etats Généraux »

- March 4, 2009 Bino agreement on the increase of 200 euros for low wages
- Lower prices for basic necessities •
- 70 million for the construction of social housing •
- Etats Généraux de l'Outre-Mer (EGOM)

GJ: The Great Debate

- In an attempt to defuse the crisis, the executive is launched a major national debate from mid-December 2018 to mid-March 2019.
- This consultation proposed to convey the wishes of the French around four major themes
- ecological transition, taxation, public services and democratic debate
- The Government excluded immigration, the death penalty, voluntary termination of pregnancy and same-sex marriage from consultation

LKP: Les Etats Généraux



- EGOM proposed by President Sarkozy
- April and November 2009 several themes:
 - Being yourself in the Republic
 - Take a bigger share in the public management of local affairs
 - Being an actor in an endogenous and sustainable development
 - - Building together a more fraternal republic
 - - Rely on a State that plays its full role

The issue of violence

- It is difficult to pose that of the protesters without questioning its link with the symbolical and policing violence of the State .
- Does not have the same scope in both contexts.
- In the Caribbean, state violence is often associated with a colonial history In the hexagon it is characterized by a magnitude and consequences perhaps unpublished

Mobilization in action

GJ: Beautiful neighborhoods and places of power, blocking roads

- Champs Elysees
- Concorde
- Ministry
- The Elysee
- Free tolls
- Roadblocks
- Blocking gas-stations

LKP: Commercial superstores

- Closures of the shops
- Roadblocks
- Closures of gas-stations
-

L'avenue des Champs Elysée le soir du 24 novembre 2018



Policiers face aux manifestants



What policy directions

Where to place the GJs

- A truly apolitical movement?
- A movement, infiltrated, manipulated?
- A movement of "little whites" recovered by the extremes and in particular the National Rally (formerly Front National)

LKP: the weight of the UGTG (general union of Guadeloupean workers) and separatists

- The UGTG union, a component of the "patriotic camp", is replacing the pro-independence organizations
- Influences the organization and the voice of the LKP
- Elie DOMOTA Secretary-General of the UGTG is also spokesperson of the LKP
- "the UGTG is a political construct serving the people of Guadeloupe ..." (UGTG May 2008)

No Importation of Yellow Vests into CFDs (French Dependencies of the Caribbean)

- A dozen protesters in Guadeloupe who demonstrated with posters and sporadic "snail operations".
- 18 November 2018: violent movements in the Reunion Island French Department of the Indian Ocean
- November 20: The island is blocked by roadblocks erected by "yellow vests". the prefect banned traffic from 21:00 to 06:00 in half of the towns of the island.



MERCI!

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rassemblement sur un rond-point de Cissac-Médoc (Gironde), en décembre 2018. © Régis Duvignau/Reuters



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