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Analysis of French media discourses on women's participation in armed violence: the case of jihadist groups.

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Tuesday morning, 22 March 2016. The school is closed that day. It's 'pedagogical day'. I'm at home, so is my brother. I'm still asleep. I hear my mobile phone, which I'd left downstairs in the living room, ringing non-stop. It's 10 o'clock. It's my mother, who's tried to call me and my brother several times. She comes to check that we're home and warns us not to go out. Two bombs exploded around 8am at Zaventem airport, killing many people. Shortly after 9am, another explosive device was detonated in a Maelbeek metro train. Again, more victims. We have just learned that Belgium is the target of terrorist attacks. I won't hear from my mother for the rest of the day. The phone lines are jammed. Impossible to call, receive or send messages. It's 7pm when she finally comes home. The feeling of invincibility I had as a teenager was gone. Just as during the Paris attacks in January and November 2015, which dealt a heavy blow to our democratic ideal, I was caught up in my emotions that day: fear, incomprehension, anger, dazedness, feverishness...

I was 16 years old. And for the 2nd time in my life, in less than a year, I'm aware that the major tragedy that has just occurred is going to mark me forever. Admittedly, I'm not one of the victims, nor are any of my family or friends. But I feel concerned, touched in the heart and in the head. I listen non-stop to the news channels, switching from television to my smartphone, from Twitter to the on-line newspapers that keep us informed almost 24 hours a day, minute by minute. Certain words resonate, not to say 'reason', more than others: terrorism, Islamism, radicalism, Salafism, jihadism. I think that the events in Paris and Brussels played a role in my choice of study. This need to comprehend the incomprehensible.

But a new dimension is emerging in the issue of radicalisation and armed jihad. The growing importance of women. Some journalists and experts seem surprised and concerned by this when they discuss terrorism in general and the latest attacks in particular. On the night of 3 to 4 September 2016, three young women, Inès Madani, Ornella Gilligmann and Sarah Hevouët, were arrested while planning to detonate a car filled with gas canisters near Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. This is the first time that a terrorist attack involving only women has been foiled in France. I myself am struck by this incursion of the feminine and gender into the security debate. In less than 2 decades, the discourse around the role of women in warfare has evolved. Since United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, "there have been several calls to increase the participation of women in civilian, police and military

components of peacekeeping activities"[1], but in 2015, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242 now recommends "considering not only women but also gender as a cross-cutting theme to be taken into account in counter-terrorism practices and in preventing and combating violent extremism"[2]. While I was trying hard not to be trapped by gender stereotypes, here I was, jumping in with both feet. I found myself thinking of these women necessarily as victims, with no free will, subjected to the hate speech of their father, brother or husband. I couldn't stop there. I had to think further. I hope that this foreword, Mesdames, Messieurs, will have shed some light on my motivation for choosing this subject for my dissertation a little less than 10 years after the events.

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[1] Nations, U. (no date) *Origines | Journée internationale des femmes | Nations Unies*, *United Nations*. United Nations. Available at: https://www.un.org/fr/observances/womens-day/background (Accessed: 17 September 2023)

[2] Europe commission (no date) *Le rôle du genre dans les activités de prévention et de lutte contre l'extrémisme violent*, *European Commission - Migration and Home Affairs*

Introduction

For nearly 20 years, terrorist attacks in Europe have placed the issue of 'countering radicalisation' at the heart of the concerns of public authorities and the media in France. In the academic world, the notion of radicalisation, previously marginal, has become central to the study of terrorism. Researchers have turned their attention away from the root causes of extremist involvement, which are difficult to pin down, to the processes and mechanisms by which violent acts are committed. This interest reflects a change in approach, with the adoption of tools from the sociology of mobilisation and collective action. Understanding the 'how' rather than the 'why'. Studying individual trajectories and the psycho-social constructs that lead to violence. But tackling the issue of radicalisation involves a major difficulty: the need to define precisely what it is. Radicalisation can have both cognitive and behavioural aspects. In the United States, for example, the focus is mainly on behavioural radicalisation, whereas in Europe, particularly in France, greater importance is attached to the cognitive aspect of radicalisation.[3] This divergence of views inevitably prompts us to reflect on the complexity of the term 'radicalisation'. What is considered radical in France, such as Salafist Islam, may be considered perfectly normal in Saudi Arabia or Iran. Similarly, liberal humanism, which rejects all forms of transcendence, was once suspected and labelled dangerous radicalism two and a half centuries ago. Because of its association with deviant forms of thought, the concept of 'radicalisation' can easily become a tool for stigmatising any 'unconventional vision'. So we will think of radicalisation, as defined by Xavier Crettiez (2016) as "the gradual and evolving adoption of a rigid way of thinking, an absolute and non-negotiable truth, whose logic structures the worldview of the actors, who use violent repertoires of action to make it heard, most often within clandestine, formalised or virtual structures, which isolate them from ordinary social references and give them a grandiose projection of themselves".[4] Some of the media and political discourse sometimes confuses the notions of Islamism, Salafism and "jihadism".[5] Islamism is a generic term for movements advocating a political role for Islam. It covers a wide range of organisations, from parties integrated into the democratic process to radical groups. Salafism is a fundamentalist movement advocating a return to the principles of early Islam.

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[3] Crettiez, X. (2016) 'Thinking about Radicalization', *Revue francaise de science politique*, 66(5), pp. 709–727.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 712
[5] In order not to validate their communication strategy, Dounia Bouzar recommends using inverted commas when the term "jihadist" or "jihadism" is used to describe individuals associated with extremist groups that use violence and claim to be Muslim. Bouzar explains that although these terrorist groups seek to present themselves in this way, it is important to stress that their actions and objectives do not correspond to the Muslim concept of jihad as it has been defined for centuries in Islam (cf. Bouzar & Caupenne (2020)). However, to facilitate reading, we will not use these inverted commas in the rest of our work.

Although it is largely apolitical and non-violent, its extremism facilitates radicalism towards jihadism. Finally, jihadism represents the violent fringe of Islamism, using terrorism to impose its vision of Islam. It relies on a warlike reinterpretation of jihad to justify its actions and pure terror, regarding all other Muslims as apostates.[6] Although there are links between these currents, they differ in their doctrines and methods. It is therefore essential not to equate Islamism, Salafism and Jihadism, in order to better understand the complexity of movements within contemporary Islam.

Contemporary jihadism was born in the 1980s, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. To combat the Red Army, an alliance was formed between the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and radical Afghan Islamist movements. Thousands of foreign fighters, particularly Arabs, were called up for the "jihad" in Afghanistan, including the Palestinian Abdallah Azzam, considered to be the spiritual father of modern jihadism. Azzam profoundly modified two key concepts of Sunni Islam: "jihad" and "martyrdom", transforming the former into an individual obligation for every Muslim and facilitating the involvement of foreign fighters. Traditionally, jihad was understood to take two forms: the "greater jihad", designating the effort that every Muslim had to make to become a better believer, and the "lesser jihad", which concerned armed combat, mainly of a defensive nature.[7] The tactical alliance forged by the West with the most radical Islamists in Afghanistan laid the ideological foundations and facilitated the emergence of today's jihadist networks. France was the first European country to be hit by jihadist terrorism in the 1990s. These attacks were perceived as being linked to foreign conflicts and not to religious radicalisation or internal social problems. Conventional anti-terrorist measures (such as the Vigipirate plan) protected France from major attacks in the 2000s. It was only with the mass departures of young French people for Syria from 2012 onwards, and the attacks by Mohamed Merah and others in 2015-2016, that the issue of radicalisation and prevention became a priority.[8] Today, public and scientific debate has taken up this issue: understanding the reasons for jihadist involvement, preventing radicalisation and encouraging the reintegration of extremists. These have become major issues in France as policies are put in place to tackle them.

As we have just seen, awareness of jihadist radicalisation and its implications in France is relatively recent. In addition, since the 2015-2016 attacks in France claimed by the Islamic State organisation, the involvement of women in jihadist groups, particularly in terrorist attacks,

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[6] El Difraoui, A. (2021b) 'Introduction. Islamisme, salafisme, djihadisme', in. Paris cedex 14: Presses Universitaires de France (Que sais-je ?), pp. 6–10

[7] El Difraoui, A. (2021a) 'Chapitre premier. La naissance du djihad global', in. Paris cedex 14: Presses Universitaires de France (Que sais-je ?), pp. 11–49.

[8] *Ibid.*

has been the subject of growing new media attention. While their involvement in violent acts is not a new phenomenon, it continues to arouse astonishment and incomprehension. Women's involvement in jihadist violence has long been ignored or played down in French public debate. Women were relegated to the passive role of "companions to jihadists". But in recent years, the growing involvement of women, whether in jihadist networks, terrorist acts or within armed groups themselves, has become a reality that can no longer be ignored. This development raises a number of questions: How have the media reported on this feminisation of jihadist violence? What stereotypes or representations do they convey about these women involved in extremism? We will try to provide some answers to these questions.

When a woman commits a suicide attack, the discourse produced differs significantly from that used when the act is perpetrated by a man. This difference reflects the persistence of stereotyped representations based on gender in the media. Far from being a passive reflection of reality, media discourse plays an active part in its construction. It disseminates representations, value systems and power relationships that influence the worldview of individuals and the societies in which they live. The media frame issues, prioritise information, dramatise or play down certain facts, thereby activating 'reality effects' that are imposed on audiences. They are active producers of meaning that create social support. Discourse analysis focuses on the modes of enunciation and the effects of meaning in a text. Heir to linguistics and the social sciences, it places discourse in its socio-historical context in order to identify the underlying symbolic and political issues. Discourse analysis pays particular attention to the semantic, rhetorical and argumentative processes that run through statements. The aim of this work will therefore be to analyse the gendered discursive devices used in the French press to report on women's involvement in armed jihadist groups, and thus to understand how the media represent women's participation in jihadist groups and what implications these representations have for understanding women's role in armed conflicts. The formulation of our working hypotheses was inspired by Laura Sjoberg and Caron E. Gentry, according to which 'deviant' women who commit armed violence are analysed by researchers in the light of these three narratives: the mother narrative, which explains women's violence in terms of their maternal instinct (the need to protect their children, for example); the monster narrative, which describes violent women as monsters, mad, more dangerous and unpredictable than men; and the prostitute narrative, which attributes women's violence to extreme or deviant sexuality. These narratives serve to ostracize violent women, to distinguish them from 'good' mothers and wives, and thus to deny their political agency.[9] In this paper, we will therefore attempt to test the

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[9] Gentry, C.E. and Sjoberg, L. (2008) 'Profiling terror: gender, strategic logic, and emotion in the study of suicide terrorism', *Austrian Journal of Political Violence*, 37(2), pp. 181–196.

hypotheses according to which, on the one hand, media representations of women's participation in jihadist groups can influence public perception and government policies, by positioning these women as passive actors who are manipulated or under male influence rather than as autonomous actors. On the other hand, female jihadist involvement is frequently psychologised and depoliticised in dominant media representations, which fail to recognise their ideological motivations and political agentivity. By combining a critical discourse analysis with a feminist approach, in particular the theory of feminist positioning, we aim to shed light on the way in which these women's identities are constructed in the media.

In the first part, the theoretical part, we will begin by reviewing the literature on the various concepts used in our work, such as media discourse, gender, social representations and armed violence against women. We will then present the theoretical framework used, justifying the use of critical discourse analysis and feminist positioning theory to study our subject, before specifying the research interest of this theme. In the second part, the practical part, we will attempt to verify our working hypotheses using TXM software, which will enable us to carry out a lexicometric analysis of a corpus of press articles from three French dailies with distinct editorial lines, *Le Figaro*, *Libération* and *Le Monde*. The articles selected for our lexicometric analysis will focus, on the one hand, on the attack on Charlie Hebdo (12 dead), the hostage-taking at the Hyper Cacher (4 dead) and the shooting in Montrouge (1 dead), and on the other hand on the attempted terrorist attack with a gas canister near the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris, on the night of 3 to 4 September 2016, as well as on the so-called 'gas canister trial' that took place in 2019. This is the first time that a terrorist attack involving only women has been foiled in France. This trial marks the first time that women have appeared before a specially constituted assize court for acts of terrorism. In short, these events illustrate the emergence of a new phenomenon in France: the direct involvement of women in violent terrorist projects based on jihadist ideology. Their trial in 2019 marks a turning point in the judicial recognition of this shift. A lexicometric analysis will reveal recurring lexical associations and possible gender biases in media coverage of women's participation in jihadism. This empirical work will enable us to validate or invalidate our initial hypotheses concerning recurring gender bias in media coverage of the phenomenon under study.

Part 1: Theoretical exploration

1. Literature review

Before presenting the construction of our research object in greater detail, it is relevant to provide a few contextual and definitional elements. This conceptual and theoretical section aims to clarify and define the main concepts used in this research, namely media discourse, gender, social representations and armed violence against women. The aim is to clarify the way in which these notions are linked and articulated in the production and dissemination of certain visions of the world by the media. We will begin by analysing how the media, as a means of producing discourse in the public arena, contribute to the construction and dissemination of social representations. Media representations convey certain gendered conceptions of male and female roles. We will define the notion of gender and show how the media tend to reproduce a stereotyped view of gender relations. We will then look more specifically at media representations of women involved in armed violence, a marginal phenomenon but one that reveals the gendered logics at work. The aim is to understand how these concepts are articulated in the production of a gendered media discourse that imposes itself as a relevant, albeit restrictive, reading grid for women involved in armed violence. This conceptual review will subsequently inform our empirical analysis.

1.1. Media discourse

Discourse is a fundamental concept in the social sciences and has been the subject of numerous theorisations in philosophy, linguistics and discourse analysis. In this chapter, we propose to explore the origins of this concept, its main theoretical meanings, and the methodological approaches that derive from it. The term discourse has a multitude of meanings depending on the theoretical perspective. Nevertheless, we can identify two main conceptions: discourse as a concrete statement and discourse as a situated social practice.[10] In a narrow sense, discourse refers to a particular statement, a linguistic sequence produced in a specific communication situation. But discourse can also be understood in a broader sense, as the set of statements that constitute a field of knowledge at a given time.[11] Discourse is then a historically situated system of representations. In addition, certain currents of thought insist on the constructive dimension of discourse, which does not simply reflect reality but participates in its

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[10] Charaudeau, P., Maingueneau, D. and Adam, J.-M. (2002) *Dictionnaire d'analyse du discours*. Paris: Seuil.
[11] Maingueneau, D. (2009) *Les termes clés de l'analyse du discours*. Nouv. éd. revue et augmentée. Paris: Édition du Seuil (Points Essais, 618).

creation. Discourse is a social practice that gives meaning to the world, while at the same time being subject to power relations.[12] Indeed, according to Hager's definition, discourse is a "ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices".[13] This is why it is necessary to understand discourse as a social activity and not as a purely linguistic object, in order to better understand the evolution of social phenomena, relations between interlocutors, relationships of domination, ideologies, etc. Discourses are acts with a performative value and a desire to influence. Far from being a consensual concept, the notion of discourse refers to multiple theoretical meanings, from the singular statement to historicised discursive formations. This plurality is reflected in the diversity of the analysis methods used. The study of discourse has become an essential part of contemporary social science.[14]

Discourse analysis made its major appearance in France in the 1960s, in conjunction with various currents of thought such as structuralism, the philosophy of language and Lacanian psychoanalysis. 1969 became a pivotal year for French discourse analysis when the journal Langages published a special issue, edited by J. Dubois and J. Sumpf, entitled "*l'Analyse du discours*", followed by the publication of M. Pêcheux's *Analyse automatique du discours* and M. Foucault's *Archéologie du savoir*. This work follows on from Zellig Harris's work in the United States on the distributional analysis of discourse.[15] This analysis of discourse, in the psychoanalytical sense of the term, aims to break down the text in order to reach its underlying unconscious content. The text was seen as a deceptive whole. Its apparent continuity had to be broken in order to reveal another, hidden discourse. The analyst had to detect the invisible flaws in the texts, cut them up into fragments (words, syntactic structures, etc.) and recombine them to produce an interpretation in terms of "class struggles".[16] Discourse analysis looks at the ways in which media, political and public messages are expressed, linking them to their social and institutional context. This approach is based on linguistics, but emphasises the links between discourse, social structures and actors. Discourse analysis does not stop at the sentence but looks at statements attested in context. It links verbal and non-verbal discourse with the

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[12] Angenot, M. (2008) *Dialogue de sourds: traité de rhétorique antilogique*. Paris: Mille et une nuits (Essai).

[13] Hajer, M. and Versteeg, W. (2005) 'A decade of discourse analysis of environmental politics: Achievements, challenges, perspectives', *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 7(3), pp. 175–184.

[14] Charaudeau, P. (2009) 'Dis-moi quel est ton corpus, je te dirai quelle est ta problématique', *Corpus*, (8), pp. 37–66.

[15] Maingueneau, D. (2012) 'Que cherchent les analystes du discours ?', *Argumentation et Analyse du Discours*, (9).

[16] Maingueneau, D. and Angermuller, J. (2007) 'Discourse Analysis in France. A Conversation', *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 8.

institutions and actors who express and interpret them. Discourse analysis studies the use of language in a given context. Part of the interpretive and constructivist tradition of the social sciences, this approach considers that there are multiple socially constructed realities rather than a single reality governed by immutable natural laws.[17] In effect, language acts as an ideological filter on the world: "language shapes or constructs our notions of reality, rather than labelling that reality in a transparent and direct way".[18] Language is therefore not a faithful reflection of social reality, but a situated construction that conveys a particular vision of the world. Linguistic meanings are largely determined by the values and attitudes of the dominant culture, that is, they are socially constructed. In this way, terms that are initially non-sexist or feminist can lose their intended meaning when integrated into a sexist or racist linguistic community. To name is to make exist in discourse. The name given is not neutral; it conveys a certain vision of reality. Naming is in itself a source of meaning. As Sophie Moirand explains, the activity of naming "participates in the construction of representations arising from the experiences that speakers have with the objects of reality".[19] By naming events in a certain way, social groups, individuals and the media disseminate categories of interpretation that influence our understanding of the world. Naming implies a positioning in relation to the object named. Behind the choice of words lie opinions, value judgements and ideologies. In this way, naming is seen "as both a social and a linguistic practice, because we always name on the basis of our representations and categorisations, but also because it always involves taking a position in relation to the object named".[20] So the naming of events by the media is the result of a collective activity, involving the positioning of journalists and audiences, rather than a unidirectional act by the media. In the end, it is essential to study the ways and means of naming events if we are to fully grasp the way in which a discourse constructs definitions of reality and produces meaning about the world. It is one of the keys to critical analysis of discourse.[21] If discourse consists of a set of statements that contribute to the construction of social reality, what about the discourse produced and disseminated by a central player in our societies: the media?

Over and above their information function, the mass media - the press, radio, television and the internet - produce specific discourses that circulate in the public arena. We can thus speak of a media discourse. We propose here to explore the specific features of media discourse

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[17] Hajer, M. and Versteeg, W. (2005)., *op cit*.

[18] Ehrlich, S. and King, R. (1994) 'Feminist Meanings and the (De)Politicization of the Lexicon', *Language in Society*, 23(1), pp. 59–76.

[19] Moirand, S. & Reboul-Touré, S. (2015). Nommer les événements à l'épreuve des mots et de la construction du discours. *Langue française*, 188, pp. 105-120.

[20] Calabrese Steimberg, L. (2012) 'The Act of Naming: New Perspectives on Media Discourse', *Langage et société*, 140(2), pp. 29–40.

[21] Lemarier-Saulnier, C. (2016) 'Cadrer les définitions du cadrage : une recension multidisciplinaire des approches du cadrage médiatique', *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 41(1), pp. 65–74.

and its critical analysis from a communicational perspective. According to the sociologist P. Charaudeau, the media is a "specialised organisation whose vocation is to respond to a social demand as a duty of democracy".[22] According to Brown, the media operate according to "a set of linguistic practices (in the broadest sense) that make it possible to present selective definitions of reality. These media linguistic practices continually construct and reconstruct social problems, crises, enemies and leaders, creating a succession of threats and assurances".[23] So, far from being a transparent reflection of reality, media discourse stages and constructs it according to social logics and political stakes. The media frame information by highlighting certain elements rather than others. They define what is central and what is anecdotal. The notion of framing is central to the analysis of media discourse. In concrete terms, media framing consists of a set of choices concerning the selection of subjects covered or not, the angle from which the subject is approached (choice of facts, causes, etc.), the place given to the different actors, the terms used to describe events, and the images and symbols associated with the story.[24] Framing refers to the way in which the media select certain aspects of an event or problem and highlight them in their treatment of the news. Framing influences the public's interpretation of events. It pre-orients the viewer by providing specific ways of reading the news.[25] According to Sophie Moirand, media communication "is constructed through the mediation of a great diversity of discourses borrowed from a lesser diversity of social worlds and linguistic and/or cultural communities".[26] Far from being neutral, media discourse conveys systems of norms and power relations. The study of media discourse and its power issues is therefore essential if we are to question the production of information and consent in our contemporary societies. Several currents have set out to deconstruct the way media discourse works: positivist content analysis, which studies corpora using statistical processing; semiology, which looks at the signs and rhetoric of media messages; linguistic analysis of the linguistic processes at work in texts; and critical discourse analysis, influenced by the Frankfurt School, which places texts in their socio-historical context.[27] These perspectives, though different, all aim to denaturalise media discourse by revealing its ideological implicits hidden

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[22] Charaudeau, P. (2011). Les médias et l'information: l'impossible transparence du discours. 2e édition. revue et augmentée. (Coll. Medias recherches). Bruxelles: De Boeck
[23] Brown, K.E. (2011) 'Muriel's wedding: News media representations of Europe's first female suicide terrorist', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 14(6), pp. 705–726.
[24] Lafon, B. (2019) *Médias et médiatisation. Analyser les médias imprimés, audiovisuels, numériques*. Fontaine: Presses universitaires de Grenoble.
[25] Lemarier-Sualnier, C., (2016)., *op cit*.
[26] Moirand, S. (2015) 'Entre discours, langue et mémoire : une analyse de la communication médiatique comme discours verbal et visuel'. Presses universitaires de Rennes.
[27] Bonnafous, S. and Temmar, M. (2007) *Analyse du discours et sciences humaines et sociales*. Paris: Ophrys (Les chemins du discours).

beneath the 'veil of objectivity'.[28] Ultimately, far from claiming to be objective, analysis of media discourse reveals that it constructs a certain social reality through the dissemination of specific systems of representations and values. Deciphering its underlying mechanisms is essential to understanding the manufacture of consent in our contemporary societies.

1.2. Gender

Since the 1970s, the concept of gender has become central to contemporary social science. Inspired by the pioneering work of American feminists, this concept allows us to reflect on the social and cultural construction of differences between the sexes, freeing us from biological determinism. Early feminist researchers insisted that the study of women would not simply introduce new subjects, but would also require a critical reappraisal of the underlying assumptions and norms governing existing research.[29] Applied to media analysis, this concept offers relevant keys to deconstructing the gendered representations conveyed by media discourse. It is from this perspective that we wish to show how this concept constitutes a congruent tool for analysing the media coverage of the still marginal phenomenon of women's involvement in armed jihadist groups.

In English, according to the Oxford Dictionary (2015), the word 'gender' has a history dating back to the 14th century, deriving from the Old French '*gendre*', which itself has its origins in the Latin '*genus*'. In addition to its grammatical meaning, it has also been used to mean "the state of being male or female", although this meaning only really became important in the middle of the 20th century. The dictionary specifies that "sex" tends to refer to biological differences, whereas "gender" refers more to cultural or social differences.[30] The concept emerged in the 1970s in American feminist circles, breaking with an essentialist perspective on the differences between the sexes. The term "gender" aims to separate the biological sex of individuals from their socially constructed sexual identity. Unlike chromosomal sex, which is innate and immutable, gender refers to the roles, behaviours and attributes culturally associated with masculinity and femininity, which vary according to time and society.[31] This constructivist approach developed with the work of Joan Scott, who made gender a relevant category of historical analysis for analysing power relationships. It makes it possible to denaturalise male domination by showing that it is based on historically situated power

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[28] Bourdieu, P. (1996) *Sur la télévision: suivi de L'emprise du journalisme*. Paris: Liber éditions (Raisons d'agir).

[29] Scott, J. W. (1986). Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis. *The American Historical Review*, *91*(5), 1053–1075.

[30] Chiland, C. (2016) 'Qu'est-ce que le genre ?', *Neuropsychiatrie de l'Enfance et de l'Adolescence*, 64(1), pp. 1–6.

[31] Oakley, Ann. 1972. Sex, Gender and Society. London : Temple Smith.

relationships. Gender has thus become a tool for the critical analysis of inequalities between the sexes.[32] This initial conception of gender as synonymous with social relations between the sexes has, however, been criticised for its universalism by post-structuralist, queer and post-colonial approaches. These emphasise the diversity of gender constructions in different cultural contexts, and their interweaving with other relations of domination.[33] In her seminal work Gender Trouble (1990), the American philosopher Judith Butler proposes a post-structuralist conception of gender. For her, gender is performative: it is constructed and constantly reinforced by practices that quote dominant norms in a more or less subversive way. Gender is not the expression of an internal identity but is played out in actions and discourses.[34] This approach emphasises the fluidity and indeterminacy of gender. While the notion of 'gender' refers to the identities, roles and representations associated with masculinity and femininity in a society, that of 'gender relations' refers more broadly to all the social structures that organise power relations between the sexes.[35] The concept of gender focuses on symbolic and normative constructions, while gender relations also encompass the institutional, economic and political dimensions that produce and maintain inequalities between men and women.[36] Like Danièle Kergoat, some sociologists prefer to speak of 'social relations' rather than 'gender', in order to illustrate the macro-sociological dynamics that permeate the entire social body. This distinction makes it possible to link the analysis of gender norms with that of the material structures of women's oppression. This is the line taken by materialist feminists such as Christine Delphy and Danièle Kergoat who, adopting a macrosociological perspective, consider that gender is inseparable from the sexual division of labour that came into being with capitalism. This division assigns women to the domestic reproductive sphere, allowing their free labour to be exploited by men. Gender is thus directly linked to the relations of economic production and the patriarchal structure.[37] This materialist analysis sees gender more as a stable system of oppression of women. Despite their differences, these multiple perspectives theorise gender as a historically situated power relationship that naturalises inequalities and hierarchies between the sexes and within each sex. The concept has gradually established itself as a key notion in women's and feminist studies, while continuing to be the subject of stimulating debate about its

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[32] Scott, J. W. (1986)., *op cit.*

[33] Parini, L. (2010) 'Le concept de genre : constitution d'un champ d'analyse, controverses épistémologiques, linguistiques et politiques', *Socio-logos . Revue de l'association française de sociologie*, (5).

[34] Butler, J. (2006) *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge (Routledge classics).

[35] Kergoat, D. (2001) 'Le rapport social de sexe. De la reproduction des rapports sociaux à leur subversion', *Actuel Marx*, 30(2), pp. 85–100.

[36] Bereni, L. (ed.) (2014) *Introduction aux études sur le genre*. 2. éd. rev. et augm., 3. tir. Louvain-la-Neuve: De Boeck (Ouvertures politiques).

[37] Kergoat, D. (2001)., *op cit.*

uses and limitations. It is undoubtedly a fertile critical tool for analysing the social and symbolic constructions of femininity and masculinity.[38]

By revealing the constructed dimension of gender identities, this concept offers stimulating tools for studying media production on the role of women in armed violence. It can be used to uncover the gender stereotypes that structure the journalistic approach to this marginal issue. Traditional representations of the gentle, peaceful woman, confined to the domestic sphere, are at odds with the figure of the fighter or terrorist. A gendered analysis of the discourse would reveal the media's strategies for resolving this dissonance. The concept of gender also helps to historically contextualise the emergence of the phenomenon under study. Women's armed involvement often accompanies moments when gender relations in society are called into question. It can therefore be linked to changes in the status of women and their struggles for emancipation.

In conclusion, the concept of gender is a relevant tool for analysing media discourse on women's participation in armed violence. It sheds light on the stereotypical visions that underlie the media coverage of this phenomenon. In addition, it allows us to place this phenomenon in a historical perspective that is attentive to changes in gender relations. Applying it to the study of discourse on women jihadists promises to renew the usual reading grids.

1.3. Social representations

The concept of social representations emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in response to the limitations of traditional individualistic approaches in social psychology. Drawing on insights from sociology, anthropology and linguistics, the theory of social representations emphasises the importance of the social context in shaping individual cognition and behaviour.[39] Firstly, this section will explore the theoretical foundations of social representations, their applications in research, and the criticisms and debates surrounding their use. Secondly, we will see that social representations disseminate stereotypes, particularly gender stereotypes, which help to perpetuate inequalities between men and women. By examining these key aspects of the concept of social representations, we can better understand how individuals and groups create and maintain shared meanings, and the implications of these processes for social interaction and social change.[40] At the heart of social representation theory is the concept of a

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[38] Hirata, H.S. and 2. éd. augm (eds) (2004) *Dictionnaire critique du féminisme*. Paris: Presses Univ. de France (Politique d'aujourd'hui).
[39] Jodelet, D. (1989) *Folies et représentations sociales*. Paris, Presses universitaires de France
[40] *Ibid.*

representational field, which refers to the shared symbolic universe on which individuals and groups draw to make sense of their social world. This field is made up of a complex network of ideas, values and beliefs shaped by language, communication and culture. The role of language is particularly important in the theory of social representations, because it is through language that individuals negotiate and construct shared meanings.[41] Communication processes, such as media discourse, also play a key role in the formation of social representations, as they can influence the importance and accessibility of particular ideas and values.

The concept of "representations" was coined in the 1960s by Serge Moscovici, in his now classic study of the appropriation of psychoanalysis by the French. Taking up the Durkheimian notion of "collective representations", he shows that each group develops shared knowledge to understand reality.[42] This concept subsequently became increasingly popular in sociology and social psychology, notably with Denise Jodelet's work on collective memory in relation to mental illness. There are several theoretical currents that have sought to explain the formation and functioning of social representations. The central core theory postulates that all representations are organised around a central core, made up of stable elements that give the representation its meaning.[43] The sociogenetic approach emphasises the organising principles of representation, which vary according to the social integration of individuals and the symbolic relationships between social groups.[44] As for the theory of organising principles, this approach considers that each representation has organising principles which determine its nature, meaning and evolution . Social representations can be defined as the set of beliefs, knowledge and opinions that are developed about a given social object within a group. They are systems of interpretation and classification that enable individuals to apprehend their environment and the objects that surround them.[45] According to Moscovici, all social representations are formed from a "figurative nucleus" that transposes a concept or scientific theory into a concrete image that is meaningful to the group. This two-stage process is known as objectification, which schematises and materialises the abstract object into a coherent image, and anchoring, whereby the object is given a meaning and usefulness for the group by fitting into the pre-existing

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[41] Rateau, P. and Lo Monaco, G. (2013) 'La Théorie des Représentations Sociales: orientations conceptuelles, champs d'applications et méthodes', *CES Psicología*, 6(1), pp. 1–21.

[42] Moscovici, S. (1961). *La psychanalyse, son image et son public*. Pairs : Presses universitaires de France

[43] J.-C. Abric (1976) *Jeux, conflits et représentations sociales*. PhD diss. Université de Provence.

[44] Rouquette, M.-L. (1973). La pensée sociale. In S. Moscovici (Ed), *Introduction à la psychologie sociale*, t. 2, 299-327. Paris : Larousse

[45] Jodelet, D. (1989)., *op cit.*

thought system.[46] These two mechanisms make the strange familiar and instrumental, integrating it into a network of socially shared meanings.

Social representations fulfil several essential functions: a cognitive function: they enable knowledge to be integrated, make unfamiliar things familiar and stabilise the social environment; an identity function: they define the identity and uniqueness of groups; and an orientation function: they guide practices and behaviour.[47] By virtue of these functions, social representations contribute to the construction of a consensual and shared vision of reality within a society. However, social representations are not static; they evolve in line with changes in the group's social environment. Their content changes as a result of interactions and collective experiences. What's more, different versions of the same representation often coexist, held by competing sub-groups. By providing common frames of reference, they create social links and strengthen group cohesion. Disseminated and repeated in interactions and communication, social representations delimit the thinkable and the unthinkable, the acceptable and the unacceptable. They exert a real social constraint on individuals and practices.[48] So far from being neutral and static, social representations are, on the one hand, conducive to a certain vision of the world, norms and values, and on the other, dynamic and constantly evolving under the effect of daily communicative practices.[49] Analysing them reveals the symbolic and ideological issues running through a society.

Social representations have a prescriptive power that affects practices. By conveying stereotypes, they legitimise and perpetuate inequalities between social groups. This is particularly true of gender stereotypes, which are deeply rooted in people's minds. Stereotypes are "shared beliefs about the personal characteristics, usually personality traits but also behaviours, of a group of people".[50] They attribute certain properties to all members of a social category in a simplistic and fixed way. They are based on prejudice and conceal the internal heterogeneity of groups. Ethnic and gender stereotypes are typical examples. For example, the dominant social representations assign women to the domestic sphere and motherhood, and men to the public sphere and rationality. These stereotypes naturalise and justify male domination, confining women to subordinate roles.[51] They conceal the diversity of

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[46] Moscovici, S. (1961)., *op cit.*

[47] Rouquette, M.-L. and Rateau, P. (1998) *Introduction à l'étude des représentations sociales*. Grenoble: Presses Univ. de Grenoble (La psychologie en plus, 6).

[48] Moliner, P. (2001) *La dynamique des représentations sociales : pourquoi et comment les représentations se transforment-elles ?* Presses universitaires de Grenoble.

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] Leyens, J.-Ph., Yzerbyt, V. & Schadron, G. (1992). Stereotypes and social judgeability. In W. Stroebe & M. Hewstone (Eds.) *European Review of Social Psychology*, 3, pp. 91-120. Chichester:Wiley, (p.24)

[51] Bem, S.L. (1993) *The lenses of gender: Transforming the debate on sexual inequality*. New Haven, CT, US: Yale University Press (The lenses of gender: Transforming the debate on sexual inequality), pp. 244.

individual trajectories behind a fixed collective identity. In this way, social representations contribute to the reproduction of gender inequalities.

The concept of social representations has been used in a wide range of research fields, including health, education and politics. Qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, are often used to explore the content and structure of social representations, while quantitative methods, such as surveys and experiments, can be used to measure the prevalence and distribution of particular representations.[52] The emergence of social representation theory is historically linked to content analysis. Content analysis is defined by Laurence Bardin as "a set of techniques for analysing communications which aim, by means of systematic and objective procedures for describing the content of statements, to obtain indicators (quantitative or otherwise) which allow the inference of knowledge relating to the conditions of production/reception (inferred variables) of these messages".[53] The object of this method is communication, which, according to Moscovici, is the fundamental process in the formation of social representations. Social representations provide the material for social communication. In this process, social representations root the discourse in a symbolic context familiar to the two classic participants in communication. Content analysis is therefore a tool that must take into account the dynamics of social representations and the important role they play in the "production/reception" of statements.[54]

The media play a central role in the production and dissemination of social representations through their symbolic power to 'define' and 'name' reality. They select certain facts and integrate them into narratives that make sense to the public, through interpretative framing.[55] However, journalists rely on pre-existing value systems, stereotypes and collective imaginations to construct their representations. They are subject to economic, ideological and professional constraints that guide media treatment. Media representations thus emerge from the encounter between logics specific to the journalistic field and a socio-cultural context that limits the production of discourse that breaks with common sense.[56] Far from being passive reflections, media representations reinterpret and transform social representations through their widespread dissemination. Reciprocally, the latter partly constrain and frame journalistic work. This constant interaction between contexts, media logics and the production of meaning invites us to go beyond a linear conception of the effects of the media on social representations. These

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[52] Breakwell, G. M. E., & Canter, D. V. (1993). *Empirical approaches to social representations*. Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press.

[53] Bardin L. (1977), *L'Analyse de contenu*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France

[54] Negura, L. (2006). L'analyse de contenu dans l'étude des représentations sociales. *SociologieS*.

[55] Bourdieu, P. (1996)., *op cit.*

[56] Charaudeau, P. (2011) 'Chapitre 16. Les médias nous manipulent-ils ?', in *Les médias et l'information*. Louvain-la-Neuve: De Boeck Supérieur (Médias-Recherches), pp. 217–238

are complex, co-constructive phenomena that a detailed socio-semiotic analysis must understand in terms of their circulation and negotiation.[57] In short, it is through an articulated analysis of the social conditions of emergence of media representations and their feedback effects on the collective imagination that we can understand the formation of social representations.

1.4. Women's political violence

Although a minority phenomenon, women's participation in armed political violence is a long-standing one that has long been a blind spot in the dominant studies of terrorism. Feminist approaches have sought to historicise this phenomenon, reveal its motivations and criticise its delegitimisation. Historically, in the collective imagination, armed violence has been the preserve of men. The qualities of strength and aggression supposedly inherent in men make them more inclined, and more legitimate, to wield weapons. On the other hand, women's involvement in armed violence has mainly been seen as an exceptional phenomenon rather than a rational choice.[58] Yet in all 4 specific waves of terrorist acts identified by Rapoport, there were women who took part. During the "anarchist wave" (1880-1920), we find Fanny Kaplan, a member of the anti-Bolshevik revolutionary socialist party who, in 1918, attempted to assassinate V.I. Lenin. During the "anti-colonial wave" (1920-1960), Ulrike Meinhof co-founded the Red Army Faction, a pro-socialist organisation that used violence to support liberation movements in the Third World. During the "new wave of the left" (1960 to 1979), and the "religious wave" (1979 to the present day), women played many roles, ranging from simple support to the perpetrators of acts of terror in insurrections and uprisings in Pakistan, Chechnya, Palestine, Iraq and India.[59] Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, the study of the motivations of female terrorists, particularly suicide bombers, has become a crucial research topic for understanding gender differences in terrorism.

When women commit violent acts, their transgression of gender norms arouses incomprehension and fear. Attempts are made to find explanations, often pathologising, for what appears to be a contradiction. Their political agentivity is denied in favour of personal and emotional motivations. Unlike men, violent women do not enjoy any recognition of the political

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[57] Hall, S. *et al.* (1994) 'Codage/décodage', *Réseaux. Communication - Technologie - Société*, 12(68), pp. 27–39.
[58] Alison, M. (2004) 'Women as Agents of Political Violence: Gendering Security', *Security Dialogue*, 35(4), pp. 447–463.

[59] Banks, C. (2019) 'Introduction: Women, Gender, and Terrorism: Gendering Terrorism', *Women & Criminal Justice*, 29(4–5), pp. 181–187.

legitimacy of their armed struggle. Their violence is perceived as illegitimate, shocking and pathological, and is subject to victim-based or culturalist interpretations. Hence Bodin's question: "How can we think about women's violence when violence against women is by far the most obvious?".[60] If, in the feminist tradition that has prevailed since the 1960s, the fight for women's liberation has always consisted of denouncing the symbolic, moral and physical violence to which women are subjected on a daily basis by men, it seems inappropriate to address violence committed by women. Focusing on the damaging effects of male domination obscures the issue of female violence, unless we see it as a legitimate response to oppression. As Virgili points out: "by making visible the women who are actors in history, we have to accept the idea that belonging to the camp of the victims or participating in emancipation must be combined with the more 'problematic' illumination of the dark areas: those of the women who are actors in violence".[61] This blind spot calls for a rethink of the definitions and frameworks for analysing violence in order to recognise the role of women, not just as victims but also as potential agents.

According to the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, terrorism is defined as "any act intended to cause death or serious injury to civilians or non-combatants, the purpose of which, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population or to compel a government or an international organisation to do or to abstain from doing any act".[62] While this term is certainly strongly contested by representatives of the Muslim community, it is the attacks carried out, in particular, by organisations that claim to be inspired by Islam that monopolise the greatest political and media attention. Indeed, women's involvement in armed violence has most often been seen as an emblem of resistance, particularly during uprisings that enjoy significant popular support. Although they are not considered to be the real leaders of these factions, the upsurge in suicide attacks perpetrated by women since the early 2000s raises the question of their actual role in the conduct of armed operations, particularly in the context of jihadist violence.[63]

Initially, the researchers will highlight the psycho-sociological characteristics in order to understand the whys and wherefores of the predominantly male membership of terrorist groups and to establish a 'standard profile' of the terrorist. In her article "The Causes of Terrorism", Martha Crenshaw examines the causes of terrorism at the situational, organisational

[60] Bodin, D. *et al.* (2005) 'Une approche de la criminalité féminine à travers l'exemple du hooliganisme', *Criminologie*, 38(2), p. 195.
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] Paul, M., Jean (2017) *Les Médias face au terrorisme: manuel pour les journalistes*. UNESCO Publishing., p.20
[63] Boutron, C. and Le Basque, M. (2019) 'Combattantes, terroristes ou victimes ? L'engagement des femmes dans la violence armée', *Les Champs de Mars*, 33(2), pp. 91–113.

and individual levels and establishes a theoretical framework distinguishing three levels of causality: contextual conditions, the rational strategy of terrorist organisations and individual psychological motivations.[64] She concludes that there is no standard psychological profile of the terrorist, but rather common explanatory variables such as the structural preconditions that make terrorism possible, the immediate triggering events, the rational calculation of terrorist organisations, and the individual psychology of terrorists, which would make it possible to explain the causes of terrorism.[65] Randy Borum will attempt to analyse the conceptual models developed since 2001 to understand the process of radicalisation towards violent extremism. While there are few empirical studies to test the hypotheses of the conceptual models, research that takes account of the multi-determined and multi-factorial nature of radicalisation is needed to understand this phenomenon. Ultimately, Borum highlights the limitations of linear models of radicalisation and calls for new empirical research to grasp the complexity of this psychosocial process.[66] In the same vein, John Horgan denounces reductionist approaches aimed at establishing profiles of terrorists, and proposes instead that emphasis be placed on studying the psychological and social process of the different phases of radicalisation, which would then pave the way for more targeted and effective counter-terrorism interventions.[67]

Following the emergence of the first female suicide bombers in the 1980s in groups such as the Lebanese Hezbollah or the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, women's participation in armed violence and suicide attacks began to be studied more systematically by researchers. While women have historically played supportive roles, the increase in their involvement in suicide attacks in recent years calls into question theories about their propensity for non-violence. Between 1985 and 2006, more than 220 female suicide bombers were recorded, representing almost 15% of the total number of suicide bombers. Moreover, in Uzbek, Chechen and Somali groups, as well as in the LTTE and the PPK, the number of women used as human bombs has equalled, and in some cases even exceeded, that of men.[68] Christopher Harmon goes so far as to claim that today "more than 30% of international terrorists are women, and women are central to membership lists and operational roles in almost every insurgency".[69] As a general rule, left-wing organisations have more women in their ranks than conservative ones. The

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[64] Crenshaw, M. (1981) 'The Causes of Terrorism', *Comparative Politics*, 13(4), pp. 379–399.

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] Borum, R. (2011) 'Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research', *Journal of Strategic Security*, 4(4), pp. 37–62

[67] Horgan, J. (2008) 'From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 618, pp. 80–94.

[68] Speckhard, A. (2008) 'The Emergence of Female Suicide Terrorists', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 31(11), pp. 995–1023.

[69] Nacos, B.L. (2005) 'The Portrayal of Female Terrorists in the Media: Similar Framing Patterns in the News Coverage of Women in Politics and in Terrorism', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 28(5), pp. 435–451.

upsurge in their participation raises questions about their motivations and the implications in terms of gender equality. Speckard also questions how female suicide bombers differ from their male counterparts. The author distinguishes two sets of individual motivations depending on the context of radicalisation. On the one hand, in conflict zones, motivations combine trauma, a desire for revenge and nationalism in the face of occupation or war. Women see it as an act of community defence and an expression of pain. In non-conflict situations, on the other hand, alienation, the quest for identity, the need to belong and identification with the suffering of the world's various communities, usually religious, take precedence. The author concludes that while there are psychological differences, men and women share similar motivations dictated by the context. Ideological and organisational support remain essential for committing suicide.[70] Historically, female suicide bombers were mainly employed by ethno-nationalist separatist groups, but over the last two decades we have seen religious fundamentalist groups, including jihadists, increasingly use female suicide bombers in their attacks. In order to analyse this change, Jessica Davis stresses the need to analyse individual and organisational motivations jointly, from a multi-level perspective, in order to understand women's involvement in these terrorist groups.[71] She also points out that little research has focused on the motivations of terrorist groups in recruiting female suicide bombers. Using the case of Iraq, Davis identifies structural factors, such as pressure on human resources, and factors specific to the organisations, such as the media impact sought. These motivations are seen as a major ideological and operational turning point for jihadism, which is set to spread to other regions.[72] In the same vein, Bloom examines the growing trend of female suicide bombers in terrorist groups around the world, and the strategic interest of terrorist organisations in using women. While the increased media attention generated by these female suicide bombers represents a serious strategic asset, Bloom rejects the idea that it reflects growing gender equality.[73]

Laura Sjoberg and Caron E. Gentry present a feminist critique of the American political science orthodoxy on suicide terrorism, in particular the rational actor approach developed by Robert Pape in his book Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism (2005).[74] On the one hand, the authors refute Pape's central thesis, according to which suicide terrorism is a rational strategic choice made by liberation organisations and their members, and on the other, they denounce the myth of gender neutrality claimed by Pape. His model would value

[70] Speckhard, A., (2008)., *op cit.*
[71] Davis, J. (2013) 'Evolution of the Global Jihad: Female Suicide Bombers in Iraq', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 36(4), pp. 279–291.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] Bloom, M. (2007) 'Female Suicide Bombers: A Global Trend', *Daedalus*, 136(1), pp. 94–102.
[74] Gentry, C., & Sjoberg, L., (2008)., *op cit.*

characteristics traditionally associated with masculinity - such as rationality, objectivity, calculation or competitive strength - while marginalising those associated with femininity - such as emotion, experience, personal attachment or despair. Pape's discussion of female suicide bombers echoes the work of Mia Bloom[75] , who draws a distinction between female and male motivations for suicide terrorism, situating female motivations in the personal sphere and male motivations in the political sphere. The authors then propose three modifications to the dominant approach in order to gain a better understanding of the motivations behind suicide terrorism: firstly, to consider that the double dynamic of feminisation and defeminisation of women terrorists aims to preserve gendered stereotypes. Secondly, to recognise that silence about gender, the emotional or the political does not erase their role as causal factors. Thirdly, to adopt a perspective centred on the emotional to counterbalance the limits of the rational approach. Adopting a relational and gender-aware approach, and reintroducing an analysis of emotions would, in the authors' view, offer a richer, more nuanced and more faithful understanding of the complex reality of suicide terrorism.[76]

While feminist approaches have made women's political violence visible and theorised it, it has to be said that it continues to be treated in a problematic way in the public arena. Numerous studies in information and communication sciences have shown that women's violence is given specific treatment in the media, revealing stereotyped conceptions of gender. The media portrayal of armed political violence differs significantly depending on whether it is perpetrated by men or women. The discourses conveyed reveal gendered conceptions of violence that tell us about the place accorded to women in violent political action. Women's political violence is delegitimised and psychologised in the dominant media discourse, revealing the persistence of gendered role differentiation in armed political action.[77] In the same vein, Katherine E. Brown will attempt to examine how the identity of Muriel Degauque, the first white European female suicide bomber in Iraq, is downplayed in favour of her Muslim identity in media discourse. Through her analysis of media discourse, she reveals three dominant definitions of 'reality' concerning Degauque. Firstly, she is presented as manipulated by her Muslim husband, infantilised and reduced to a domestic role. Her violence is explained by psychological disorders and deviant sexuality, denying her agency. Secondly, her Muslim identity is emphasised in a safe, orientalist narrative. The author concludes that despite Degauque's atypical profile, the media confined her to familiar narratives because of her

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[75] Bloom, M. (2005) *Dying to kill: the allure of suicide terror*. New York: Columbia University Press
[76] Gentry, C., & Sjoberg, L., (2008)., *op cit*.
[77]Cardi, C. and Pruvost, G. (2012) *Penser la violence des femmes*. Paris: la Découverte.

Muslim identity, revealing the pervasiveness of gendered and orientalist constructions.[78] Ultimately, while there is no evidence that the motivations and behaviour of male and female terrorists are fundamentally different, just as there is no evidence of intrinsically gendered political motivations between men and women, this does not prevent the media treatment of women terrorists from reproducing the gender stereotypes present in society and the gendered biases in the coverage of women in politics. In other words, gender stereotypes permeate information about both violent and non-violent political actors. Yet research shows that the clichés conveyed by the media have a considerable impact on the tactical considerations and decisions of terrorist groups, as well as on the actions of women terrorists.[79]   In the first moments of an attack, the media play an essential role in the public interest. As Marthoz points out, attacks "reveal the media, how they operate, their reflexes and routines, but also their principles and values".[80] Terrorists rarely limit the impact of their violence to real victims, relying instead on the media to report on their acts, thereby extending their terror to society as a whole, far beyond the actual victims. Fundamentally, terrorism is violence against civilians with the aim of influencing governments and their citizens to adopt the political changes desired by the terrorists. So the perception that target societies have of women as actors in general, and as people capable of committing violence in host societies in particular, is essential in determining how the use of female suicide bombers can help or harm a group's political cause.[81] In addition, because of the stereotypes and prejudices associated with the female gender, women represent a significant strategic interest in carrying out terrorist attacks. Since they do not arouse the same suspicion as men, they can easily slip through the hands of the law enforcement and security forces, which are essentially made up of men, and thus avoid any search or interrogation. Some authors claim that suicide attacks carried out by women (whether on behalf of secular or religious organisations) are more lethal than those carried out by men and therefore more "effective".[82] Despite this strategic role, women's involvement is reduced to emotional manipulation and following their spouses. The media portray them as mothers, monsters or victims rather than autonomous political actors. Those involved in the fight against terrorism would therefore do well to grasp the gap between the stereotype of the female terrorist and the reality of gendered roles within terrorist organisations.

In conclusion, although a minority, women's participation in armed political violence is a long-standing phenomenon that has long been obscured. Feminist studies have shown that

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[78] Brown, K.E, (2011), *op cit.*
[79] Nacos, B., (2005)., *op cit.*
[80] Paul, M., Jean (2017), *op cit.*, p. 14
[81] Speckhard, A., (2008), *op cit.*
[82] Boutron, C., & Le Basque, M., (2019), *op cit.,* p.96

this blind spot reflects the illegitimacy accorded to women's involvement in armed struggle, which is interpreted as shocking and pathological. However, since the 1980s, the growing involvement of women, particularly as suicide bombers in separatist or jihadist groups, has led to a more systematic analysis of their motivations. Multilevel approaches reveal both individual and organisational logics dictated by the contexts. However, the dominant media discourse continues to deny the agency of female terrorists, who are infantilised or reduced to male manipulators. Gendered constructs persist, despite the changing roles of women in some armed groups. Ultimately, stereotypical representations of women terrorists in the public arena contrast with the complex reality of their violent political involvement. Deconstructing these media biases is necessary to understand the gendered dimension of contemporary terrorism in all its complexity.

2. Theoretical framework

This study is part of a critical analysis of media discourse on women's participation in armed violence, taking the case of jihadist groups. To carry out this analysis, the research is based on a theoretical framework combining two complementary approaches: critical discourse analysis (CDA) and feminist positioning theory. We begin by presenting the theoretical foundations and methodologies of critical discourse analysis (CDA), tracing its emergence in the 1980s at the crossroads of linguistics and critical social sciences. We will set out its key concepts, its main founding works and its contributions to the study of power relations in and through discourse. We will also highlight some of the debates and limitations raised in relation to CDA. Secondly, we will explore the origins of feminist positioning theory, developed since the 1970s by researchers such as Bronwyn Davies and Rom Harré. We will present its central notions relating to the discursive construction of gendered subjects and the possibility of (re)negotiating the positions assigned to them. We will show how this theory sheds relevant light on issues of women's representation and agentivity. Thus, the articulation of these two theoretical-methodological perspectives will guide our analysis of media discourse on the involvement of women in jihadist groups.

2.1. Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis emerged in the 1980s as a result of growing concern about issues of power, domination and discrimination in Western societies, and follows on from Michel Foucault's work on the relationship between discourse, knowledge and power. Critical linguistics focused on the links between language and ideology. At the same time, the development of cultural studies, gender studies and postcolonial studies led to questions about the discursive construction of representations and identities.[83] The dominant narratives and discourses on minorities, women and colonised peoples are being called into question. Discourse analysis is emerging as an approach that enables us to critically study the reproduction of relations of domination in and through language. This approach falls within the epistemological framework of social constructivism, which considers that reality is constructed through discourse rather than simply described or reflected by it.[84] Several researchers have

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[83] Wodak, R. and Meyer, M. (2001) 'What CDA is About - A summary of Its History, Important Concepts and Its Development', in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. 6 Bonhill Street, London EC2A 4PU: SAGE Publications, Ltd.

[84] Van Dijk, Teun A. (2008) 'Critical Discourse Analysis', in Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen, and Heidi E. Hamilton (eds) *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Rpr. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell (Blackwell handbooks in linguistics), p. 851.

helped to structure and theorise this approach. These include Teun Van Dijk, professor of discourse at Barcelona's Pompeu Fabra University, who published the seminal "Handbook of Discourse Analysis" in 1985.[85] Ruth Wodak, a professor at the University of Vienna, also played a key role in the development of CDA through her research into nationalist and xenophobic discourse. Norman Fairclough, a professor at Lancaster University, has proposed a method of textual analysis that combines precise linguistic description and socio-political interpretation. His book "Language and Power"[86] published in 1989 (first edition) is a major reference. The aim of these researchers was to develop a critical approach to studying how discourse contributes to the reproduction of domination in societies. Thus, critical discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language that focuses on how social power, domination and inequality are reproduced, contested and negotiated through texts and discourse in social and political contexts.[87] It examines how discourse structures social knowledge and representations, social relations and social identity. She sees language as a social practice and discourse as constituting society and culture, rather than simply reflecting them. It looks at institutional, media and political discourse to reveal their role in legitimising the social order. CDA reveals what is implicit, presupposed or concealed in texts and statements.[88] Starting from the premise that texts are produced by socially situated individuals, and that discourse is a social operation in which ideologies can be both manifested and generated, CDA is based on the conviction that any type of language can help to create and legitimise various ideologies and forms of discrimination in society. It breaks with positivist conceptions of language as a simple reflection of reality, asserting its constructive and performative nature.[89]

Although it shares common theoretical foundations, critical discourse analysis is not a unified movement and varies considerably from one researcher and school to another. The Vienna school, represented by Ruth Wodak, developed a discursive-historical approach focusing on the socio-political and historical contexts of discourse.[90] The Amsterdam school, represented by Teun Van Dijk and others, pays more attention to the systematic linguistic analysis of texts. In the UK, Norman Fairclough's work combines textual discourse analysis

[85] Schiffrin, D., Tannen, D. and Hamilton, H.E. (eds) (2008) *The handbook of discourse analysis*. Repr. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell (Blackwell handbooks in linguistics).
[86] Fairclough, N. (2015)., *op cit*.
[87] Van Dijk, T (2008)., *op cit*.
[88] Fairclough, N. (2015)., *op cit*.
[89] Van Leeuwen, T. (2008) *Discourse and practice: new tools for critical discourse analysis*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press (Oxford studies in sociolinguistics).
[90] Wodak, Ruth and Meyer Michael (2016) 'Critical discourse studies: History, agenda, theory and methodology', in R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds) *Methods of critical discourse studies*. 3rd edition. London ; Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE

and critical social theory. Other currents, such as the dialectical-relational approach, examine the dialectical relationships between discourse and other social elements. Despite this diversity, CDA is subject to a number of recurring criticisms. It is sometimes criticised for a lack of scientificity, the absence of a unified and systematic methodology, or a tendency to over-interpret texts ideologically.[91] Some also denounce the risk of circularity between discourse analysis and the initial theoretical postulates. Finally, critical discourse analysts are sometimes accused of making value judgements rather than actually explaining discursive phenomena.[92] However, the defenders of CDA generally refute these criticisms, arguing that the scientificity of this approach lies precisely in its critical and reflexive epistemological stance, in the rigour of the articulation between textual analysis and socio-political interpretation, and in the diversity of the methods employed. They also emphasise the need for a committed analysis to bring to light phenomena of domination that are often naturalised.[93]

The methodology of critical discourse analysis varies from one researcher to another and from one current to another, but it has certain points in common. It generally combines a precise linguistic analysis of texts and their formal properties, with an interpretation linked to the socio-political and historical context of the discourse. At the textual level, different analytical tools are used: lexicometry, argumentative analysis, grammar, semantics, enunciative analysis, etc. Some, like Ruth Wodak, combine several complementary methods. Others, like Teun Van Dijk, have developed systematic models of analysis. Norman Fairclough combines a fine textual analysis of discourse with a critical theoretical framework.[94] In this work, the use of TXM software for a lexicometric analysis of the journalistic corpus will enable us to understand the lexical and semantic specificities of this media discourse. This textual analysis is linked to a socio-historical contextualisation that takes into account the conditions of production and reception of the discourse. Critical interpretation aims to bring to light what is implicit or naturalised in the texts in terms of ideology and power relations. CDA thus offers a relevant framework for the contemporary study of discrimination, by denaturalising discourses that may legitimise the domination of certain social groups.[95] It makes it possible to grasp the constructed dimension of the representations conveyed and their inclusion in historical power relations. Its nuanced, reflective approach avoids the pitfalls of 'political correctness' by

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[91] Widdowson, H.G. (1995) 'Discourse analysis: a critical view', *Language and Literature: International Journal of Stylistics*, 4(3), pp. 157–172.
[92] Billig, M. (2008)., *op cit.*
[93] Wodak, R. (2001)., *op cit.*
[94] Fairclough, N. (2015)., *op cit.*
[95] Van Leeuwen, T. (2008)., *op cit.*

emphasising the complex discursive processes underlying exclusion and discrimination. CDA is therefore an invaluable tool for critical research into societal issues.[96]

The critical analysis of discourse finds a privileged field of study in the examination of media discourse. The media (press, television, radio) are key players in the contemporary circulation of discourse at the heart of democratic societies. They wield considerable power in the construction of shared representations and the legitimisation of certain systems of norms and values.[97] CDA provides a critical analysis of how the media help to reproduce or reinforce certain dominant ideologies through their discursive practices. It looks at both the conditions under which media discourse is produced within a journalistic field that responds to specific economic and symbolic logics, and the ways in which it is received by a public in various locations.[98] Numerous studies in CDA have focused on the media construction of minorities, social movements, international relations, etc., bringing to light phenomena of stigmatisation, delegitimisation or the placing on the agenda of certain problems to the detriment of others. For example, in 'The Politics of Exclusion'[99], Wodak and Kryzanowski studied media coverage of immigration and asylum seekers in Austria, while Reisigl and Wodak analysed xenophobic discourse in the Austrian press during the rise of the far-right FPÖ party.[100] CDA calls for a detailed analysis of the linguistic and rhetorical processes at work in media reporting, often revealing biases and blind spots in terms of cultural, gender or class diversity.

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated the relevance of critical discourse analysis in examining the way in which language practices help to reproduce or challenge the social order and power relations. Born at the crossroads of linguistics and critical social sciences in the 1980s, CDA offers a fruitful theoretical and methodological framework for uncovering the links between discourse, ideologies and domination. Its tools are particularly effective in deconstructing dominant media discourses and revealing their biases and unspoken meanings. The critical approach to discourse is thus one of the two strands of the theoretical framework we are using in this work, in conjunction with the feminist theory of positioning. It is precisely to the genesis and contributions of this second perspective that our next chapter will be devoted. We will see how positioning theory, which emerged in the 1980s, offers stimulating tools for

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[96] Baker, P., Gabrielatos, C., Khosravinik, M., Krzyżanowski, M., Mcenery, T., & Wodak, R. (2008). A useful methodological synergy? Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press. *Discourse & Society*, *19*(3), 273–306.

[97] Fowler, R. (2007) *Language in the news: discourse and ideology in the press*. Reprint. London: Routledge

[98] *Ibid*.

[99] Wodak, R. & Krzyżanowski, M. (2009). The Politics of Exclusion: Debating Migration in Austria. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

[100] Reisigl, M. & Wodak, R. (2001). Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism. London: Routledge

analysing the discursive construction of gendered identities and power relations between the sexes. The combination of a critical approach to discourse and a sensitivity to gender issues will enable a nuanced analysis of media discourse on women's participation in jihadist groups.

2.2. Feminist Standpoint Theory

We argue that terrorism experts generally theorise from masculinised norms, and that accounts of women terrorists often portray them as purely driven by emotion, madness or sexuality - in contrast to the supposed rationality of men. These stereotypical characterisations are commonplace in much academic writing on suicide terrorists, which tends to essentialise women engaged in self-murder as weak, emotional, uncontrollable and unfit for political action. Although gender assignment is universal, the content of this assignment is as varied as human experience within global politics.[101] Suicide terrorism exists in a world where cultural practices are structured and described in gendered ways that often wrongly sacralise traits associated with masculinity at the expense of those associated with femininity.[102] A feminist perspective refutes the idea that the political sphere can be understood without taking into account the intimate and emotional. Feminists argue that we must recognise the gendered structure of discourse and action. Feminist experts argue that gender neutrality by omission is by no means neutral. Feminist researchers understand that supposedly 'neutral' interpretations are often based on male assumptions, given the hegemonic power of men and masculinities in the political sphere.[103] The aim of a critical feminist approach is to make visible the discursive mechanisms involved in the (re)production of gender inequalities in and through the media. This is why, in the context of this work on the analysis of media discourse relating to women jihadists, it seems appropriate to adopt a feminist approach, and more specifically to mobilise the theory of feminist standpoint. Embodying a discursive, anti-essentialist and relational approach to gender, the latter provides, on the one hand, adequate conceptual tools for analysing the discursive construction of stereotyped figures of 'the jihadist woman', and on the other, enables media discourse to be placed in the wider context of gender relations and mechanisms of male domination.[104]

The concept of positioning makes it possible to account for the diversity of subjectivities, their shifting nature and the agentivity of subjects in discursive interactions.

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[101] Butler, J. (2006)., *op cit.*
[102] Banks, C. (2019)., *op cit.*
[103] Gentry, C., & Sjoberg, L., (2008)., *op cit.*
[104] Baxter, J. (2003) *Positioning gender in discourse: a feminist methodology*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bronwyn Davies and Rom Harré proposed the concept of positioning as an alternative to that of 'role' for analysing the discursive production of subjectivities in interactions. The authors criticise the dramaturgical approach and role theories, which see people as actors following a pre-established script. In contrast, the notion of positioning enables us to think of individuals as subjects capable of actively positioning themselves in discourse. Positioning refers to the process by which individuals are situated in conversations through narratives in which they assume certain identities. Positions are not fixed but negotiated over the course of exchanges. Davies and Harré show that individuals navigate between multiple and sometimes contradictory positions depending on the discourses available.[105]

Standpoint theory emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as a critical feminist theory of the links between knowledge production and power relations. It is part of the legacy of Marxism (proletarian knowledge) and black American thought (knowledge of African-American women). Figures such as Nancy Hartsock, Hilary Rose and Sandra Harding are associated with it. This theory postulates that knowledge rooted in the lives of dominated women is more reliable and objective than dominant androcentric knowledge. It reveals minority experiences and worldviews.[106] Proposed as a prescriptive methodology to guide future feminist research, feminist standpoint theory challenges the idea of a fixed, universal female identity, and considers instead that women occupy diverse subject positions, depending on their race, class, sexual orientation, etc. Opposing any essentialist vision of a homogenous female condition, it highlights the intersections between gender and other relations of domination that create varied subject positions.[107] It seeks to theorise the way in which women's lived experience can be transformed into protest knowledge through a collective process of political interpretation. The challenge is to create new subjectivities from excluded experiences that challenge the dominant frameworks of knowledge production. Positioning is therefore conceived as an ongoing political effort to collectively develop new frameworks of intelligibility based on marginalised experiences. The aim is to make disqualified voices heard and to reveal the blind spots in dominant androcentric knowledge, in order to transform power relationships.[108]

Positioning theory enables us to analyse the discursive production of subjectivities as a dynamic process negotiated through interaction. Each subject adopts shifting identity positions in discourse. Numerous studies in information and communication sciences have shown that

[105] Davies, B. and Harré, R. (2007) 'Positioning: The Discursive Production of Selves', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20, pp. 43–63.
[106] Bracke, S. & Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2013)., *op cit*.
[107] Harding, S. G. (Ed.). (2004)., *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies*. Psychology Press.
[108] Bracke, S. & Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2013)., *op cit*.

the media disseminate stereotyped representations based on gender. Women are confined to certain simplifying discursive positions.[109] With regard to women jihadists, several studies have shown that the media confine them to typical figures, denying the complexity of their motivations.[110] The stereotypical positions identified include the manipulated victim, the submissive mother, the venal prostitute, and so on. However, according to the theory of positioning, subjects adopt plural and changing identity positions as a result of discursive interactions. Reducing female jihadists to a few fixed positions amounts to essentializing their identity. A detailed analysis of the discursive positions assigned to these women by the media would reveal the stereotyping processes at work and reveal the complexity of their individual journeys. Positioning theory thus provides a relevant framework for deconstructing the media's production of stereotyped figures of 'jihadist' women.[111] Coupled with a lexicometric analysis, it offers tools for uncovering reductive discursive mechanisms.

In conclusion, the value of combining critical discourse analysis (CDA) and feminist standpoint theory as a theoretical framework for a study of media discourse on women's participation in armed violence lies in the complementary nature of these two approaches. CDA makes it possible to analyse how media discourse on this specific subject can reflect and reinforce certain ideologies and power relations. It invites us to examine the language choices, the dominant media framings, the blind spots and the things left unsaid in the journalistic coverage of this issue.[112] Feminist standpoint theory brings a sensitivity to gender issues and relations of domination between the sexes. It leads us to pay attention to the way in which women are represented, named and constituted as subjects in these media discourses. It also invites us to reflect on the place given or not given to the voices and points of view of the women concerned. By combining these two approaches, it is possible to carry out a detailed and complex analysis, which combines both the critical dimension of the discourses and the feminist dimension. This makes it possible to uncover any androcentric biases, gender blind spots and issues of women's agentivity in media coverage of women's participation in violent groups. The intersection of CDA and feminist theory thus offers a rich analytical framework for work on media discourse relating to women and violence.

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[109] Mattelart, A. and Mattelart, M. (1986) *Penser les médias*. Paris: La Découverte
[110] Cf. Cookiescu, 2019 ; Kabashi, 2017
[111] Bendixsen, S. (2013). *The religious identity of young Muslim women in Berlin: an ethnographic study*. Brill.
[112] Baker, P., and all. (2008)., *op cit.*

3. Conclusion and interest of the research

By addressing various concepts and theories, this first theoretical section enabled us to situate our research object within a conceptual framework and an existing state of the art. This part helped us to understand that the involvement of women in violent extremist groups is a phenomenon that, while long-standing, is nonetheless complex and calls into question traditional representations of gender. When women carry out attacks, public opinion reacts with incomprehension and fear. Their violence is mainly perceived as deviant and illegitimate, contrary to the presumed feminine qualities of gentleness and non-violence. The media, by conveying stereotyped representations of these women, fail to recognise the agency of violent women. That is why, in this work, we shall attempt to analyse in detail the discursive mechanisms at work in the press, and in the French media in particular, in order to account for the phenomenon of 'women jihadists'. To do this, we began by discussing the notion of discourse, and in particular the implications of media discourse, which we defined as a social construction of reality conveying systems of norms and power relations. In this way, we understood the importance of the media's role as a social process capable of giving meaning to society, and consequently its influential role in the perception of terrorist events in our society. We therefore dwelt on the concept of gender and social representations, two analytical tools that proved relevant in analysing media discourse on women's participation in armed violence, enabling us to shed light on the underlying opinions and attitudes of social representations, and to shed light on the stereotyped visions that underlie the media coverage of this phenomenon.

In order to verify our working hypotheses that media representations of women's participation in jihadist groups can influence public perception and government policies, by positioning these women as passive actors manipulated or under male influence, and that women's jihadist involvement is frequently psychologised and depoliticised in dominant media representations, which fail to recognise their ideological motivations and political agentivity, we adopted a theoretical framework articulating critical discourse analysis and feminist standpoint theory. On the one hand, by looking at the links between discourse, knowledge and power, critical discourse analysis makes it possible to reveal the androcentric biases and relations of domination underlying media discourse. On the other hand, by inviting us to pay attention to the discursive positions assigned to women and to their ability to (re)negotiate these assignments, feminist standpoint theory brings an awareness of gender issues and the discursive construction of identities. The intersection of these two approaches, one critical and the other feminist, will enable us to study the power relations and gender issues at stake in the production of media discourse on this phenomenon.

The originality of our approach lies in the combination of a lexicometric analysis using TXM software, of a media corpus combined with a qualitative reading of interpretation, through the prism of feminist standpoint theory and critical discourse analysis. By adopting quantitative tools to process a vast set of media texts, this study will be able to reveal recurring lexical trends and usages that are difficult to detect through manual analysis. From a feminist perspective, our work will be able to shed light on the dominant representations and discursive mechanisms at work, and validate our hypotheses on the dissemination of stereotyped representations in the French media. However, our research also has certain limitations that need to be taken into account. On the one hand, our limited corpus of three press titles does not allow us to generalise our results to all the media. Secondly, in the absence of interviews with the editors of the articles selected in our corpus, the interpretation of lexical choices and discursive positions remains hypothetical. Finally, we could consider extending our theoretical framework to include other complementary concepts from gender studies. Nevertheless, our research opens up stimulating prospects for a better understanding of the media's production of consent and the evolution of gendered representations in our society.

Having defined the concepts relevant to our analysis in the theoretical section and justified the methodological framework we have chosen, it is now time to move on to the empirical phase of our research. The practical part will set out the approach adopted to collect, process and analyse the data in order to answer our question about the representations conveyed in media discourse about women's involvement in armed jihadist groups. This empirical analysis will make it possible to verify the validity of our initial hypotheses and to deepen our understanding of the representations disseminated in the French media concerning the growing involvement of women in armed jihadist movements.

Part 2: Empirical Analysis

1. <u>Data collection method.</u>

In the previous section, we demonstrated the value of analysing the representations conveyed in French media discourse on the involvement of women in armed violence, particularly in jihadist groups. This analysis raises two major methodological challenges: how to collect and analyse the information published in the media on this subject? And how can the large volume of data generated be processed? To answer these questions, it appeared necessary to adopt a digital research approach, mobilising textual data analysis techniques. After exploring different methods, we decided that a lexicometric analysis of a corpus of texts using TXM software was the most appropriate way to carry out our empirical analysis. We opted for a three-stage approach: firstly, the creation of a corpus of media texts, secondly, the automated analysis of this corpus using lexicometric tools, and thirdly, the interpretation and visualisation of the results. Our corpus of texts will consist of 150 articles from the daily newspapers *Le Figaro*, *Le Monde* and *Libération*. This methodology is in line with work on social representations, while incorporating the benefits of digital technology for processing a massive corpus. It will enable us to carry out a detailed statistical analysis of French media discourse on our subject, to extract the most salient representations and to present them in an interpretative form. First, we will justify our journalistic choice concerning the selection of newspapers used in our lexicometric analysis. Secondly, we will detail the stages in the construction of our corpus and its main characteristics. Finally, we will explain the ins and outs of the lexicometric approach.

1.1. <u>Journalistic choice</u>

Between the need to inform the public and sensationalist treatment of events, the media play a crucial role in the coverage of subjects related to terrorist attacks. This coverage reveals their position in society and influences the impact of terrorism on our representations. We might assume that journalistic ethics require journalists to adhere to basic principles, such as accurately characterising acts and avoiding the risk of conflation, interpreting events and explaining the underlying causes in a nuanced way, rigorously verifying information to combat rumours, treating all the communities concerned in a balanced and inclusive way, making critical use of figures and statistics without manipulating perceptions of the phenomenon, and

fairly portraying violence without sensationalism.[113] However, we can assume that each treatment is coloured by the editorial line and political orientation of the newspaper. Because of its influence on the reactions of public opinion and the authorities, the framing given to the coverage of terrorism is decisive. The editorial line of the media and their choice of journalistic coverage are defined by their propensity to detach themselves from ideological a priori, univocal theories and peremptory equations.[114] Media coverage of terrorism varies according to the degree of sensationalism and professionalism of each medium, but also according to their political orientation. Some will seek to play down the violence, while others will magnify it.[115] This is why, in order to increase the validity and reliability of our lexicometric analysis, we are going to mobilise three press titles with relatively opposing editorial lines. This will enable us, firstly, to compare the discourses and analyse any differences in media treatment of the subject according to political orientation, and thus highlight the ideological positions specific to each title in the way it approaches our theme. Secondly, this approach will enable us to cover a wider spectrum of French media discourse on this issue, and consequently to avoid the risk of bias induced by the choice of a single title which might have steered the discourse in a particular direction. We will therefore be better able to objectify the media mechanisms at work by observing them in three distinct areas. The editorial opposition will be between *Le Figaro*, *Libération* and *Le Monde*.

Founded in 1826, *Le Figaro* is one of the oldest dailies in the French press. Under the management of Hippolyte de Villemessant, the newspaper adopted a satirical, centre-right editorial line. In 1854, it became a general news daily. During the Second World War, Le Figaro established itself as France's leading newspaper despite the German occupation, which forced it to cease publication for part of the war. After the war, while maintaining a moderate and liberal tone, the newspaper defended the values of the Republic. Bought by the Dassault group in 2004, *Le Figaro* maintains this centre-right editorial line. In addition to its print version, the daily has expanded onto the web with lefigaro.fr, which offers live news and a range of features. Close to the positions of the Republican right, it defends a rather traditionalist vision of society. Its readership is drawn from senior executives and professionals.[116]

Founded clandestinely in 1944 by Hubert Beuve-Méry, *Le Monde* appeared for the first time on 19 December 1944. From the outset, the newspaper was committed to independence

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[113] Marthoz, J-P., (2017), *op cit.*
[114] *Ibid.*
[115] Damian-Gaillard, B., Montañola, S. and Saitta, E. (2021) 'Chapitre 2. Une médiatisation essentialisée', in *Genre et journalisme*. Louvain-la-Neuve: De Boeck Supérieur, pp. 97–139.
[116]Bernard, A. (2007) 'Le Figaro', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, (93), pp. 202–204.

and objectivity. Gradually, it established itself as a benchmark title in the French and international press. While maintaining a centre-left editorial line, *Le Monde* asserts its independence from political parties. In 1995, the newspaper launched the lemonde.fr website, which is now one of France's leading news websites. With 2.9 million readers every day, the national daily ranks first in terms of readership.[117]

Founded in 1973 in the wake of May 68 at the instigation of Jean-Paul Sartre, *Libération* was initially positioned on the extreme left with a collective and libertarian approach. In 1981, the paper adopted a more traditional format, while remaining firmly anchored on the left. Over the years, *Libération* has evolved towards a centre-left, non-partisan editorial line. Since 2020, following financial difficulties, the title has been owned by an endowment fund for the independent press, supported by the Altice group. *Libération* maintains a daily print edition and is developing its web presence. Its readership is urban, young and educated.[118]

So, the mobilisation of these three newspapers - *Le Figaro*, *Libération* and *Le Monde* - is of particular interest for an analysis of media discourse on a given subject. The first, more conservative, expresses the point of view of a traditional France attached to the established order. The second, which is anchored on the left, represents a progressive and multicultural France. The third represents a more nuanced point of view. This editorial opposition will enable us to analyse any differences in media treatment of women's participation in armed jihadism, depending on the newspaper's political line. Our corpus therefore includes three unique but undoubtedly complementary perspectives on our subject of study.

1.2. The corpus

According to Charaudeau's definition, a corpus is "a collection of linguistic data (in the form of written or oral texts, various documents, observations, reasoned empirical observations or provoked surveys) which is constituted as an object of analysis".[119] He reminds us that the constitution of the corpus responds to a specific problem, linked to a specific theoretical approach. So the corpus is part of a heuristic approach, proposing a particular intellectual path based on basic hypotheses. The aim is to discover facts and ideas, in other words, to interpret. Depending on the type of object studied, we can identify three main problem areas that

[117] *Le Monde.fr* (2021) 'L'histoire du « Monde » au fil des années', 12 February. Available at: https://www.lemonde.fr/le-monde-et-vous/article/2021/02/12/l-histoire-du-monde-au-fil-des-annees_6069693_6065879.html (Accessed: 16 September 2023).
[118] *La Croix* (2023) 'Libération fête ses 50 ans : dix dates qui ont marqué l'histoire du journal', 18 April. Available at: https://www.la-croix.com/Culture/Liberation-fete-50-ans-dix-dates-marque-lhistoire-journal-2023-04-18-1201263886 (Accessed: 16 September 2023).
[119] Charaudeau, P., (2009)., *op cit*., p.39

Charaudeau calls cognitive, communicative and representative, each of which determines a type of corpus. Our object of study falls within the third type of problematic: representative and interpretative, whose object of study is defined through hypotheses of socio-discursive representations, and whose corpus is made up of signs-symptoms representative of dominant discourses.[120] According to Charaudeau's typology, our analysis of the representations conveyed in media discourse on women's participation in armed violence, through a corpus of targeted media texts, is part of a representational and interpretative problematic.

The choice of lexicometry as a methodology will therefore enable us to work on a corpus of texts and to observe four major dimensions. Firstly, at the level of the overall corpus: firstly, by observing the frequency of lexical forms (or polyforms) in a corpus (whether these forms are characterised by overuse, average use or underuse). Secondly, by observing the fixation of forms in repeated segments. Thirdly, by observing the formation of lexical networks. Secondly, in a comparison between parts of the corpus: by observing the contrast or similarities between texts from the point of view of the distribution of forms or polyforms.

Our corpus of texts is made up of 150 newspaper articles (see appendix 1). 50 newspaper articles come from the newspaper *Libération,* 50 newspaper articles come from the newspaper *Le Monde*, and the remaining 50 newspaper articles come from the newspaper *Le Figaro*, published between 1/01/2015 and 31/12/2020. These articles were selected according to various keywords ("femmes kamikazes ", "attentat", "femmes djihadistes")[121] inserted in the search bar of each newspaper, and then classified in chronological order of publication date for each newspaper in a Word document. We constructed and partitioned our corpus using the Alceste method, which will then enable us to input it into the TXM lexicometric analysis software. Alceste is a textual data analysis method developed in France in the 1980s by Max Reinert. According to Reinert, all discourse expresses lexical worlds, that is, a set of words that structure thought and give coherence to discourse. A lexical world emerges when words form a coherent sentence or part of a text.[122] Reinert proposes to revisit the notion of lexical worlds through lexical analyses of word co-occurrences in simple sentences using the Alceste method. By identifying the appearance of specific forms in a discourse, this method makes it possible to identify the latent signifying structures in a corpus of text and to extract the dominant themes and representations.[123] The idea is to identify sets of recurring words referring to similar themes. Their presence or absence reveals representational worlds. The texts contain words and

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[120] *Ibid*.
[121] English translation: "women suicide bombers", " terrorist attack", "women jihadists"
[122] Reinert, M. (1986), *op cit*.
[123] *Ibid*.

groups of words. Alceste examines these sequences and classifies them according to their frequency.[124] This classification highlights the dominant lexical worlds, expressed by co-occurring words. It is based on the hierarchical grouping of elementary textual units. Major lexical trends corresponding to representations are thus identified.[125] The special feature of this method is that all our texts (in this case our newspaper articles) are grouped together in a single Word file, each of which is then separated by a tag system that allows the TXM software to distinguish each text. To distinguish the texts, we have assigned the following tags to each of them: *text_ ; *date_ ; *journal_. Partitioning the corpus according to these different tags will enable us to compare sub-corpuses with each other, according to date or type of newspaper, for example. We then carried out a number of cleaning operations in order to obtain maximum homogeneity in the grammatical forms of our corpus by eliminating all superfluous textual data. Firstly, we removed all the cumbersome elements that were unnecessary for our analysis, such as repetitions of the author's name, the time of publication of the article, hypertext links, etc. Secondly, after lower-casing the entire corpus, we checked the spelling and grammar of each text (changing "a" to "à" and "e" to "é ;è" where necessary), and removed any potential line breaks, etc. We also standardised certain words to make our analyses easier (we changed all forms beginning with "jihad" to "*djihad*"). The resulting text was encrypted in .txt format, and then saved in a TXM text file. As the table below shows, we have a text corpus comprising 150 newspaper articles from *Le Monde*, *Libération* and *Le Figaro*, consisting of 215402 words and 14,756 different graphic forms, with the maximum frequency of appearance of the same form being 12,263 times.

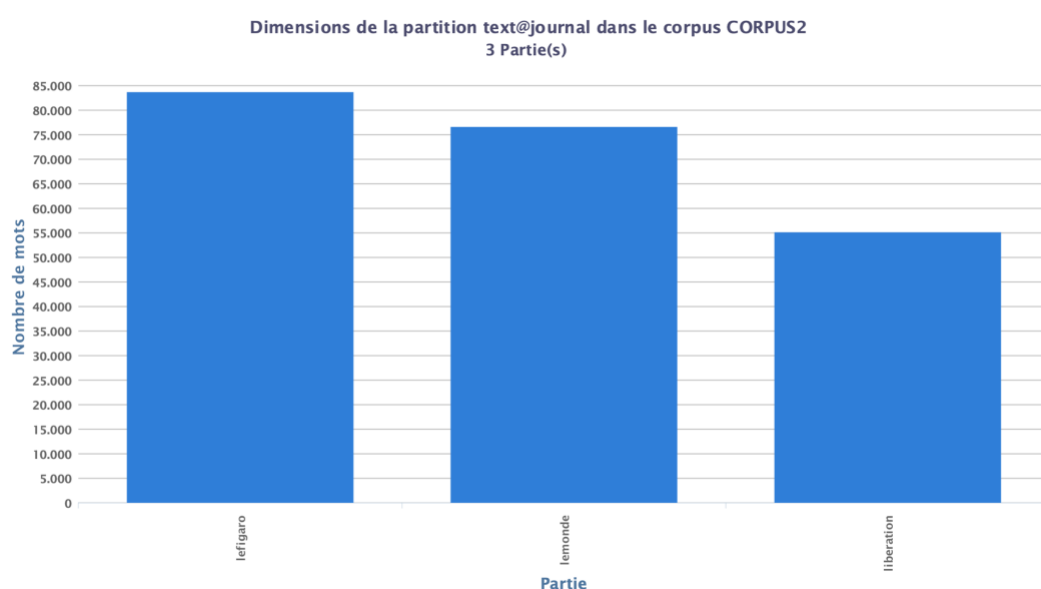| Number of texts	150
Total number of words	215 402
Number of different forms	14756
Average text length	994
Maximum frequency	12263
Total number of hapaxes[126]	6784

Table 1: General characteristics of the corpus

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[124] Marpsat, M. (2010), *op cit*.

[125] Reinert, M. (2007) 'Postures énonciatives et mondes lexicaux stabilisés en analyse statistique de discours', *Langage et société*, 121–122(3–4), pp. 189–202.

[126] Lexical forms with a single occurrence

To go into a little more detail, the longest text is *texte_088 (article from the newspaper *Le Figaro,* entitled "*Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame: le cas d'Inès Madani au cœur de l'audience*"[127] and published on 26 September 2019) with 6897 words. The shortest text is *texte_021[128] (from the newspaper *Libération,* entitled "L*e départ d'Hayat Boumeddiene vers la Syrie*" and published on 17 February 2016) with 143 words. Using the "Partition" operation in the TXM software, we were able to use the table below to determine the total number of words in each newspaper (*Le Figaro, Le Monde, Libération*). *Le Figaro* is the newspaper with the most words, with a total of 83680 words, followed by *Le Monde* with 76596 words, and *Libération* with 55126 words.

Graph 1: Partition of the total number of words for each newspaper

1.3. The lexicometric approach

Lexicometrics is a methodology resulting from the convergence of quantitative analysis of textual discourse and modern data processing statistics. It enables the human and social sciences to process very large volumes of text and to qualify phenomena that were previously done manually. Lexicometrics is therefore not a theory but a methodology for the statistical counting of words, initiated by authors such as Guiraud and Muller.[129] Many studies adopt a

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[127] Julien Licourt, « Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame : le cas d'Inès Madani au cœur de l'audience », Le Figaro, 26 septembre 2019

[128] Libération, « Le départ d'Hayat Boumeddiene vers la Syrie », 17 février 2016

[129] Fiala, P. (1994) 'L'interprétation en lexicométrie. Une approche quantitative des données lexicales', *Langue française*, 103(1), pp. 113–122.

micro perspective to study the discourse of specific actors or groups. They are interested in what is said, the intended effects and the ways in which it is expressed. Different approaches coexist: rhetoric to analyse the argumentative and persuasive dimension, narrative for the narratives and stories conveyed, institutional to understand the construction of beliefs, critical to reveal power relationships. Each perspective sheds light on a facet of the actors' discourse and its underlying issues.[130] Text analysis software tools have been developed in connection with different disciplinary fields, reflecting their own methodological postulates. Some literature researchers, such as Etienne Brunet, wanted to study the vocabulary of writers in order to analyse their style, and attached importance to the lemmatisation and categorisation of words. Others in socio-politics were interested in intertextuality, studying the circulation of textual sequences. This led to the development of software for analysing lexical segments and co-occurrences. In psychoanalysis, Max Reinert aimed to identify the signifying structures of texts through co-occurrences, and by identifying the dominant 'lexical worlds' through segmentation and classification.[131] We can see that each discipline has its own concerns, which dictate the software functionalities. Lemmatisation, statistical tables, etc. differ according to tradition. Today, however, we are seeing a blending of different functionalities that transcends disciplinary roots.

To analyse our corpus of press articles, we will use TXM software. TXM is an open source platform developed by ENS Lyon for textometric and lexicometric analysis of digital corpora. TXM integrates a set of statistical and visual tools to quantitatively study the distribution of words in a text.[132] Lexicometric analysis is therefore a method of statistical analysis of the vocabulary used in a text or a corpus of texts. It makes it possible to quantitatively study the use of words in a text in order to better understand its style, register, theme, etc. Lexicometric analysis counts the frequency with which words appear, identifies associations between words (co-occurrences) and measures the diversity of vocabulary used.[133] It uses computer tools to automatically process large volumes of text. More specifically, lexicometric research "is responsible for examining, on the basis of corpuses of texts submitted for comparison, how the terms exchanged in the public arena around issues of power reflect the struggles of symbolic appropriation or dispossession that are played out in the very place of

[130] Blanc, A., Peton, H. and Garcias, F. (2019) 'L'analyse lexicométrique des macro discours par les vocabulaires – enjeux théoriques et méthodologiques', *Finance Contrôle Stratégie*, (NS-6).

[131] Leblanc, J.-M., Fleury, S. and Née, É. (2017) 'Chapitre V. Quels outils logiciels et pour quoi faire ?', in *Méthodes et outils informatiques pour l'analyse des discours*. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes (Didact Méthodes), pp. 123–161.

[132] Borriello, A. (2022), « Powerpoint du Cours d'Analyse des Discours Médiatiques », ULB

[133] Reinert, M. (2007)., *op cit.*

exchange".[134] The main objectives of this method are to determine the specific vocabulary of a text or an author, to highlight the dominant themes addressed in a corpus, to compare the vocabulary of several texts or authors, and to follow the evolution of vocabulary within a text or between historical periods. In short, lexicometric analysis studies the statistical distribution of words in texts to reveal their linguistic structures and meaning. It is a quantitative method widely used in discourse analysis.[135] In concrete terms, the TXM software will enable us to calculate word frequency, identify co-occurrences between terms, construct comparative lexical tables and carry out a specificity analysis and a factorial correspondence analysis.

The lexicometric analysis will enable us to identify the specific vocabulary used by the media when dealing with a given subject. For example, identify the recurring terms associated with women jihadists (wives, mothers, recruits, etc). And so, to check whether the narrative narratives put forward by Gentry and Sjoberg in academic research to explain women's violence are also visible in the media. We can analyse the associations between terms. For example, are women systematically associated with subordinate roles ("femmes de djihadistes"[136]) or is their own action recognised ("femme kamikaze"[137])? We will also be able to identify any biases or stereotyped representations in the dominant media discourse, and thus gain a better understanding of how this media discourse contributes to the social construction of the phenomenon of women jihadists.

To sum up, lexicometric analysis has many advantages. It is a rigorous quantitative method that systematically processes the entire corpus. It highlights lexical recurrences that simple human reading cannot always perceive. What's more, the computational power of the software makes it possible to process large corpora. However, this method also has certain limitations. Purely quantitative lexical analysis needs to be supplemented by a qualitative interpretation of the results. Furthermore, it does not take into account the semantic ambiguity of words or the context in which they are spoken. Despite these limitations, lexicometric analysis remains very useful for our purposes. Coupled with a content analysis, it will enable us to validate our hypotheses on media representations of female jihadists.

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[134] Bonnafous, S. and Tournier, M. (1995) 'Analyse du discours, lexicométrie, communication et politique', *Langages*, 29(117), pp. 67–81

[135] Leblanc, J.-M. (2015) 'Proposition de protocole pour l'analyse des données textuelles : pour une démarche expérimentale en lexicométrie', *Nouvelles perspectives en sciences sociales : revue internationale de systémique complexe et d'études relationnelles*, 11(1), pp. 25–63.

[136] English translation: wives of jihadists

[137] English translation: female suicide bombers

2. Lexicometric analysis and interpretation

Our lexicometric analysis using TXM software will first consist of a "surface" analysis of our lexical table and a factorial correspondence analysis, before going into greater depth with the analysis of concordances and co-occurrences, and the analysis of the specificities of terms relevant to our research question. Combined, these different analyses will enable us to validate or invalidate our working hypotheses.

2.1. Analysis of the lexical table

The first step in carrying out a lexicometric analysis is to extract the lexical table from our corpus. To do this, the TXM software performs a segmentation, that is, it counts the presence of each graphic form in each of the texts in the corpus, which makes it possible to generate a general table with the graphic forms listed in rows and the different texts in the corpus in columns. Used as a starting point for comparing and measuring frequency statistics, this table is called a lexical table and contains all the forms, their total frequency and their distribution in the different parts of the corpus.[138] It is a contingency table or cross-tabulated table (double entry) showing the absolute frequencies. It can be organised in lexicographic form (alphabetical order of forms) or lexicometric form (hierarchical index of forms). In the second case (used in this work), the forms are classified in descending order of their frequency of use, from the highest frequencies to the hapaxes.[139] For the sake of consistency, we have carried out a lemmatisation of our lexical table, grouping all the forms of the same family under their lemma, i.e. "their canonical form (e.g. all the agreed forms of an adjective grouped under its singular and masculine form; all the conjugated forms of a verb grouped under its infinitive form)".[140] Below is a list of the first 30 substantive lexical forms extracted from our lexical table, comprising exclusively nouns, verbs (with the exception of the verbs 'to be', 'to have' and 'to do'), adverbs and adjectives. It should be noted that this table in itself is not sufficient for an exhaustive interpretation. The presence of certain terms can sometimes give rise to ambiguity, due to their multiple meanings, contradictory connotations or varied standardised uses, among other things. To understand the precise meaning of a term in discourse, it is necessary to remove the occurrences of the term in question from their context, while examining the concordance and co-occurrence relationships that shed light on the contextual meaning. This hierarchical

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[138] Fiala, P., (1994), *op cit.*
[139] Leblanc, J., Fleury, S. & Née, É. (2017)., *op cit.*
[140] Borrielo, A. (2022), *op cit.*

repertory of frequencies highlights the most quantitatively salient phenomena in the corpus (see appendix 2 for the first 100 full forms in the lexical table).

	Frlemma	Frequency		Frlemma	Frequency
1	Femme	1120	16	Ornella	266
2	Attentat	661	17	Etat	265
3	An	642	18	Aussi	261
4	Jeune	499	19	Dernier	257
5	Madani	470	20	Vouloir	256
6	Pouvoir	446	21	Français	251
7	Inès	431	22	Islamique	249
8	Homme	423	23	Voiture	245
9	Autre	393	24	Coulibaly	243
10	Terroriste	393	25	Passer	226
11	Syrie	386	26	Prendre	217
12	Accusé	331	27	Fille	214
13	Paris	328	28	Personne	211
14	Policier	306	29	Enfant	209
15	France	299	30	Procès	208

Table 3: The first 30 full forms in the corpus lexical table

From the outset, terms related to the lexical field of terrorism are logically very present: "attentat" (terrorist attack) (661 occurrences), "terroriste" (393 occurrences), "Islamique", (249 occurrences), which highlights our case study. The frequent appearance of the forms "femme" (women) (1120 occurrences), "jeune" (young) (499 occurrences), "Inès", (431 occurrences), "Ornella" (266 occurrences), and " fille " (girl) (214 occurrences) highlights the fact that women terrorists and their profile are the central subject of our research object. The geographical anchorage is apparent in the occurrences of "France" (299 occurrences), "Paris" (328 occurrences), and " Syrie " (386 occurrences). The judicial and police dimension is also important, with terms such as "policier" (306 occurrences), "accusé" (accused) (331 occurrences) and "procès" (trial) (208 occurrences).

Based on this lexical table, we can already make a few observations.

- ✀ The *focus on women terrorists* indicates that media discourse pays particular attention to them. This could reflect an evolution or intensification of female involvement in terrorism, and increased media interest in the subject.

- ✀ The emphasis on the *judicialisation of terrorism* means that the media pay particular attention to the legal aspects, legal proceedings and trials linked to terrorism. This may reflect the growing importance of the legal response in the fight against terrorism.

- ✀ *Identification of key actors*: the text suggests that the lexical table helps to identify certain key actors involved in terrorism. This may include specific terrorist groups, leaders, or other individuals who play a central role in the media discourse on terrorism.

However, the lexical table also reveals less developed angles such as the contextual analysis of terrorism, i.e. terms relating to the motivations of terrorists, their political, religious or ideological objectives, as well as certain social, economic and political factors that could contribute to the radicalisation and recruitment of these individuals. Media discourse can influence the public perception of terrorism by emphasising certain aspects to the detriment of others. This is why, as stated above, this 'surface analysis' is not sufficient to understand the nuances and meanings of the forms identified in our lexical table. In fact, the 'cotext', that is, the contextualisation in their immediate lexical environment, plays a major role in the meaning of a discourse. According to Haroche, Henry and Pêcheux, "it is not only the nature of the words used but also (and above all) the constructions in which they are combined".[141] In conclusion, these preliminary observations of our lexical table lay the foundations for a more in-depth and nuanced analysis of the semantics present in our corpus. So, in order to gain a better understanding of the relationships and co-occurrences between the terms we have identified, in the next section we will use a factorial correspondence analysis (FCA) technique. This statistical approach will allow us to explore how terms group together, relate to or differ from each other in our corpus, thus providing a more structured perspective on the underlying semantics in the discourse on women and terrorism.

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[141] Maldidier D. (1990), *L'Inquiétude du discours*, textes de Michel Pêcheux choisis et présentés par Denise Maldidier, Paris, Éditions des Cendres.

2.2. Correspondence factor analysis

Developed by J.-P Benzécri, correspondence factor analysis (CFA) is a method for summarising and graphically representing the distance relationships between the elements of a lexical table, whether rows (representing graphic forms) or columns (representing text).[142] This technique aims to provide an optimal visual representation of the distances between all the profiles (rows or columns), by projecting them into a space made up of orthogonal planes. Points close together in this space represent rows or columns with similar profiles, while points further apart represent rows or columns with different profiles. Each point in this space can be either a lexical form in the corpus or a text (or any other partition category chosen).[143] This means that two identical profiles (two texts which would have exactly the same vocabulary, or two lexical forms which would be distributed in exactly the same way between the texts) will occupy the same position in the space. In other words, this method makes it possible to visually group elements according to their proximity, highlighting differences and similarities in terms of frequent use of the lexicon.[144] In the case of a large lexical table, with many lexical forms spread across many texts, it is impossible to compare profiles by eye. To represent this information graphically would require a large number of dimensions (axes). CFA solves this problem by reducing the information to a limited number of axes so as to truncate low-frequency forms, reduce redundant axes using mathematical calculations, and retain the axes that provide the most information while maximising the dispersion of points projected into space.[145] In general, the first two or three axes are used to represent the internal variation of the lexical table. It is generally recommended to start with an AFC when carrying out a global lexicometric analysis of a corpus for several reasons. Firstly, the CFA provides an overview of the contrasts and similarities between the lexicons used in the corpus. It highlights the main lexical and thematic trends. Secondly, given that it is a synthetic method that visually summarises the main contrasts in the vocabularies, the CFA guides and directs the more detailed analyses that follow by providing avenues of interpretation.[146] It can highlight lexicons specific to certain texts or groups of texts, which can then be explored in greater depth. The other methods (concordance analysis, co-occurrence analysis, specificity analysis) go into more detail and require you to already have an overview. Of course, all these

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[142] Mayaffre, D., Pincemin, B. and Poudat, C. (2019) 'Explorer, mesurer, contextualiser. Quelques apports de la textométrie à l'analyse de discours', *Langue française*, 203(3), pp. 101–115..
[143] Leblanc, J., Fleury, S. & Née, É. (2017)., *op cit.*
[144] Lebart, L., Salem, A. and Berry, L. (1998) 'Correspondence Analysis of Lexical Tables', in Lebart, L., Salem, A., and Berry, L., *Exploring Textual Data*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands (Text, Speech and Language Technology), pp. 45–79.
[145] Borrielo, A. (2022), *op cit.*
[146] Leblanc, J., Fleury, S. & Née, É. (2017)., *op cit.*,

techniques are complementary and interconnected. But starting with CFA gives you an overall picture of the corpus before going into detail, and enables you to target subsequent qualitative analyses more effectively. The results of the CFA guide the choice of terms to be explored in greater depth.

To understand this method, we will borrow some of its vocabulary from geometry. In order to interpret a factorial design, three elements must be taken into account: 1) the position of a point in relation to the centre of the axes, which represents the average or banal discourse; 2) the position of a point in relation to another point, considering the angle and distance from the centre; 3) the contribution and position of the rows and columns in relation to the different axes. In general, because of the large number of lexical forms, it is easier to read the factorial plane from the text points than from the platform points.[147] The position of the text points in relation to the centre indicates how common or exceptional they are in relation to the corpus average. In addition, the angle formed by two text points and their distance from the centre can be used to assess their similarity. There are three possible scenarios: firstly, the more acute the angle, the more similar the texts. At equal angles, the greater the distance of the two points from the centre (vector), the more distinct they are from the average discourse in the same direction. Secondly, the more obtuse the angle, the more opposed the texts. At an equal angle, the greater the distance of the two points from the centre (vector), the more distinct they are from the average discourse in an opposite direction (what is under-represented in one compared with the average discourse is over-represented in the other, and vice versa). Thirdly, the closer the angle formed is to the right angle, the more independent the texts are of each other (no significant over- or under-representation of vocabulary in one compared to the other).[148]

The final stage involves interpreting the main factors of variation in the lexicon, generally the first two or three axes. Groupings of texts along these axes can provide information about the most marked contrasts between texts in the corpus. The way in which they are grouped on the second axis makes it possible to correct/nuance the first reading by showing the existence of a second (albeit less significant) logic of differentiation between the texts. This interpretation must be cautious, as it is exploratory and may be open to over-interpretation.[149] It allows trends to be identified which can then be confirmed by other measures of comparison or distribution, such as the analysis of specificities.

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[147] Lebart, L., Salem, A., Berry, L. (1998)., *op cit.*
[148] Borrielo, A. (2022), *op cit.*
[149] *Ibid.*

Ultimately, CFA simplifies the understanding of the complex information contained in the data set by highlighting the most structuring dimensions. This graphical representation makes it possible to detect the tension points and discursive breaks that predominate in the corpus by graphically displaying the occurrences and texts that play a key role in these variations.[150] The first step in our CFA was to partition our corpus according to the *text_ tag so that all the variations in our corpus could be reduced to 149 structuring dimensions. These structuring dimensions were created on the basis of our lemmatised lexical table, thus making the initially dense scatterplot more readable. This operation made it possible to slightly increase the space between the points while maintaining the general distribution of the data on the graph, thus avoiding an excessive loss of information. The first three dimensions explain 29.88% of the variation in vocabulary in our corpus. The first dimension is responsible for 14.02% of the variation in vocabulary, the second for 8.84% and the third for 7.03% (the sum of the variations in the 149 dimensions therefore explains 100% of the variation in the vocabulary of our corpus).

#	Valeur propre	%	Σ%		
1	0,0868	14,02	14,02		
2	0,0547	8,84	22,86		
3	0,0435	7,03	29,88		

Table 4: Eigenvalues of the first three axes of our CFA

The type of graph shown below enables us to identify significant lexical oppositions and associations. In addition, an analysis of the columns and the contribution of the texts enables us to identify the texts whose vocabulary is decisive in the construction of the axes and whether or not there is a divide in the texts making up the corpus. For example, when we analyse the contribution to each of our first three axes (by ordering the "Cont1", "Cont2" and "Cont3" columns in descending order in the software), we see that text_088[151] is the biggest contributor to axis 1 (13.50%). As for axis 2, it is text_125[152] which contributes the most (3.98%). Text_100[153] is the biggest contributor to Axis 3 (4.77%). Next, it is interesting to see the position of the texts on the corresponding axes. In this case, text_088 (4125 occurrences) has the coordinates -0.58 on axis 1 and -0.02 on axis 2. Text_125 (1639 occurrences) has the

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[150] Leblanc, J., Fleury, S. & Née, É. (2017)., *op cit.*

[151] Julien Licourt, « Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame : le cas d'Inès Madani au cœur de l'audience », *Le Figaro*, 26 septembre 2019 (cf. appendix 1)

[152] Le Monde.fr, « Paroles brutes de djihadistes français », *Le Monde*, 30 novembre 2016

[153] Stanislas Poyet, « Attentats de janvier 2015 : Hayat Boumeddiene, la « princesse de l'Etat islamique », condamnée mais toujours introuvable », *Le Figaro*, 18 décembre 2020

coordinates -0.05 on axis 1 and -0.4 on axis 2. When we then analyse the vocabulary, ranking the "Cont1" line in descending order, the graphic form contributing most to axis 1 is the "madani" form (coordinates: (-1.42; 0.42) and frequency of 470) with a contribution of 9.1% to this axis. Then, ranking the "Cont2" line in descending order, the graphic shape contributing most to axis 2 is the "ans" (years) form (coordinates 0.19; 0.6 and a frequency of 642) with a contribution of 3.62%. The "coulibaly" form (coordinates 0.82; 0.8 and a frequency of 243) is the form contributing most to axis 3 (15.10%). These years allow us to assume that Axis 1 represents articles about the attempted gas canister attack on Notre-Dame de Paris (September 2016), while Axis 3 mainly covers articles about the January 2015 attacks.
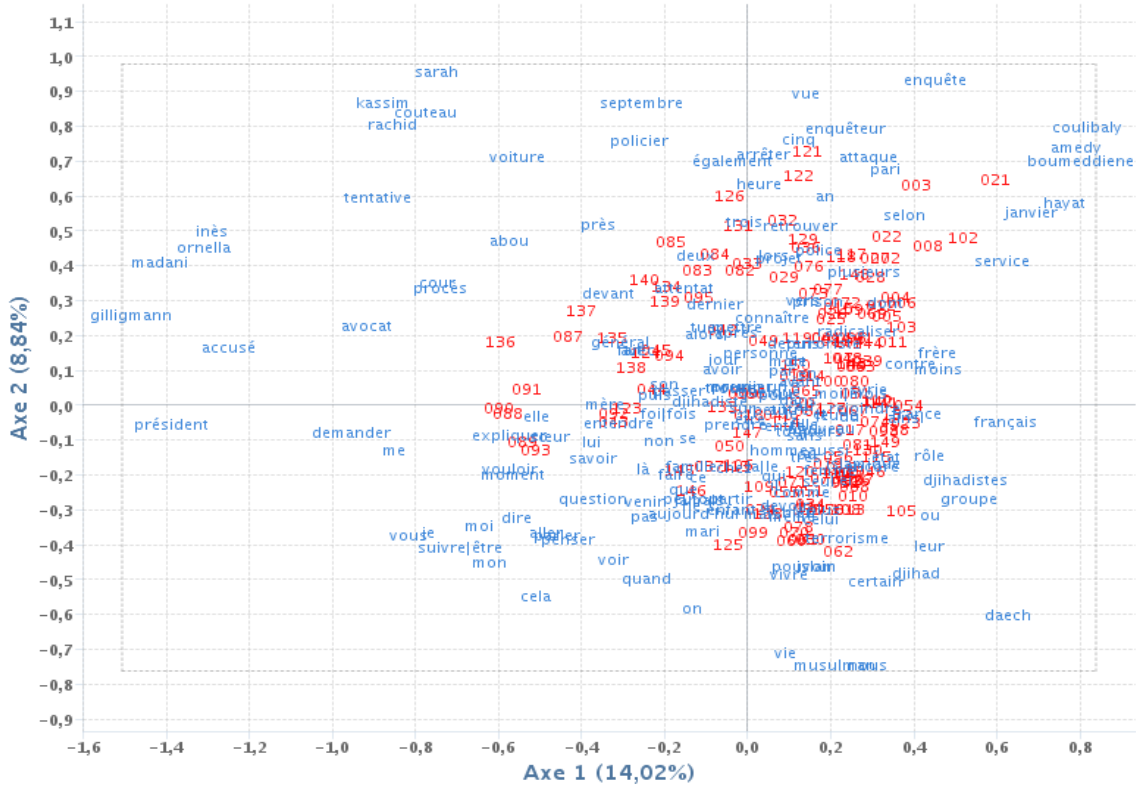
Graph 2: CFA of our lemmatised lexical table

By combining these results, that is, the positioning on these axes and the relative contribution to each of these axes, we will attempt to give meaning to these axes, to determine the demarcation lines they indicate in our vocabulary as a whole. The horizontal axis (dimension 1) seems to oppose terms such as "femme" (woman), "fille" (girl), "sœur" (sister), on the one hand, and terms such as "djihad", " attentat " (attack), "djihadiste " (jihadist), on the other. There is a clear contrast between the place of women and terrorist actions. This

corresponds well with the theme of text_088, which describes the hearing of Inès Madani during the trial of the "gas canisters" case. Moreover, the second (text_089[154]) and third texts (text_091[155]) with the highest contribution to axis 1 also relate to this trial, in particular the hearing of Ornella Gilligmann (text_089) and the arrest of Inès Madani (text_091). The vertical axis (dimension 2) contrasts terms evoking radicalisation such as "radicalisé" ("radicalised") and "idéologie" ("ideology") with terms such as "mari " ("husband"), "épouse" ("wife") and "amour" ("love"), referring to romantic relationships. This axis puts radicalisation and private life in tension. These terms relate well to text_125, which deals with the testimonies of men and women who have left to join the Islamic State organisation. The proximity of terms such as "femme" (woman), "fille" (girl), "sœur" (sister) or "djihad ", "djihadiste", "attentat" (attack) reveals frequent lexical associations in the corpus. The central position of terms such as "jeune" (young), "ans" (years) indicates that they are present in the different contexts without being specific to one of them.

In conclusion, the factorial correspondence analysis carried out enabled us to highlight salient lexical oppositions within our corpus of press articles. Identifying the contribution of terms and texts to the construction of the factorial axes reveals divergences in the vocabulary used. We noted the emergence of an opposition between the lexicon relating to women's jihadist commitment and that evoking their private lives. Another factorial axis reveals a tension between the judicial and prison themes and the role of women in the attacks. These results reveal different discursive orientations in the media treatment of women's participation in the 2015-2016 attacks. In order to deepen the analysis, we will now look at the concordances and co-occurrences of terms in the corpus. A detailed examination of the lexical environments will enable us to clarify the semantic relationships between words. This will enable us to refine our understanding of the construction of media discourse on the role of women in the attacks and their trial. This qualitative analysis will be a useful complement to the general trends revealed by the factorial correspondence analysis.

2.3. Analysis of concordances and co-occurrences

According to Negura, in order to "establish the elements that generate shared meanings and organise the representation, at least two criteria must be taken into consideration when analysing the elements of the representations: the frequency of the element and the power it has

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[154] Julien Licourt, En direct « Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame : la cour se penche sur le cas d'Ornella Gilligmann », *Le Figaro*, 27 septembre 2019

[155] Julien Licourt, « Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame : cavale et arrestation de la principale accusée », *Le Figaro*, 1 octobre 2019

to organise the meaning of the representation".[156]   So, on the basis of our lexical table, we can use the analysis of occurrences and concordances, which are tools for putting interesting graphic forms back into context, to analyse frequency, which is defined as the element's popularity index, and to analyse co-occurrence, which refers to the number of relationships the element has with other elements and can help us to understand the element's strength in the representation. Concordance analysis is a central method of lexicometric corpus analysis. It involves systematically examining all occurrences of a key term in their phrasal context. In concrete terms, by searching for a keyword in all the articles, we can observe in detail how it is used in the different texts that make up the corpus.[157]   By analysing concordances, we can identify the main semantic environments for the term under study. For example, in our corpus of French press articles on the participation of women in the attacks of 2015-2016, the concordance of the word "'femme" reveals whether it is frequently associated with syntagms such as "femme de djihadiste", "victime collatérale", "kamikaze de Daesh"[158], and so on. A systematic examination of the contexts in which a word is used reveals the semantic networks associated with it. By combining concordances and occurrences, it is possible to combine a quantitative view of the dominant terms with a detailed qualitative analysis of how they are used in context. This allows us to gain a deeper understanding of the corpus by going from the general to the specific. In our study, this type of lexicometric analysis will be invaluable in uncovering any stereotypical biases or changes in the way the French media report and represent women's participation in terrorist activities. The concordance analysis will provide clues as to the orientations and positions conveyed through the semantic choices made in this media corpus.

2.3.1. Concordance analysis

On the basis of the concordance analysis of our lexical table, we can make a number of observations, which we will explore in greater detail below:

ℭ Unsurprisingly, the form "*femme*" (woman) is the common noun with the highest frequency of occurrence in the corpus (1120 occurrences), this clearly demonstrates the central theme of our corpus, and therefore of our analysis. Initially, we might assume that the recurrent use of the terms "jeune femme" (young women), "fille" (girl), or even "califette", tends to infantilise these women and present their commitment as an immature

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[156] Negura, L., (2006), *op cit.*
[157] Leblanc, J., Fleury, S. & Née, É. (2017)., *op cit.*
[158] English translation : "jihadist's wife", "collateral victim", "Daesh suicide bomber

act. A number of academic studies address the issue of the infantilisation of women in social and media representations, such as Erving Goffman's[159] work on gendered representation in advertising, where women are frequently associated with childhood, fragility and submission, or studies on gender stereotypes in the media, which highlight the persistence of the infantilising figure of the "jeune fille" ("young girl") to describe women, whatever their actual age (Lauzen et al., (2008)).[160] The form "femme" is also often followed by the form "de" (of) or " du djihadiste ", which reduces their motivation to sentimental causes and their commitment explained by the manipulation of a man. It can also be a form of male guardianship. Their actions are related to their status as wives and not considered autonomously and/or voluntarily. According to Damian-Gaillard, Montañola and Saitta, these media techniques aim to maintain the gendered distinction between men and women.[161] Describing these women primarily as "femmes de" ("wives of") maintains a gendered distinction between "active" male terrorists and "passive" female terrorists, even when their involvement is similar. This denial of women's autonomy and agentivity in media discourse is part of a general tendency to infantilize or belittle women's involvement in male spheres of action. In addition, using the expression "femmes fatales" or "their own femininity" or "their own bodies"[162] means analysing their involvement through the prism of sexuality. Ultimately, although the recurring expression "femmes de" tends to deny women's autonomy and maintains a gendered distinction between male "active" and female "passive" terrorists, as we said above, the reality seems more complex. Admittedly, describing these women primarily in terms of their marital status is part of a denial of their agentivity, in line with the media's tendency to infantilize the role of women. However, the increasing appearance in media discourse of the terms "femme djihadistes" or "femmes terroristes" should not be interpreted as a sign of emancipation or a shift towards offensive roles. A qualitative analysis of the contexts of use reveals that these expressions are often directly qualified or relativised in the cotext. They refer less to a permanent development than to a one-off desire to dramatise. Thus, behind the apparent recognition of women's involvement, stereotypical views of their participation persist, confined to subordinate or supporting roles.

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[159] Goffman, E. (1976). Gender Commercials. In: Gender Advertisements. Communications and Culture. Palgrave, London.
[160] M. Lauzen, M., Ph.D., M. Dozier Ph.D. & Horan M.A. (2008) Constructing Gender Stereotypes Through Social Roles in Prime-Time Television, Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 52(2), pp. 200-214,
[161] Damian-Gaillard, B., Montañola, S. & Saitta, E. (2021)., *op cit.*
[162] Cf. text_035 : « ce qui me frappe, c'est l'hyper-moralité de ces femmes qui cache un sentiment de culpabilité concernant leur corps, leur sexualité, leur vie (…).

Référence	ContexteGauche	Pivot	ContexteDroit
10		femme	jihadiste, sois pieuse et tais -toi la brigade al-khansa, milice féminine de l'
17		femme	kamikaze : une première en france, pas dans le monde la jeune femme qui
56		femme	kamikaze : une nouvelle ère du djihad en france en choisissant de déclencher sa ceinture
71		femmes	de djihadistes : éternelles naïves ou complices de l'ombre ? alors que salah abdeslam
106		femmes	de djihadistes elles s'appellent aïcha, hayat ou imène. elles ont partagé la
43	« décisive » : celle d'anissa,	femme	de dix ans son aînée, dont elle garde le fils. une « figure
132	, une centaine de français – hommes,	femmes	et enfants – s'y seraient repliés ces derniers temps. parmi eux, là
40	gilet explosif », « attentat st-denis,	femme	kamikaze morte ». tout comme djelika, qui se présentait comme « salafiste jihadiste
81	à la kalachnikov, kamikazes, voiture-bélier,	femmes	mercenaires et peut-être demain enfants terroristes. les terroristes de daech ont pris nos sociétés
19	une grande partie de l'année. «	femme	cow-boy » les témoignages des habitants du quartier, recueillis par le journal local,
47	. pourquoi vous êtes -vous intéressée aux «	femmes	terroristes » ? celles que l'on désigne comme « femmes terroristes » apparaissent d'
47	? celles que l'on désigne comme «	femmes	terroristes » apparaissent d'autant plus dangereuses que les normes de genre font qu'on
47	ces femmes sont vues aussi comme des «	femmes	fatales » ? oui, et dans les deux sens du terme, c'est-à-dire
46	du renseignement ne contiennent ni l'entrée «	femme	» ni le terme « genre »). lorsque les acteurs du renseignement font
47	le figaro, titre en première page «	femmes	et terroristes : les psychiatres expliquent ». ces femmes sont vues aussi comme des
47	». « battantes » plutôt que «	femmes	battues » ? c'est clairement la revendication de ce beau livre, combattantes (
130	prendre en compte la spécificité des muhajirat (	femmes	migrantes), qui sont aujourd'hui systématiquement arrêtées à leur retour. la direction des

Table 5: Concordance for the "femme" form

⍟ Looking at the form "***terroriste***" (393 occurrences) (cf. appendix 3), we can see that the lexical field of terrorism is very present, with many occurrences of terms such as "attentat" (attack), "projet" (project), "organisation" or "réseau" (network). The criminal dimension is highlighted by recurring legal terms such as "association de malfaiteurs" (criminal association) and "infraction". We also note a slight desire on the part of the media to understand motivations, notably through the expression "the psychology of terrorists".

⍟ The form "***djihad***" (166 occurrences) is not present in the first 30 full forms of our lexical table, but it is regularly associated with the form "femme" in the set "djihad au féminin" (female jihad) or "djihad des femmes". This reflects a growing awareness of the role of women in jihadist activity, which is no longer confined to men alone, and consequently a desire to highlight the specific nature of women's jihadist involvement and their motivations. It may also reflect the realisation that jihadism affects men and women alike, and the need to analyse the phenomenon from a gender perspective. Although there are gender differences, female jihadists share the same ideological convictions as their male counterparts. Their adherence to the principles of jihadism is similar. However, Geraldine Casutt warns that gender roles within jihadist groups mean that women do not take on the same roles as men, particularly in terms of violence. They are more confined to the roles of "wives" and "mothers". So the "female jihad" is defined less by different motivations or beliefs than by a differentiation of roles in relation to men, dictated by the jihadist ideology itself. Women develop specific representations linked to their roles, but within the same ideological framework as men. In short, despite their gendered roles, women's

jihadist commitment is based on the same principles as men's. The "female jihad" refers above all to distinct roles, not divergent convictions.[163]

Référence	ContexteGauche	Pivot	ContexteDroit
62	, où elle prépare une thèse consacrée au	djihad	féminin en co-tutelle avec l'ehess à paris. son doctorat porte
130	adapter la « doctrine d'emploi » du	djihad	féminin à ses besoins stratégiques. si aucun cas impliquant des occidentales
30	. géraldine casutt prépare une thèse sur le	djihad	féminin à l'école des hautes études en sciences sociales (ehess
78	l'organisation terroriste. la doctorante sur le	djihad	féminin à l'université de fribourg en co-tutelle avec l'ehess à
95	principales accusées étaient « devenues le visage du	djihad	féminin » et avaient prêté allégeance à l'état islamique. les
42	molins : inès madani, figure majeure du	djihad	féminin, déjà condamnée en avril à huit ans de prison pour
115	qui ont rejoint la horde des prétendants au	djihad	exacerbé un peu pour faire une expérience post-féministe qu'elles imaginent dépaysante
31	veulent devenir des actrices à part entière du	djihad	et prendre en main leur destinée », a-t -il assuré.
61	d'engagement des femmes musulmanes occidentales dans le	djihad	et leurs représentations en tant que femmes dans le djihadisme. elle
109	benchellali. mais la multiplication des candidats au	djihad	et les attentats de janvier ont changé la donne. sa boîte
110	leur enfant a déjà pris la voie du	djihad	et est parti vers la syrie. à quoi aboutissent ces signalements
71	des sites dédiés aux sœurs pour parler du	djihad	et embrigader ses acolytes. sur des écoutes, on découvre aussi
37	d'évoquer mohamed, premier parti faire le	djihad	et devenu sniper pour l'état islamique ? « il a eu
37	à une filière d'acheminement de candidats au	djihad	et deux d'entre eux d'être impliqués dans un « projet
60	/ 3. - la doctorante spécialiste du	djihad	et des femmes géraldine casuttnous explique les motivations des jeunes filles françaises
62	3 / 3. -la doctorante spécialiste du	djihad	et des femmes géraldine casutt décrypte la façon dont les femmes ont
128	, mais ensuite les gens ont abandonner le	djihad	et allah depuis n'a cesser de nous humilier (…)

Table 6: Concordance of the " djihad " form

ↄ In the same vein, if we analyse the concordances of the form "*idéologie*" (ideology) (58 occurrences) (cf. appendix 4), we find that the ideological dimension of jihadist involvement (whether by men or women) is not necessarily a highly developed angle in the articles. The corpus probably deals with the phenomenon in a fairly factual way, reporting events and news items linked to women jihadists, without going into an in-depth analysis of the ideological underpinnings. Journalists may avoid using the term "ideology", which refers to a learned and analytical vocabulary. They prefer more immediate terms such as "jihadism". Of course, a more detailed analysis of the corpus would be needed to confirm these hypotheses. But the few occurrences of "idéologie" seem to indicate that this angle is not very developed in the journalistic coverage of the subject. However, despite the fact that it is rarely discussed, this form, when it does appear, is regularly preceded by verbs such as "épouser" (to marry), "plonger" (to plunge), "embrasser" (to embrace), "s'enfermer" (to lock oneself up), and followed by segments such as " de daech ", " djihadiste ", "de l'Etat islamique" (of the Islamic State). This is a direct indication that the media are making a link between terrorist attacks and an ideology associated with jihadism. In addition, the use of verbs such as "embrasser" or "épouser" reflects a persistence of marriage to describe ideological commitment. The fact that women are described as espousing or embracing an ideology evokes a

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[163] Casutt, G. (2018) 'Quand le djihadiste est une femme', *Inflexions*, 38(2), pp. 87–96.

stereotypical view of female commitment as primarily emotional and passionate rather than rational or political. In this way, these repeated segments tend to psychologise and depoliticise women's ideological commitment, anchoring it in the register of emotions or sentimental relationships rather than as an autonomous political act. The form " idéologie " is also found with the terms "rôles" and "fonctions", in contexts evoking different gendered roles for male and female jihadists. These elements suggest that, despite the different functions dictated by jihadist ideology, the articles highlight a similarity of ideological convictions between radicalised women and men. We can conclude from the concordances that, despite a slight representation of women's adherence to the same ideological principles as male jihadists, the recurrent use of certain verbs reveals the persistence of gendered representations that neglect their political agentivity in their adherence to an extremist ideology.

ೞ The form "*radicaliser*" (115 occurrences) (see appendix 5) is also worth analysing. When its concordancer is analysed, this form is often transformed into a repeated segment such as "se radicalise" (is radicalised), "s'est radicalisé" (has been radicalised), or as "jeune radicalisée" (young radicalised), "femme radicalisée" (radicalised woman), which highlights the radicalisation process and the profiles of the people concerned. Its legal context highlights additions or proposals that refer to violent plans or actions ("were preparing violent actions"), departure for Syria ("to join Syria") or extremist networks ("contacts with radicalised Belgians"). Some contexts also emphasise the ideological dimension of radicalisation ("ideologised", "in line with Daesh ideology"). We can conclude from this that the corpus deals mainly with the violent and extremist dimension of radicalisation, in connection with departures to Syria or plans for terrorist attacks in France, and less with motivations or the process of radicalisation. However, given the nature of the corpus (articles on the attacks of 2015-2016), we must be cautious about generalising these conclusions to the whole phenomenon of radicalisation. This corpus sheds light on certain aspects, but other corpora could highlight different orientations of radicalisation.

ೞ Although the form "*commando*" (65 occurrences) does not appear in the table of the first 30 full forms, it is nonetheless crucial to our analysis. According to the concordance analysis, the form "commando" is strongly associated with the lexical field of terrorism (attack, explosion, jihadists, etc.). It refers to the idea of groups organised to commit violent acts. The expression "commando de femmes" (women's commando) is over-represented. On the one hand, this shows that the media emphasise the gendered nature of these groups, highlighting the role of women, whereas usually

the word "commando" is rarely followed by the word "men". On the other hand, it also shows a desire to present women as full players in these commandos and not just as support. The presence of the words "cerveau" (mastermind), "kamikazes" (suicide bombers) and "déterminées" (determined) in the cotext of the form " commando " (commando) reveals a desire on the part of the media to present women as full-fledged actors in terrorist groups. However, a closer analysis of the contexts in which they appear reveals a number of nuances. Take the example of text_077, which mentions "Faute d'avoir pu faire exploser une voiture piégée au cœur de Paris, ce commando de femmes "fanatisées", "téléguidé depuis la Syrie", projetait un autre attentat".[164] We can see that if the expression "commando de femmes" is used, it is directly relativised by the cotext with the term "téléguidé", which minimises the agentivity of these women, presented as manipulated. Moreover, the adjective "premier" (first) attached to "commando de femmes" in many instances may also reveal the persistence of a stereotypical view of female participation, perceived as recent and exceptional. Ultimately, by refining the contextual analysis, we can qualify the interpretation of an over-representation of "commando de femmes" as a reflection of an emancipation of representations.

Texte	ContexteGauche	Pivot	ContexteDroit
15	personnes interpellées samedi en belgique faisaient partie du	commando	, dont 7 membres sont morts, ou si une autre équipe
29	cacher, amédy coulibaly. un « premier	commando	de femmes » les policiers de la direction générale de la sécurité
29	paris, françois molins, qualifie de «	commando	de femmes ». alors qu'il écoute le discours de françois
32	les autorités assurent avoir déjouée en démantelant un	commando	de femmes jihadistes. ornella g., 29 ans, a
33	– elles sont présentées comme « le premier	commando	de femmes jihadistes ». ornella. g, inès. m
36	antiterroristes ont ordonné le renvoi aux assises du	commando	de cinq femmes jihadistes démantelé en septembre 2016 après un attentat raté
38	et conservent une capacité à « projeter des	commandos	terroristes » dans les capitales régionales ou sites touristiques. les auteurs
38	. » en france, la menace de	commandos	formés à l'étranger a diminué, mais pas disparu, laissant
39	est suspectée d'être le cerveau d'un	commando	exclusivement féminin. ces faits font l'objet d'une procédure distincte
42	, en septembre 2016. parmi ce «	commando	de femmes », comme l'avait qualifié à l'époque le
42	une conférence de presse après l'arrestation du	commando	: « le passage à l'acte, par des jeunes femmes
42	« d'une émulation collective ». un	commando	déterminé, mais « téléguidé », selon les mots de françois
42	des « mairies ». les membres du	commando	féminin étaient toutes abonnées à sa chaîne, et ce sont les
43	inès madani, « cerveau » présumé du	commando	de femmes qui a voulu faire exploser des bonbonnes de gaz près
43	de comparaître. au sein de ce «	commando	de femmes », inès madani occupe une place centrale : celle
44	, définitive et ferme » de ce «	commando	de femmes ». « que sait -on du rôle exact qu'
45	qui jugeait pour la première fois un «	commando	de femmes » dans un dossier terroriste, a rendu son verdict
45	leurs côtés, trois autres membres du «	commando	» féminin dont le parquet avait évoqué « la détermination sans faille

Table 7: Concordance table for the "commando" form

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[164] English translation: = "Having failed to detonate a car bomb in the heart of Paris, this commando of "fanatical" women, "remote-controlled from Syria", was planning another attack.

In conclusion, an analysis of the concordances of the forms "femme", "terroriste", "djihad", "radicaliser", "idéologie" and "commando" in our media corpus reveals several trends in the representation of women's involvement in jihadist groups. On the one hand, the recurrent use of infantilising or sexualising terms to describe these women reflects the persistence of gender stereotypes and the denial of their full agency. Their actions are often referred to as male tutelage rather than considered autonomously. On the other hand, the emergence of expressions such as "femme djihadistes" (female jihadists) or "commando de femmes" (female commandos) reflects a gradual awareness of the active role that women can play in these organisations. Their involvement is not systematically confined to a passive or subordinate role. However, this image of autonomy should not be generalised to all women involved in "women's jihad". As the literature on this concept emphasises, while female jihadists share the ideological motivations of their male counterparts, they largely take on gendered roles confined to the domestic and conjugal spheres. Jihadist ideology itself defines gender-differentiated functions. So, behind an apparent emancipation of representations, stereotyped concepts of women's roles within jihadism persist in reality. Rather than an actual changeover, media discourse seems to be riven by tensions between the persistence of an occultation of female agentivity and the growing need to reflect a certain reality of the phenomenon. Media discourse would benefit from incorporating the complexity of the multiple profiles and motivations of the women involved, going beyond the dichotomies between submission and agentivity. In short, while certain shifts are perceptible, media discourse still struggles to fully represent the autonomy of women in the jihadist and terrorist sphere, which is perceived as masculine. Detailed qualitative analyses are needed to understand the nuances behind apparently positive expressions such as "women's commando". While these initial observations are admittedly subjective and need to be explored in greater depth and with more nuance, they already provide some interesting avenues for analysis of the media's portrayal of women's involvement in violent acts. This is why it is useful to study the analysis of concordances and co-occurrences in lexicometry in parallel, as these two approaches complement and enrich each other. On the one hand, concordances make it possible to study in detail the contexts in which a term appears, and to understand its meanings and uses; on the other hand, co-occurrences bring out the associated terms in a significant way, and thus reveal the main themes linked to the term studied. Used together, concordances and co-occurrences validate and refine each other. Let's move on to the analysis of co-occurrences.

Co-occurrence is "the statistically significant association of two linguistic units (usually two words) in a given window (usually the paragraph)".[165] Co-occurrence analysis is based on "the idea that the simultaneous presence of several elements in the same unit of context is an indication of a relationship between these elements".[166] This analysis therefore consists of identifying the lexical universe associated with a full form described by a statistical index. The higher the index, the higher the frequency between two terms. This analysis makes it possible to identify associations between recurring terms and to highlight the central themes addressed in media discourse.[167] By identifying the co-occurrences of the terms "woman", "terrorist" and "jihadist", we can highlight the way in which these terms are characterised and defined in the articles. We will be able to observe changes in lexical associations over time over the period studied. The associated words will reveal the dominant or minor angles in the media analysis of the phenomenon of women jihadists. The co-occurrences will also point to the judgements, stereotypes and prejudices still present or not in media discourse. Ultimately, as one of the essential tools in lexicometrics, the analysis of co-occurrences will provide us with key elements to support our critical analysis of French media discourse on women jihadists.

The most relevant form to analyse for our purposes is "*femme*" (woman). Our first observation is that this form is strongly associated with the term "jeune" (young), with an index of 77 and an average distance of just 0.4. Forming common fixed expressions "jeune femme" (young woman), this reveals a focus of discourse on the profile of young female terrorists. Moreover, when we examine the table of co-occurrences of the form " jeunes ", it is most often associated with the forms "filles" (girl) (index 36, average distance of 0.3), "mineures" (minor) (index 5, average distance of 1.1), or "radicalisées" (radicalised) (index 6, average distance of 2). By way of example, text_118 mentions "(...) *l'organisation terroriste utilise non seulement des hommes, mais des femmes, de jeunes femmes, qui font connaissance et nouent leur projet de manière virtuelle*"[168]. While it is true that the four women of the eight defendants in the "gas canisters" trial - Inès Madani, Ornella Gilligmann, Sarah Hervouët and Amel Sakaou - were respectively 19, 29, 23 and 39 at the time of the events, when we study the concordances and the co-occurrences of the form "homme" (men), the latter is less associated with the form "jeune" (index 3 and average distance of 1.2). Yet the perpetrators of the attacks on 13 November are not much older than the women mentioned above (for example, Abdelhamid

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[165] Mayaffre, D., Pincemin, B. & Poudat, C. (2019)., *op cit*.
[166] Negura, L., (2006), *op cit.*
[167] Salem, A. (1987) *Pratique des segments répétés: essai de statistique textuelle*. Klincksieck.
[168] English translation: "(...) the terrorist organisation uses not only men, but women, young women, who get to know each other and set up their plans virtually"

Abaaoud, who masterminded the attacks, was 27 at the time of the events, Salah Abdeslam 26, Bilal Hadfi 20). There are several reasons for this. On the one hand, it may be linked to gender stereotypes: as the image of the "female terrorist" is more unexpected and shocking than that of the "male terrorist", she is more characterised and described, in particular by insisting on the criterion of age. The media tend to infantilise women by emphasising their young age, portraying them as immature and manipulated, whereas men are portrayed as autonomous and responsible. What's more, as women's involvement in terrorism is a relatively recent phenomenon, it is portrayed as primarily affecting the "younger generation". Moreover, the emphasis on their young age could reflect a desire to denounce their manipulation and the perversion of their ideals. However, it is necessary to qualify this observation in order to avoid the pitfalls of a one-sided interpretation, focusing on age, and to emphasise the complexity of the motivations and identities at play in women's jihadist involvement. Although the analysis shows a strong association between the forms "femme" (woman) and "jeune" (young), it is important to qualify the observation that the media systematically focus on the profile of young female terrorists. Admittedly, this association partly reflects gender stereotypes, with a tendency to infantilise women by emphasising their age. However, it may also reflect a statistical reality, with the majority of women joining these networks at an early age. Furthermore, the emphasis on their youth is not necessarily linked to a desire to manipulate the media. It may be intended to raise legitimate questions about the processes of radicalisation affecting young people, not just women. Finally, this local observation should not lead to the image of the "young terrorist" being abusively generalised to all women involved in jihadism. More detailed qualitative analyses are needed to understand the diversity of individual profiles and backgrounds. Ultimately, sociological, psychological and statistical factors may explain the prevalence of this "jeune femme" (young women) association in media discourse.

Our second observation is that the "***commando***" form (index 12 and average distance of 1.6), the " ***djihadistes*** " form (index 9 and average distance of 1.4), the "***kamikaze***" (suicide bomber) form (index 7 and average distance of 0.9) and the "***combattantes***" (fighters) form (index 11 and average distance of 2), are often associated with the "femme" (women) form, forming the formulas "commando (de) femmes" and "femme(s) kamikaze(s)" (female suicide bomber), "femmes combattantes" (female fighters). We understand the term formula, defined by Alice-Krieg Planque, as "a set of formulations which, because of their use at a given time and in a given public space, crystallise political and social issues that these formulations at the

same time help to construct".[169] Analysing the way in which they are disseminated, interpreted and developed in media discourse provides information about the way in which the media construct and disseminate certain representations. Identifying the formulas associating "women" and "jihadism" is therefore revealing of the meanings attributed to women's involvement and how these meanings have evolved. While we must remain cautious about jumping to hasty conclusions, this concept does offer some stimulating keys to a critical analysis of the discourse. For example, the recurrent association in media discourse between the forms " femmes " (women) and terms such as " commando ", " djihadistes " (jihadists) or " combattantes " (female fighters) reflects a desire to highlight the emergence of new female roles within terrorist organisations. The use of these terms tends to present women as fully-fledged actors in violence, no longer confined to subordinate roles. However, when we carry out a contextual analysis of the concordances in the "femmes combattantes" segment, the presence of the term "daech" and "entend faire des" (intends to make) in its left context reveals that the media present the use of women fighters as a deliberate strategy of the Islamic State. The text thus reveals the persistence of a stereotyped vision, with phrases such as "faire des femmes des combattantes" suggesting that this role is still assigned to them by the organisation, rather than taken on of their own free will. For example, text_017[170] entitled "*Femme Kamikaze : une première en France, pas dans le monde »,* mentions *« (…) un cran de plus dans l'effroi. Signe supplémentaire de la stratégie de l'organisation État Islamique de marquer durement les esprits, une jeune femme kamikaze a activé sa ceinture d'explosif ce mercredi aux premières heures de l'assaut à Saint-Denis*".[171] What's more, the use of the singular "female suicide bomber" for each attack represents an exception where the expression "suicide bombers" is sufficient to designate men. We cannot therefore conclude that the offensive role played by women has been completely normalised in the images conveyed. Moreover, the terms "revirement" (reversal), "ambiguïté" (ambiguity) and "prudent" (cautious) nevertheless qualify the idea of a total evolution of jihadist doctrine on this point.

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[169] Krieg, A. (2009) *La notion de "formule" en analyse du discours: Cadre théorique et méthodologique*. Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté.

[170] Jean-Manuel Escarnot, « Femme kamikaze : une première en France, pas dans le monde », *Libération*, 18 novembre 2015

[171] English translation: "Female suicide bomber: a first in France, not in the world", mentions "(...) a new level of terror. In a further sign of the Islamic State organisation's strategy to leave a lasting impression, a young female suicide bomber activated her explosive belt in the early hours of the assault in Saint-Denis on Wednesday".

Occ	Fréq	CoFréq	Indice	DistMoy
jeune	263	138	67.1655	0.2173913
les	3058	539	40.1557	2.4990723
des	2904	438	18.9064	2.6027398
hommes	176	61	18.4785	3.327869
jeunes	236	70	16.8736	0.87142855
trois	277	71	13.4944	1.0704225
commando	58	27	12.1525	1.5925926
occidentales	21	16	12.0415	1.25
combattantes	28	18	11.4623	2.0
ces	391	84	11.2494	2.047619
rôle	108	35	10.0151	3.4571428
radicalisées	38	19	9.4225	0.6315789
djihadistes	200	50	9.341	1.38
enceinte	11	10	9.0861	1.4
daech	119	35	8.735	4.3428574
kamikazes	52	20	7.4309	0.9
arrêtées	17	11	7.248	1.3636364
foyer	27	13	6.3891	1.7692307

Table 8: Analysis of co-occurrences of the form "femme"

Given that our analysis focuses mainly on the personalities of Hayat Boumeddiene, Inès Madani, Ornella Gilligmann and Sarah Hervouët, it would be interesting to see whether there has been any change in the way they are represented over time. As a reminder, some of the articles collected were published in January 2015 (Charlie Hebdo and Hyper Casher), another part was published in September 2016 at the time of the attempted attacks on 4 and 8 September, and finally the last part concerns the trials of these attacks held in 2020. Let's start by analysing the co-occurrences of the form "***hayat***" (from Hayat Boumeddiene, one of the 14 defendants on trial in the trial of those presumed responsible for the January 2015 attacks, which was held in September 2020[172]), and we find that the forms with the highest index are 'boumeddienne' (index 238 / average distance .0), which is logical because this is his surname, followed by "compagne" (partner/girlfriend) (index 41 / average distance 3.1), "coulibaly" (index 34 / average distance 4.9), "amedy" (index 33 / average distance 4.6), "belhoucine" (index 13 / average distance 4.5) and "épouse" (spouse/wife) (index 7 / average distance 2.9) (see table 9 below). These co-occurrences reveal that Hayat Boumeddiene, charged with criminal terrorist conspiracy, is primarily identified by her status as the companion or wife of Amedy Coulibaly, the perpetrator of the Hyper Casher hostage-taking. Her own identity and role seem to take a back seat. She is described through her sentimental relationship with a man, rather than as an

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[172] She is still being sought by the French authorities.

autonomous player in these events. This analysis illustrates the frequent tendency in the media to relate women's involvement to a male figure, in this case their spouse, rather than recognising their own agentivity. The fact that "compagne" (partner) and "épouse" (spouse) are so strongly associated with "hayat" reflects the persistence of stereotypical representations and a difficulty in describing women involved outside their marital status.

Occ	Fréq	CoFréq	Indice	DistMoy
boumeddiene	137	133	238.3024	0.0
compagne	51	30	41.2146	3.1333334
coulibaly	243	45	34.5953	4.866667
amedy	174	39	33.4729	4.5897436
belhoucine	74	16	13.9134	4.5
épouse	58	10	7.927	2.9

Table 9: Analysis of co-occurrences of the form "hayat"

Let's now analyse the form "madani" (see table 10), the surname of Inès Madani, convicted of involvement in an attempted terrorist attack near Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, France in 2019. The strongest occurrences are "inès" (index 127 / average distance .0), "gilligmann" (index 47 / average distance 3.9), "ornella" (index 45 / distance 3.7), "accusée" (accused), (index 15 / average distance 4.5), "sakaou" (index 12, average distance 3.8) and "virtuel" (virtual) (index 12 / average distance 3.3). The most frequent terms are the names of her co-accused ("gilligmann", "ornella") and the term " accusée ", referring to her legal status. There is therefore less reference to an associated male figure, unlike the "hayat" form where the spouse's name dominates. The use of the term " virtuel " (virtual) may reflect the widespread idea that women become radicalised online through manipulation. This proves to be correct in this case. If we look at the similarities between the forms "madani" and " virtuel ", and analyse the articles in more detail, we learn that Inès Madani created a virtual character, a jihadist man who boasted of wanting to organise attacks in France, through whom Madani seduced women on social networks and incited them to attempt attacks.[173]

[173] Julien Licourt, « Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame : le cas d'Inès Madani au cœur de l'audience », *Le Figaro*, 26 septembre 2019

Occ	Fréq	CoFréq	Indice	DistMoy
inès	431	388	127.0	0.010309278
gilligmann	230	78	47.7823	3.9487178
ornella	266	81	45.5188	3.7407408
accusée	192	39	15.6428	4.5384617
sakaou	87	24	13.0023	3.8333333
virtuel	46	18	12.8783	3.2777777
principale	18	12	12.3916	2.4166667

Table 10: Analysis of co-occurrences of the form "madani"

When we analyse the co-occurrences of the form "***gilligmann***" (see appendix 6), the surname of Ornella Gilligmann, sentenced to 25 years in prison for her involvement in the attempted attack on Notre-Dame, the most relevant co-occurrences are "ornella" (index 301 / average distance 0. 1), "madani" (index 46 / average distance 4), "accusées" (accused) (index 10 / average distance 4.4), "mère" (mother) (index 7 / average distance 4.1), "divorce" (index 6 / average distance 4.4) and "emprise" (hold) (index 5 / average distance 4.4). As with the "madani" form, her first name and the term "accusées" are among the most closely related. Her identity as an accused is highlighted. On the other hand, the recurrence of the form "mère" (mother) emphasises her maternal role, and the phrase "Ornella Gilligmann mère de 3 enfants" ("Ornella Gilligmann mother of 3 children") or "Ornella Gilligmann mère de famille" ("Ornella Gilligmann mother of a family") is often used to refer to her. The form "divorce" reveals that her marital situation may have played a part in explaining her actions. However, this form is only used in text_089[174], which deals with Ornella Gilligmann's trial. The form " emprise " is used to refer to the hold that Inès Madani had over Ornella Gilligmann. This term was often used by the latter and her lawyer as a defence strategy during Gilligmann's trial.

Let's conclude with an analysis of the form "***sarah***" (see appendix 7), the first name of Sarah Hervoüet, charged with "participation in a terrorist criminal association" and "attempted murder". The most relevant co-occurrents are, among others, "hervouët" (index 194 / average distance .0), "amel"[175] (index 30 / average distance 3.6), "ans" (years) (index 10 / average distance 3.7), "hazan", who is her lawyer (index 8 / average distance 2.7), but also "voilée" (veiled) (index 4 / average distance 2.5) and "guidée" (guided) (index 4 / average distance 4.0).

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[174] Julien Licourt, En direct « Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame : la cour se penche sur le cas d'Ornella Gilligmann », *Le Figaro*, 27 septembre 2019
[175] Amel Sakaou has been charged with criminal conspiracy to commit a terrorist act and complicity in an attempted murder in relation to a terrorist undertaking.

As with the other defendants, her surname "hervouët" comes first, identifying above all her legal identity, although the form "ans" shows a focus on her age. Hervouët is often identified as "Sarah Hervouët 23 years old...". The presence of the first name "amel" refers to her co-accused, thus associating them together. But unlike the analysis of co-occurrences of the forms "madani" and "gilligmann", here we find the terms " voilée " (veiled) and " guidée " (guided), which introduce a dimension of manipulation and submission: the veil as a marker of radicalisation undergone, and the idea that she was "guided" by others, denying her agentivity. The segments "Sarah h. was entirely veiled" and "Sara Hervouët (...) also guided by Rachid Kassim" are repeated a small number of times.

In conclusion, a study of the co-occurrences of the forms "femme", "hayat", "madani", "gilligmann" and "sarah" reveals contrasting developments in the media representation of women involved in attacks. Admittedly, the recurrent identification of women by name and their status as defendants reflects a recognition of their criminal responsibility and their active role in the events, where previously they had been relegated to a passive status. However, this progress is qualified by the persistence of markers that infantilise or diminish responsibility. The omnipresence of the terms "jeune" ("young") and "âge" ("age") reflects a focus on the precocity of their involvement, interpreted as immaturity. Similarly, the notions of "guidée" (guided), "emprise" (hold) or "virtuel" (virtual) deny some of their autonomy. Above all, the over-representation of the terms "épouse" (wife/spouse) and "compagne " (partner/companion), mainly present in the "hayat" form, to designate certain women reveals the maintenance of a priority identification through the prism of their marital relationship rather than through their own identity. There is therefore a contrast between the direct designation of their criminal responsibility and the persistence of elements denying their full agentivity, reduced to the influence of men or external factors. In short, while media discourse is showing greater objectivity, the representation of the women involved remains marked by ambivalence, between empowerment and the maintenance of stereotyped narrative patterns. The lexicometric analyses carried out to date, through the study of concordances and co-occurrences, have identified certain trends and ambivalences in the media representation of women involved in attacks. In order to deepen and consolidate these results, it seems appropriate to analyse the specific features of our corpus. This statistical technique aims to highlight lexical forms that are significantly over-represented compared to a reference corpus. The identification of specificities will thus make it possible to confirm or qualify the observations made on the recurrent associations of terms designating female terrorists. The specifically salient forms will support our interpretations of the angles favoured or minimised in the media presentation of this phenomenon. By targeting the characteristic lexical usages of our corpus through a gender

lens, the analysis of specificities will shed further light on the representations conveyed of women's involvement in ideologically motivated violent actions.

2.4. Specificity analysis

Specificity analysis of a corpus in lexicometrics is a powerful contrast tool, complementary to CFA, which highlights the lexical particularities of a set of texts compared to another reference corpus by means of a probability calculation which takes into account the size of the text. This method makes it possible to identify terms and themes that are over-represented in the corpus studied compared with the reference corpus.[176] This brings out its lexical particularities. A form can be positive or negative specific (over-represented or under-represented) in a part of the corpus. When the specificity index is zero (between -2 and 2), the vocabulary is considered to be commonplace (corresponding to an average distribution in all parts of the corpus). This allows us, on the one hand, to identify the key words that characterise a corpus and are significant of the content and concerns of the texts, and on the other hand, to facilitate the interpretation of the corpus by pointing out the specific lexicons that make it up.[177] Nonetheless, this method highlights lexical contrasts, but does not in itself provide a detailed interpretation of content. Words that are over-represented in the corpus may be anecdotal rather than substantive. For example, certain important terms may not stand out if they are not frequent enough. Specificity analysis is therefore useful for identifying the main lexical trends in a corpus, provided that the reference corpus is chosen carefully and that this method is combined with others for a more detailed qualitative analysis.

We began our specificity analysis by partitioning our corpus on the basis of the *text_ variable. We then obtained our table of specificities generated on the basis of our lemmatised lexical table. The first form we analysed was, of course, "*femme*" (woman) (see graph 3 below). Analysis of the specific features of the form "femme" (lemmatised) in texts from the newspapers *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde* shows some interesting variations between these two titles. We can immediately see that the form "femme" is predominantly over-represented (index greater than 2) in texts 50 to 100 (texts from the newspaper *Le Figaro*) compared to the other texts, and in particular in text_062[178] with an index of 16.2, and is under-represented (index less than - 2) in texts 100 to 150 (texts from the newspaper *Le Monde*), in particular in

[176] Mayaffre, D., Pincemin, B. & Poudat, C. (2019)., *op cit.*
[177] Leblanc, J., Fleury, S. & Née, É. (2017)., *op cit.*
[178] Lucile Quillet, « Pourquoi Daech ne peut pas exister sans les femmes », *Le Figaro*, 16 décembre 2015

text_128[179] with an index of -5.6. An in-depth analysis of these two texts with opposing positions could provide a better understanding of the different editorial orientations of the two newspapers, especially as they were produced before (text_068) and after (text_128) the failed attacks on Notre-Dame de Paris in September 2016. On the one hand, text_062 (805 hits) from the newspaper *Le Figaro*, published in December 2015, is an interview with Géraldine Casutt, a doctoral student specialising in jihad and women, who deciphers the way in which women have enabled the Daech system to establish itself over time. Among other things, she says: "I don't think it's going to happen any time soon (that these women will be fighting and carrying out attacks themselves). The day that the EI announces that women can fight there, it will most likely be in a bad position". However, Casutt also asserts that, given the media coverage and the effect of terror that this could provoke, it would not be "surprising to see lone wolves acting or women intervening in an exceptional way in an attack". When we analyse the concordancer for the form "femme" (woman) relating to text_068, we notice that this form is followed several times by the form "daech" and the lemmatised form "combattre" (to fight). In particular, it is associated with the segments "musulmanes occidentales" (Western Muslim women) and "voilées en Europe" (veiled women in Europe). As for text_128 (4,371 occurrences) published by *Le Monde* in June 2017, while its purpose is "to study the way in which European jihadists justify their attacks in letters to their loved ones (...)", the form "femme" is under-represented, and is only mentioned in this sentence: "*les kamikazes s'adressent à des femmes: mère, sœur et compagne*" (The suicide bombers target women: mother, sister and companion). There is therefore a striking contrast: the theme of women is central to the article in *Le Figaro*, approached from the angle of their place in jihadist ideology, whereas it is virtually absent from the text in *Le Monde*, which deals with male European suicide bombers. In short, the analysis here reveals divergent editorial orientations. *Le Figaro* highlights the role and representation of women within Daech, a subject obscured by *Le Monde*, which deals with jihadist suicide bombers separately.

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[179] Soren Seelon, « Plongée dans la tête des kamikazes », *Le Monde*, 7 juin 2017
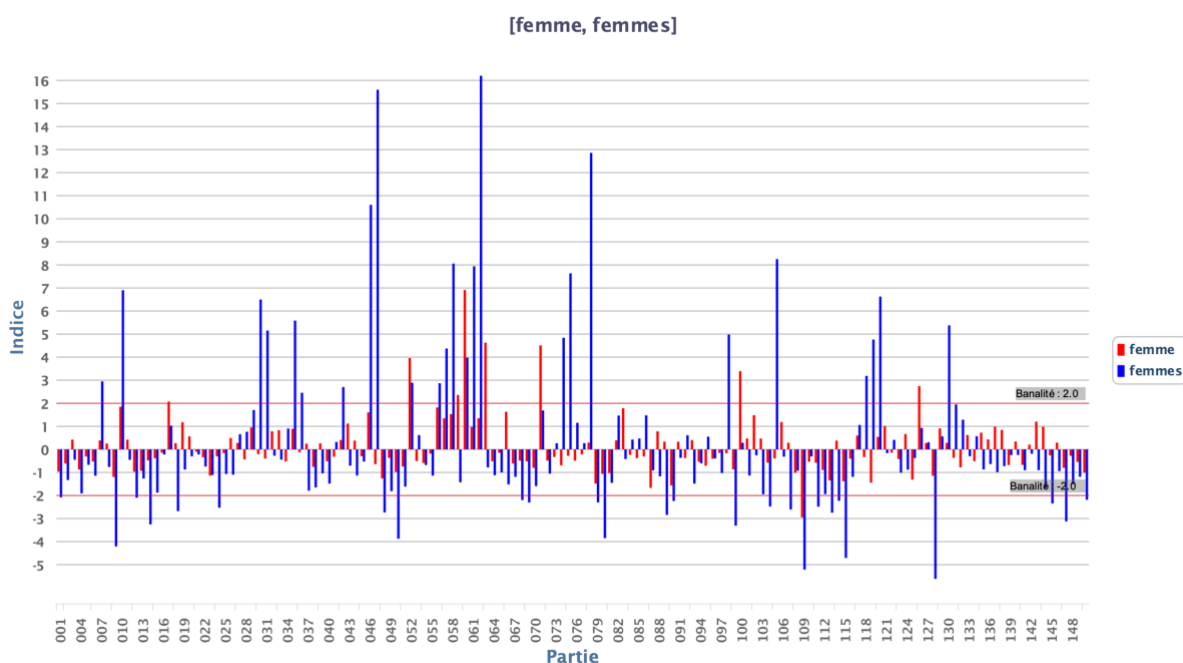
[femme, femmes]

Graph 3: Analysis of the specific features of the "woman" form according to the *text_ partition

An analysis of concordances and co-occurrences has brought to light the phrase "commando de femmes " (women's commando), which appears several times in various texts. Using the analysis of specificities, let's analyse how the form "***commando***" is distributed within our corpus. Graph 4 below shows that the "commando" form is mainly distributed between texts 50 and 150. Commando" is most over-represented in text_118[180] (index of 12.4) from the newspaper *Le Monde*, which deals with the attempted gas canister attack. In this text, the attack is presented as an " *un projet « inédit » mené par des femmes, (…) » et comme un « commando de femmes « téléguidé » par des djihadistes du groupe État islamique en Syrie*"[181]. The form "commando" is also over-represented in text_076[182] (index of 6.9). This text, from the newspaper *Le Figaro*, is entitled "*Voiture suspecte: le commando 'téléguidé' par Daech depuis la Syrie*", and describes this commando as "un commando de femmes 'radicalisées' et prêtes à frapper", "commando de filles" or "commando de jeunes femmes"[183]. On the other hand, the "commando" form is the most (slightly) under-represented in text_088[184] (index -0.8), a text

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[180] Le Monde.fr, « Essonne : interpellations en lien avec les attaques de Saint-Etienne du Rouvray et de Magnanville », *Le Monde*, 9 septembre 2016

[181] English translation "unprecedented project" carried out "by women (...)" and as a " commando of women" led "by jihadists from the Islamic State group in Syria"

[182] Christophe Cornevin, Caroline Piquet et Anne-Laure Frémont, « Voiture suspecte : le commando « téléguidée » par Deach depuis la Syrie », *Le Figaro*, 9 septembre 2016

[183] English translation: "a commando of 'radicalised' women ready to strike", "commando of girls" or "commando of young women."

[184] Julien Licourt, « Attentat raté près de Notre-Dame : le cas d'Inès Madani au cœur de l'audience », *Le Figaro*, 26 septembre 2019

which nonetheless concerns the trial of Inès Madani, one of the participants in this commando. In conclusion, the over-representation of the form "commando" in certain articles seems to confirm the recurrent use of this formula, identified in the concordances and co-occurrences, to designate the group of women involved in attempted attacks. The fact that the strongest indices of specificity are found in press articles reporting the events themselves suggests that this formula is used more to describe the action than for a posteriori analysis. The frequent association of "commando" with terms such as "téléguidé" (remote-controlled), "filles" (girls) or "jeunes femmes" (young women) confirms the persistence of stereotyped, infantilising or disempowering representations, as already noted. On the other hand, the under-representation of "commando" in an article on the trial tends to show that the active and organised dimension of this group is less emphasised when individual motivations and responsibilities are studied. Overall, these observations on the specific features of "commando" corroborate the idea of an ambivalent presentation, between recognition of an offensive role and maintenance of a stereotyped view of women's capacity for autonomous action.
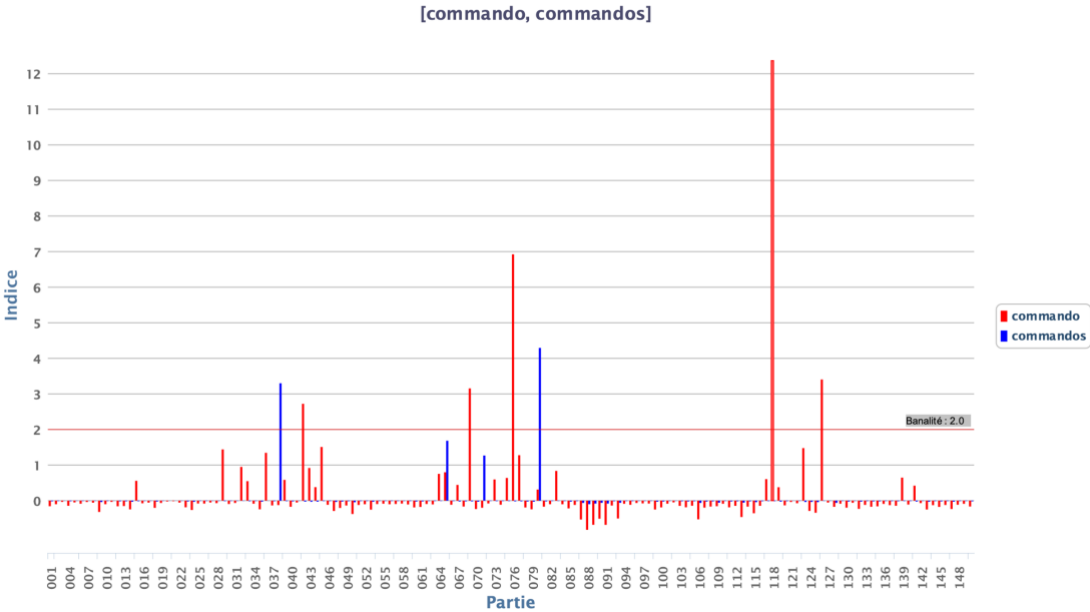
Graph 4: Analysis of the specific features of the "commando" form according to the *text_ partition

In order to analyse more closely the distribution of the "**femme**" (women) form in each of the newspapers making up our corpus, we partitioned our corpus into sub-corpuses according to the *journal_ tag. Graph 5 below shows that the "femme" form has a specificity index of 5.5 in *Le Figaro*, and is therefore over-represented. In contrast, this form is under-represented in *Le Monde*, with an index of -6.4. In the newspaper *Libération*, this form is distributed in an

"ordinary" way, with an index of 0.4. On the basis of these data, we can deduce that the under-representation of the term "femme" in the newspaper *Le Monde* shows that this newspaper attaches relatively little importance to the role of women in the attacks, that it does not emphasise this aspect. Conversely, the strong over-representation of the term in *Le Figaro* places a great deal of emphasis on the participation of women in the attacks, making it a privileged angle of analysis. *Libération* seems to treat the issue in a fairly balanced way, neither underplaying it nor overemphasising it. We can therefore see that the three newspapers may have different ideological leanings when it comes to interpreting the role of women in these events: downplaying of the phenomenon in *Le Monde*, a rather neutral treatment in *Libération,* and, on the contrary, a strong focus on this aspect in *Le Figaro*.
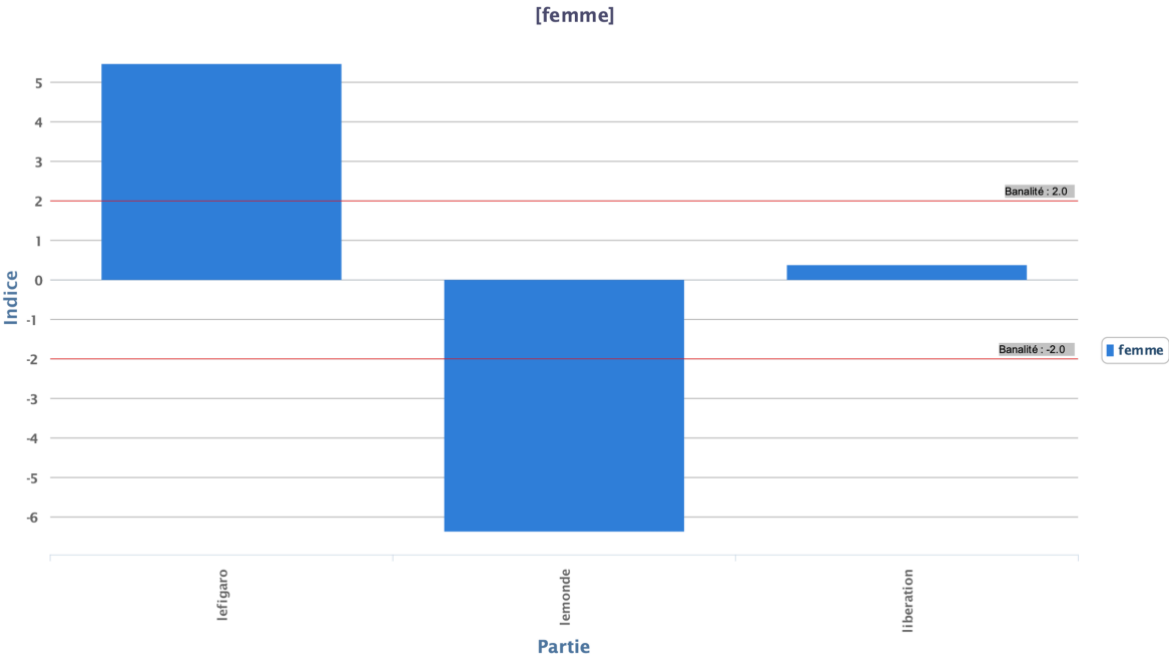
*Graph 5: Analysis of the specific features of the 'woman' form according to the *journal_ partition*

We now turn to the analysis of the forms "***djihad***", "***djihadisme***", "***djihadiste***" and "***djihadistes***" (see graph 6 below). To do this, we carry out the same actions as for the analysis of the specific features of the form "femme" (woman). Once these actions have been carried out, we obtain the graph below, and we can see that, unlike the form "femme", the forms beginning with "djihad", in particular the form "djihadisme", are over-represented in the newspaper *Le Monde* with a specificity index of 4.1 (the forms "djihad", "djihadiste" and "djihadistes" are between 0 and 2). Conversely, the form 'djihadisme' is under-represented in the newspaper *Le Figaro* with an index of -2.9 (the forms 'djihad', 'djihadiste' and 'djihadistes'

are slightly under-represented with an index varying between 0 and -2). For the newspaper *Libération*, these terms are in the average range, with an index fluctuating between 2 and -2 (djihadistes: index 1.3; djihadisme: index -0.6; djihad: index -0.3; djihadiste: index -1.2). The fact that one newspaper, in this case *Le Monde*, uses these forms more frequently may indicate a desire to categorise these acts primarily as acts of "jihadism", in reference to Islamist extremist ideology. The newspaper is thus emphasising the ideological dimension in its coverage of the attacks. Abundant use of this vocabulary may also reflect a political orientation aimed at closely associating terrorism and Islam, by emphasising the link with jihadism. Conversely, a newspaper such as *Le Figaro*, which makes little use of these terms, may be seeking to avoid hastily equating terrorism with Islam, by refusing to overuse this religious vocabulary to describe terrorist acts. Behind these lexical choices, we can see an editorial line that influences readers' perception of the attacks. Whether or not we talk about "jihadism" guides our interpretation of the causes of these acts.
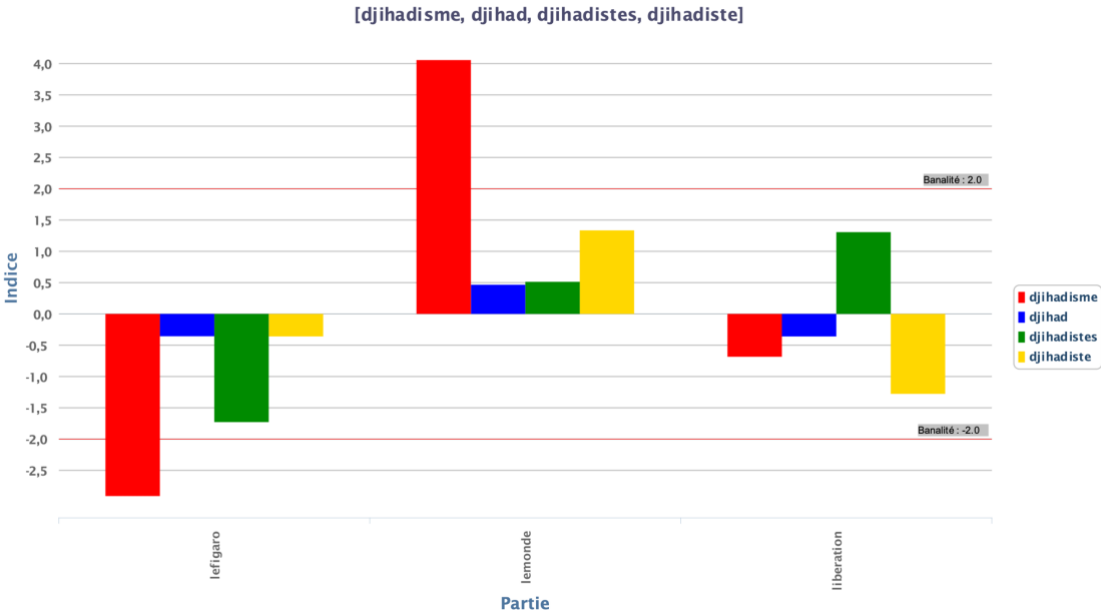
Graph 6: Analysis of the specificities of the forms "djihadisme", "djihad", "djihadistes" and "djihadiste" according to the *journal_ partition

When we then analyse the specifics of the "***terroriste***" form, we obtain different results. The graph below shows that, unlike the "djihadisme" form, the Figaro newspaper over-represented the "terroriste" form in its articles, with a specificity index of 3.7 (here the distribution of the "terroriste" form is considered to be trivial as it only has an index of 0.4). Conversely, the "terroristes" form has an index of -3.3 in *Le Monde*, so it is under-represented (the "terroriste" form has an index of -1.5). The "terroristes" form is also over-represented in

the newspaper *Libération* (index of 3). Furthermore, when we go into more detail and analyse the distribution over time of the "terroriste" form, we find that while it is distributed in a banal way throughout the corpus, it is over-represented between 25 November 2020 and 4 December 2020 (specificity index fluctuating between 7 and 8). On 25 November 2020, the newspaper *Libération* published the text_46, entitled "*Les femmes terroristes sont... des terroristes*" ("Women terrorists are... terrorists"), with the aim of "deconstructing the stereotype of the male terrorist, and integrating more women into the ranks of the intelligence services".[185] The article highlights the idea that women involved in terrorist activities should be perceived and treated as terrorists, without their gender being used as a qualifier or justification for their actions, and suggests that the presence of women in the intelligence and police services could help counter jihadist propaganda by using voices that are credible and close to the female experience. The second article in which the "terroriste" form is the most over-represented is texte_099[186] published by *Le Figaro*, which deals with the "*terrorisme pulsionnel*" (impulse terrorism) put forward by Marc Trévidic. However, the latter does not emphasise the female aspect of terrorism but rather the fact that terrorism can be manipulated by individuals who exploit the beliefs and motivations of terrorists to achieve their own objectives. In addition, of the 150 articles in our corpus, 32 of them aim to question or analyse the meaning of 'female jihadists' as such, and the implications that this phenomenon engenders. Moreover, when analysing the content of the articles, many of them challenge long-established stereotypes and prejudices about women's involvement in armed violence, and attempt to explain the motivations behind their involvement in jihadism. While some assert that girls, like boys, adhere to the same ideological system and the same political demands[187], despite the fact that their role within this ideology is different, others assert that the political dimension is less pronounced among women than among men, and that "for these young girls, politics is above all the search for a solid family life".[188]

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[185] Emmy-Lou Nicolaï, « Les femmes terroristes sont… des terroristes », *Libération*, 25 novembre 2020

[186] LENA, « Marc Trévidic : Nous sommes aujourd'hui devant un terrorisme pulsionnel », *Le Figaro*, 4 décembre 2020

[187] Pierre Alonso, « Jihad : Les femmes ne sont pas censées passer à l'acte », *Libération*, 9 septembre

[188] Calvet, C. & Vécrin, A. & Boulakchou A., (2017), « Fathi Benslama et Farhad Khosrokhavar : « La violence exercée par les jeunes femmes djihadistes est d'abord tournée contre elles-mêmes », *Libération*
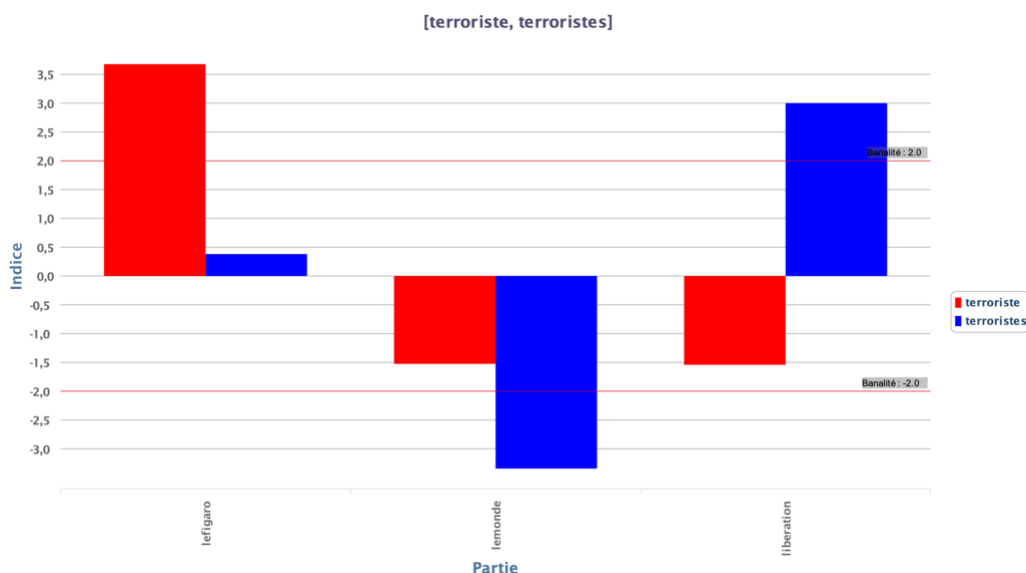
Graph 7: Analysis of the specific features of the "terrorist" form according to the *journal_ partition

We might note that in its media coverage, *Le Monde* clearly favoured the term "djihadisme" over "terroriste" when referring to these attacks and the participation of women in them. Conversely, *Le Figaro* and *Libération* made little use of the term "djihadisme" (jihadism) but referred more to "*actes terroristes*" (terrorist acts). These divergent lexical choices between the three newspapers could reveal different positions regarding the interpretation given to these tragic events. By placing greater emphasis on the 'jihadist' dimension, *Le Monde* emphasises the ideological and religious background that may explain these violent acts. The newspaper thus establishes a causal link between Islamist extremist ideology and the terrorist threat. The explanatory factor lies in the jihadists' radical interpretation of Islam. Conversely, by speaking primarily of terrorist acts, *Le Figaro* is distancing itself from the hasty equation of Islam with terrorism. By preferring this more neutral term to the religious reference, the newspaper seems to want to dissociate the Muslim religion from the acts committed in its name, and thus try not to stigmatise Islam as a whole. Nevertheless, when we analyse the concordance of the form "djihadisme" (see appendix 8) used in the articles from the newspaper *Le Monde* (texts 101 to 150), we find that it is mostly used in articles that refer to jihadism as such, or that attempt to explain either the process of radicalisation or this "new trend" of jihadist women, and is used less in articles reporting the facts of the attacks themselves. Among the most relevant examples, we can cite text_110[189] entitled "*Stop djihadisme": 40% de femmes parmi les radicalisations signalé*" ("Stop jihadism":

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[189] Anna-Aël Durand, « Stop djihadisme": 40% de femmes parmi les radicalisations signalées", *Le Monde*, 24 novembre 2015

40% women among reported radicalisations"), text_115[190] entitled " *Expliquer la radicalisation: portrait-robot d'un terroriste "maison'"*" ("Explaining radicalisation: sketch of an in-house terrorist"), or text_120[191] entitled "Farhad Khosrokhavar: "*On entre dans une forme de féminisme du djihadisme*" ("We are entering a form of feminism of jihadism"), written a few days after the failed attack on Notre-Dame. As for *Le Figaro*, the analysis of concordances of the form "djihadisme" is mainly used in articles published a few days after the failed attempt on Notre-Dame's life. By way of example, we can cite text_078[192] , published on 19 September 2016, entitled "*Daech et les femmes combattantes: l'ambiguïté qui les perdra?"* (Daech and women fighters: the ambiguity that will lose them*),* and text_079[193] , published on 5 October 2016, entitled "*Le ciel attendra: outil pédagogique contre le djihad ou instrument de diversion?*" (The sky will have to wait: an educational tool against jihad or a diversionary tactic?). On the other hand, when we study the concordancer of the form "djihadiste" in the newspaper Le Monde, it is mostly associated with the theme of women, on the one hand when the articles refer to the failed gas canister attack. For example: text_123[194] entitled "*Terrorisme: Sara Hervouët, 23, aspirante au martyre*" (Terrorism: Sara Hervouët, 23, aspirant to martyrdom), text_124[195] entitled "*Ines Madani, la djihadiste qui se faisait passer pour un homme*" (Ines Madani, the jihadist who passed herself off as a man), and text_125[196] entitled "*Paroles brutes de djihadistes français*" (The raw words of French jihadists). On the other hand, when we talk about "women jihadists", such as in text_130[197] entitled "*Qui sont les femmes djihadistes? Une étude inédite sur leur profil et leurs motivations* " (Who are the women jihadists? A ground-breaking study of their profile and motivations), and text_139[198] entitled " *Commando de Notre-Dame: jusqu'à 30 ans de réclusion requis dans le procès du "djihad au féminin*" (Notre-Dame Commando: up to 30 years' imprisonment requested in the "female jihad" trial).

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[190] Farhad Khosrokhavar, « Expliquer la radicalisation : portrait-robot d'un terroriste « maison », *Le Monde,* 15 juillet 2016

[191] Jérémie Lamothe, « Farhad Khosrokhavar : « On entre dans une forme de féminisme du djihadisme », *Le Figaro*, 10 septembre 2016

[192] Lucille Quillet, « Daech et les femmes combattantes : l'ambiguïté qui les perdra ? », *Le Figaro*, 19 septembre 2016

[193] Alexandre Devecchio, « Le ciel attendra : outil pédagogique contre le djihad ou instrument de diversion ? », *Le Figaro*, 5 octobre 2016

[194] Soren Seelow, « Terrorisme : Sara Hervouët, 23 ans, aspirante au martyre », *Le Monde*, 11 octobre 2016

[195] Soren Seelon, « Ines Madani, la djihadiste qui se faisait passer pour un homme », *Le Monde*, 7 novembre 2016

[196] Le Monde.fr, « Paroles brutes de djihadistes français », *Le Monde*, 30 novembre 2016

[197] Soren Seelon, « Qui sont les femmes djihadistes ? Une étude inédite sur leur profil et leurs motivations », *Le Monde*, 5 mai 2018

[198] Rémi Dupré, « Commando de Notre-Dame : jusqu'à 30 ans de réclusion requis dans le procès du « djihad au féminin », *Le Monde*, 10 octobre 2019

In conclusion, the over-representation of "djihadisme" (jihadism) in *Le Monde* compared to "terroriste" (terrorist) does seem to reflect a desire on the part of this newspaper to establish a link between jihadist ideology and the terrorist threat. However, a qualitative analysis of the concordances nuances this observation. The term is used mainly in analytical articles, and less in the raw coverage of the attacks. *Le Figaro* also mentions "djihadisme" in analysis and contextualisation articles, while giving priority to "terroristes" to describe the events. We cannot therefore conclude that there are any fundamental differences in the way the headlines treat the subject. The two terms coexist in all the newspapers. The frequent association of "djihadiste" ("jihadist") with " femme " ("woman") clearly reflects a desire to focus specifically on women's involvement in this ideology. On the whole, however, newspapers are cautious about conflating terrorism and Islam, using the terms in the right context. In addition, the persistence of articles questioning the very meaning of "femmes djihadistes", as well as their motivations, which range from political to family-related, reveals that this concept remains open to debate and interpretation in the media. On the whole, we can see a shift towards a gender-neutral identification of female terrorism, but also the persistence of gendered stereotypical views, making female jihadism an as yet unstabilised concept in media discourse.

An analysis of concordances and co-occurrences showed us that the form "femme" (woman) was often preceded by the form "kamikaze" (suicide bomber), thus forming the formula "femme kamikaze" (female suicide bomber), a formula that can be interpreted as an evolution, or a certain awareness, of the role of women in armed violence. Let's move on to an analysis of the specific features of the '***kamikaze***' form, whose representativeness will be analysed using the *journal_ tag. Graph 8 below shows that the 'kamikaze' form is over-represented in *Le Figaro* (index of 3.3), under-represented in *Le Monde* (index -6) and normally represented in *Libération* (index 0.8). From these data, we can deduce that the over-representation in Le Figaro seems to confirm the frequent use of the phrase "femme kamikaze" revealed in the analysis of concordances and co-occurrences, particularly in this title. On the other hand, the under-representation in *Le Monde* indicates that the phrase is used less frequently there. We can therefore observe different uses of this term depending on the editorial line. *Le Figaro* puts more emphasis on the modus operandi of the attacks. *Le Monde* is perhaps more cautious about conflating suicide bombers, terrorism and Islam. However, the presence of this formula in the concordances shows that it is not totally absent from the three titles. The differences measured are relative. We cannot conclude that there are fundamental differences or marked ideological positions. To sum up, there are nuances of intensity, but the phrase "femme kamikaze" (female suicide bomber) runs through the whole of the media corpus,

reflecting a change in representations of the role of women in the attacks. However, this evolution is relatively short-lived. When we analyse the distribution of the form 'kamikaze' according to the *date_ tag (see appendix 9), this form is mostly used between 14 October 2015 and 19 October 2015, and distributed in a banal manner (ranging between an index of 2 and - 2). These articles, mainly from the *Libération* and *Le Figaro* newspapers, focused on the alleged first female suicide bomber in Europe, Hasna Aït Boulahcen, who allegedly detonated herself with an explosive belt during the assault in Saint-Denis on Wednesday 18 November.[199] These articles identify the event as "Female suicide bombers: a new era of jihad in France"[200], "Female suicide bombers: a first in France, not in the world"[201], or "Female suicide bombers: a strategy to shock public opinion"[202].
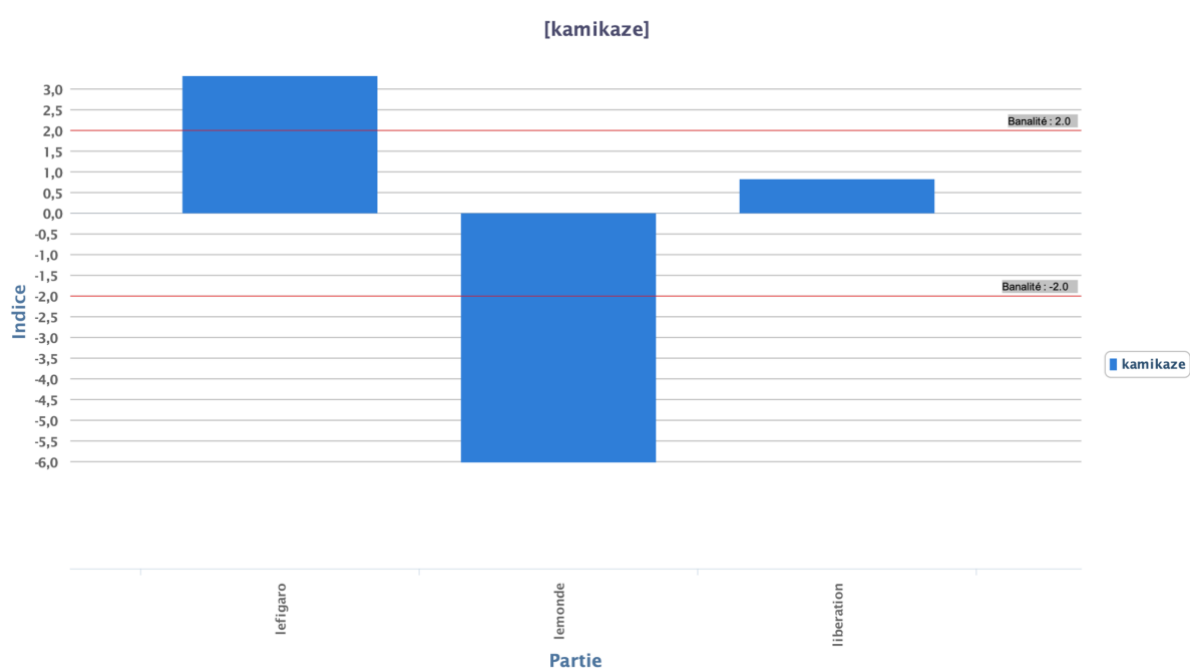
*Graph 8: Analysis of the specific features of the "kamikaze" form according to the *journal_ partition*

In conclusion, the concentration of the form 'kamikaze' over a short period corresponding to the November 2015 attacks shows that its use is highly contextualised. It refers to a specific event (the assault on Saint-Denis) and then disappears once the facts have been clarified. The rapid association of "femme" and "kamikaze" could therefore reflect an

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[199]On 20 November 2015, investigators "formally established that she was not wearing an explosive belt during the assault in Saint-Denis". (cf. *Le Monde*, « Hasna Aït Boulahcen, entre vodka et niqab », 21 novembre 2015).

[200] AFP, « Femme kamikaze : une nouvelle ère du djihad en France », *Le Figaro* 18 novembre 2015

[201] Jean-Manuel Escarnot, « Femme kamikaze : une première en France, pas dans le monde », *Libération*, 18 novembre 2015

[202] Lucile Quillet, « Les femmes kamikazes, une stratégie « pour choquer l'opinion publique », *Le Figaro* 18 novembre 2015

instantaneous media reflex rather than the affirmation of a trend. The immediate treatment was marked by a certain dramatisation, with the event being described as "a new era of jihad", which subsequently faded. It is therefore difficult to deduce any lasting change in representations of the role of women terrorists. This temporal analysis qualifies the previous interpretations by showing the weight of the current context on the occasional use of certain terms. Thus, although the analysis of the corpus shows that the expression "femme kamikaze" is highly contextual and linked to the attacks of 2015-2016, it would be relevant to extend the reflection to other theatres of operation where women use suicide tactics. Indeed, the use of female suicide bombers seems to be increasing in some recent conflicts, such as in Chechnya, Sri Lanka, Iraq and Nigeria with Boko Haram. A comparative study with these conflict zones would make it possible to determine whether we are witnessing a global trend of increasing involvement of women in kamikaze actions.

In conclusion, the lexicometric analysis of the media corpus carried out in this section has highlighted several salient trends in the presentation of women's involvement in armed jihadist groups. A detailed study of frequencies of appearance, concordances, co-occurrences and specificities revealed recurring lexical usages reflecting certain dominant representations. Behind the apparent recognition of women's active role, the analysis showed the persistence of infantilising or disempowering markers in media discourse. In order to draw all the conclusions from this lexicometric analysis, the next and final section will return to the hypotheses formulated at the start of this work. We will discuss the extent to which the results obtained allow us to validate them or not. This comparison with our initial hypotheses will provide an overview of what this empirical research tells us about the media production of the phenomenon of 'female jihadists'. Following the detailed presentation of the methodology and results of the analysis in this empirical part, the next section will look back at the hypotheses that guided this work and structured our thinking. This final review will assess our initial assumptions in the light of the data collected and processed.

3. Conclusion of the second part and analysis of the results

In conclusion, the aim of this work was to use a lexicometric analysis of a media corpus to study the representations conveyed of women's involvement in jihadist groups. To do this, we created a corpus of texts consisting of 150 newspaper articles (online) from the French newspapers *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* and *Libération,* published between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2020. The articles focused on the attacks of January 2015, the attempted attack of September 2016 and the attacks of November 2015, as well as the trials of each of these events. We carried out a hypothetico-deductive analysis based on two main hypotheses. The first postulated that media representations of women's participation in jihadist groups can influence public perception and government policies, by positioning these women as passive actors who are manipulated or under male influence rather than as autonomous actors. However, our lexicometric analysis revealed a more nuanced picture. Firstly, the factorial correspondence analysis revealed an opposition between, on the one hand, the lexicon relating to women's jihadist involvement and, on the other, that evoking their private and conjugal lives. This tension reflects a still marked focus on the personal dimension rather than on women's political autonomy. Similarly, a study of the concordances showed the recurrence of infantilising terms ("jeune femme", "fille"), or linking their actions to a male figure ("femme de", "épouse de"). These lexical elements tend to minimise their full agentivity. However, a second analysis of co-occurrences nuances this observation. The recurring use of their names and their status as defendants shows a form of recognition of their responsibility, even if the markers that diminish responsibility persist. In addition, the identification of formulas such as "femme djihadistes" or "commando de femmes" in the analysis of concordances indicates an emerging awareness of their active role, although this is often relativised by the context. Ultimately, the persistence of infantilizing markers and the designation by the marital relationship testifies to a partial concealment of the autonomy of women terrorists. But the growing recognition of their criminal responsibility, through identification by name and their status as defendants, also demonstrates a form of awareness of their active role, albeit ambivalent. When we compare the media coverage of the January 2015 attacks, focusing on Hayat Boumeddienne, and the failed attack on Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris in September 2016, focusing on Inès Madani, Ornella Gilligmann and Sarah Hervouët (the 3 main defendants in this attack), we see a difference in the way they are named. Although Hayat Boumeddienne is accused of having actively financed and participated in the 2015 attacks, the analysis of co-occurrences shows that she is almost always portrayed by the media as the companion or wife of Amedy Coulibaly (who killed a policewoman in Montrouge and was one of those responsible for the attack on the Hyper Casher shop). However, analysis of the co-occurrences of the forms "madani", "gilligmann" and

"sarah" revealed a certain evolution in the way female terrorists are identified. While the age of these women and the terms "young girls" or "young women" are still widely used to represent them, there is less use of terms relating to their marital or parental status. These women are not described as "black widows", "mad for Allah" or "little pieces of woman", as was the case with Hayat Boumeddienne, but as terrorists who chose to take up arms, in the same way as the men.

The second hypothesis assumes that female jihadist involvement is frequently psychologised and depoliticised in the dominant media representations, which struggle to recognise the ideological motivations and political agentivity of these women. While the ideological and political dimension is not central to the corpus, neither are women systematically portrayed as mere manipulators. Admittedly, the factorial correspondence analysis highlighted an opposition between a vocabulary of radicalisation on the one hand, and a lexicon of feelings on the other, which may reflect a focus on personal motivations. However, an analysis of the concordances shows that the ideological dimension is not totally obscured. Initially, we could say that the articles emphasise women's adherence to the same ideological principles as men, despite their different roles, and attempt to understand the motivations of these women, beyond simple sentimental manipulation, for their commitment to jihadism. However, if we go into more detail by analysing the contexts in which the form 'ideology' appears, it is regularly associated with verbs such as 'marry' or 'embrace'. Consequently, the fact that women are described as espousing or embracing an ideology evokes a stereotypical view of female engagement as primarily emotional and passionate rather than rational or political, which tend to psychologise and depoliticise women's ideological commitment. In addition, the study of co-occurrences indicates that, depending on the woman, her motivations are presented in a variety of ways, between politics and the quest for identity. No systematic depoliticisation can be deduced. So, behind the divergent trends, media representations appear to be riven by tensions, between emphasising political motivations and reducing them to individual psychology. In short, despite a number of changes, media representations continue to be marked by tensions between the persistence of stereotyped narrative schemes and the growing need to recognise the complexity of the phenomenon and the variety of women's profiles and pathways to involvement. While the initial hypotheses need to be qualified, this analysis opens up some stimulating perspectives. Deconstructing the sclerotic media discourse on women jihadists would be a salutary step towards adapting state responses.

At the end of this analytical journey, it is worth taking a step back to consider some of the stimulating findings that this work has brought to light about media discourse on women's involvement in armed jihadist groups. For me, tackling this theme has been an opportunity to take an interest in a subject that is close to my heart, that of the media's treatment of gender and women's political violence. This work has opened my eyes to the persistence of stereotyped narrative patterns in the media, despite recent developments. Understanding the subtleties of the discourse on women jihadists has proved to be a complex but crucial part of understanding a phenomenon that is still too little explored. More broadly, this work is fully in line with current events, in a context where female participation in jihadist armed violence in France has never been so high. Indeed, since the 2015-2016 attacks in France, awareness of the active participation of women in jihadist groups, and in attacks in particular, has been the subject of new media, political and judicial attention. While their involvement in violent acts is not a new phenomenon, it continues to arouse astonishment and incomprehension. As women are generally relegated to the passive role of "companions to jihadists", public opinion, the media and politicians are reluctant to recognise their agency in the same way as men. Deconstructing the dominant representations of these women disseminated by the media is therefore more necessary than ever in order to adapt state responses to this contemporary challenge. To achieve this, this study began by defining the conceptual frameworks needed to analyse gendered media discourse on armed violence against women. Then, a lexicometric analysis of a press corpus was used to empirically uncover certain androcentric biases in representations of female jihadists. Having set out the main thrust of the problem, I would now like to return to the main contributions of this work.

The various concepts and theories discussed in our theoretical section have enabled us to situate our research object within a conceptual framework and an existing state of the art. By tracing the origins and implications of the concept of discourse, gender and social representations, we have been able to highlight the complexity underlying women's involvement in violent extremist groups, a phenomenon that has emerged over several generations. Discourse, defined as a social construction of reality, conveys systems of norms and power relations that constitute knowledge at a given time. In analysing the construction of discourse, a number of currents and researchers, such as M. Pêcheux and M. Foucault, have endeavoured, by studying the use of language, to deconstruct the semantics of political, media or public messages, by linking them to their social and institutional context. This has demonstrated the need to study the ways in which a discourse is enunciated and named in order

to fully grasp how it constructs definitions of reality and produces meaning about the world. Consequently, a number of currents have set out to deconstruct media discourse, revealing its ideological implicities hidden beneath a supposed objectivity. Ultimately, analysis of media discourse reveals that it constructs a certain social reality through the dissemination of specific systems of representations and values. Deciphering its underlying mechanisms is essential to understanding the manufacture of consent in our contemporary societies. This retrospective of the concept of discourse has brought out the implications of the concept of gender and social representations, two analytical tools that have proved relevant in analysing media discourse on women's participation in armed violence. On the one hand, the concept of gender, as it has developed since the 1970s in feminist studies in a break with an essentialist conception of the differences between the sexes, refers to the social and cultural constructions associated with the masculine and the feminine, as opposed to biological sex. This concept reveals the stereotypes and power relations that underpin media representations of women involved in armed groups. Applying a gendered analysis to the study of discourse on women jihadists therefore promises to renew the usual reading grids, by deconstructing stereotyped visions. The concept of social representations, which emerged in social psychology in the 1960s and 1970s, refers to the symbolic universe of meanings shared within a group, enabling individuals to understand the social world. Various theories have sought to explain how they are formed and how they function. The main idea is that social representations exert a constraint on practices by disseminating stereotypes that legitimise inequalities between social groups, particularly gender inequalities. Gender stereotypes relegate women to the domestic sphere and men to the public sphere, naturalising male domination. We therefore emphasise the key role of the media in the production and dissemination of social representations, through their symbolic power to name and define reality. Media representations are based on pre-existing stereotypes and collective imaginations. It is essential to analyse their production and their effects on representations. In order to test our working hypotheses that media representations of women's participation in jihadist groups can influence public perception and government policies, by positioning these women as passive actors who are manipulated or under male influence, and that women's jihadist involvement is frequently psychologised and depoliticised in dominant media representations, which fail to recognise their ideological motivations and political agentivity, we have adopted a theoretical framework combining critical discourse analysis and feminist standpoint theory. On the one hand, by looking at the links between discourse, knowledge and power, critical discourse analysis makes it possible to reveal the androcentric biases and relations of domination underlying media discourse. It invites us to take a close look at the language choices, the dominant journalistic framings and the blind spots in media coverage. On

the other hand, by inviting us to pay attention to the discursive positions assigned to women and to their possibility of (re)negotiating these assignments, feminist standpoint theory sheds essential light on gender issues, by paying attention to the way in which women are represented and portrayed in these discourses. The intersection of these two approaches, one critical and the other feminist, will enable us to study both the power relationships and the gender issues at stake in the production of media discourse on this phenomenon.

During the selection of our methodology, which will enable us to verify our working hypotheses from an empirical point of view, two methodological challenges emerged. Firstly, how to collect and process the information published in the media on the subject in question, and secondly, how to analyse the large volume of data generated. After exploring different methods, we opted for a lexicometric analysis. The originality of our approach lies in the combination of a lexicometric analysis using TXM software, of a media corpus combined with a qualitative interpretation reading. We opted for a three-stage approach: firstly, the creation of a corpus of media texts, secondly, the automated analysis of this corpus using lexicometric tools, and thirdly, the interpretation and visualisation of the results. Our text corpus is composed of 150 articles from the French dailies *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* and *Libération*, published between 1/01/2015 and 31/12/2020. These articles were selected according to various keywords ('female suicide bombers', 'female jihadists', 'attack'). This editorial opposition makes it possible to analyse any differences specific to the newspaper's political line in the media treatment of women's participation in armed jihadism. Our corpus therefore incorporates three different but undoubtedly complementary perspectives on our subject of study. The lexicometric analysis of this corpus using TXM software enabled us to calculate the frequency of words, construct comparative lexical tables, identify concordances and co-occurrences between terms, and carry out an analysis of specificities and a factorial analysis of correspondences.

The results obtained by our lexicometric analysis qualified the assumptions of our working hypotheses. On the one hand, the various analyses cited below revealed a persistence of infantilizing terms and designations by their marital relationship, thus translating a focus on their private life, which engenders a minimization of their political agentivity. The recurrent use of the terms " jeunes " ("young") and " filles " ("girls") to define these women by the media tends to infantilise women by emphasising their young age, presenting them as immature and manipulated, whereas men are presented as autonomous and responsible. But on the other hand, the recurring identification of women by name and status as defendants shows an emerging awareness of their criminal responsibility and active role, particularly since 2016. Indeed, when we compare the media coverage of the January 2015 attacks, focusing on Hayat Boumeddienne, and the failed attack on Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris in September 2016, focusing on Inès

Madani, Ornella Gilligmann and Sarah Hervouët (the 3 main defendants in this attack), we see a difference in the way they are named. They are not described as "black widows", "mad for Allah" or "little pieces of woman", as was the case with Hayat Boumeddienne, but as terrorists who chose to take up arms, in the same way as the men. What's more, their ideological motivations are not systematically denied, but are often psychologised and reduced to the emotional. Indeed, the fact that women are described as espousing or embracing an ideology evokes a stereotypical view of female commitment as being primarily emotional and passionate rather than rational or political. Thus, these repeated segments tend to psychologise and depoliticise women's ideological commitment, anchoring it in the register of emotions or sentimental relationships rather than as an autonomous political act. Overall, then, there has been a shift towards a more benign identification of female terrorism, but also the persistence of gendered stereotypical views, making female jihadism a concept that has yet to stabilise in media discourse. Hermeneutical caution is still called for, however, in order to avoid any unambiguous conclusions about a social phenomenon riddled with ambivalence.

Despite the stimulating results, we must mention a few methodological limitations. Firstly, the limited size of the corpus analysed means that the results cannot be generalised to all the French media. A larger and more diversified sample would strengthen the validity of the observations. For example, this work could be extended by a comparative study taking into account media discourse from other countries facing the jihadist terrorist threat. The phenomenon of 'female jihadists' extends beyond France's borders, as evidenced by their growing involvement in organisations such as al-Qaeda and Daesh. It would therefore be stimulating to analyse whether similar representational logics structure media coverage of this issue abroad. A multinational approach would make it possible to ascertain whether the observations made about French media discourse can be found in other national contexts. Furthermore, the absence of interviews with journalists and editors limits the interpretation of the semantic and rhetorical choices made. Their testimonies would usefully shed light on the production logics at work. In addition, lexicometrics would benefit from being complemented by other discourse analysis techniques such as thematic content or enunciative analysis. A number of research avenues could be explored to extend this exploratory work.

Ultimately, this work will have shed new light on media discourse relating to women's involvement in jihadist violence. Although some changes are emerging, the tensions between the persistence of stereotypical narrative patterns and recognition of the complexity of the phenomenon are still evident. The contributions of this research suggest that we should continue our efforts to deconstruct the dominant representations. For beyond their academic interest, they resonate with crucial societal issues. A detailed understanding of the driving forces behind

women's jihadism is essential if we are to rethink public policies that are sometimes still trapped in stereotypical images. This work is only the first step in this process, but it opens up promising heuristic perspectives for understanding a phenomenon that is still too often perceived through the distorting prism of gender stereotypes.

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Appendix 2 - First 100 full forms of the lexical table

	Frlemma	Fréquence		Frlemma	Fréquence
1	Être	4819	51	Jour	185
2	Avoir	4520	52	Bien	184
3	Femme	1120	53	Savoir	182
4	Faire	839	54	Vie	177
5	Attentat	661	55	Famille	176
6	An	642	56	Amedy	174
7	Jeune	499	57	Prison	173
8	Madani	470	58	Président	170
9	Pouvoir	446	59	Expliquer	167
10	Inès	431	60	Fait	167
11	Homme	423	61	Djihadiste	162
12	Autre	393	62	Certain	155
13	Terroriste	393	63	Connaitre	155
14	Syrie	386	64	Mère	155
15	Dire	355	65	Sarah	153
16	Accusé	331	66	Peu	151
17	Paris	328	67	Avocat	150
18	Policier	306	68	Fois	150
19	France	299	69	Seul	150
20	Aller	285	70	Janvier	149
21	Ornella	266	71	Plusieurs	148
22	Etat	265	72	Septembre	148
23	Aussi	261	73	Attaque	147
24	Dernier	257	74	Heure	147
25	Vouloir	256	75	Islam	147
26	Français	251	76	Parler	147
27	Islamique	249	77	Mourir	143
28	Voiture	245	78	Groupe	142
29	Coulibaly	243	79	Retrouver	142
30	Avant	237	80	Moins	140
31	Voir	235	81	Djihadistes	139
32	Sans	229	82	Boumeddiene	137

33		Passer	226	83		Cour	137
34		Prendre	217	84		Tentative	137
35		Très	215	85		Jamais	136
36		Fille	214	86		Kassim	136
37		Entre	211	87		Mois	136
38		Personne	211	88		Demander	133
39		Enfant	209	89		Musulman	131
40		Procès	208	90		Enquête	128
41		Partir	207	91		Nouveau	128
42		Premier	201	92		Venir	128
43		Frère	200	93		Aujourd'hui	127
44		Mettre	199	94		Terrorisme	127
45		Mort	199	95		Rejoindre	125
46		Projet	194	96		Toujours	125
47		EI	192	97		Tuer	125
48		Trouver	192	98		Service	124
49		Devoir	190	99		Djihad	123
50		Contre	185	100		Moment	123

Appendix 3 - Concordancer for the form " terroriste"

Référence	ContexteGauche	Pivot	ContexteDroit
24	de nos enfants soit impliqué dans un acte	terroriste	. on ne se sent à l'abri de rien. les
63	à déterminer. soupçonnés de préparer un acte	terroriste	de leur domicile situé dans un quartier ouest de la ville,
40	malfaiteurs en vue de la préparation d'actes	terroristes	». durant un procès long de plus de dix heures,
105	à des femmes prêtes à commettre des actes	terroristes	, aussi violentes que leurs homologues masculins. pour l'instant,
40	de malfaiteurs en vue de commettre des actes	terroristes	». des parcours où s'imbriquent la quête d'un absolu
86	irak. leur implication opérationnelle dans des actes	terroristes	(25 femmes dont 11 mineures ont été impliquées dans les projets
86	menace a évolué, avec moins d'actes	terroristes	dirigés ou téléguidés, et beaucoup plus d'actions endogènes, provenant
99	question de la cause servie par l'action	terroriste	est évidemment essentielle. vous pouvez limiter les trafics d'armes ou
99	ne supporterait pas que quelqu'un commette une action	terroriste	sans son autorisation. dans les groupes terroristes, il y a
40	», mais aussi de commettre une action	terroriste	sur le sol français, à la ceinture « louis vuitton »
39	ayant été déjoués et des procès d'aspirants	terroristes	ayant permis de mieux cerner la nébuleuse jihadiste, le reportage peut
69	paris et mis en examen pour « assassinats	terroristes	» dans l'enquête sur les attentats de bruxelles. le 22
67	sa mise en examen pour complicité d'assassinats	terroristes	. leur sœur souad s'est dite « fière » de son
131	sont aussi poursuivies pour des tentatives d'assassinats	terroristes	et des complicités. a leurs côtés, deux de leurs proches
50	reste depuis enfermé chez lui à chaque attaque	terroriste	. « je ne l'oublierai jamais. c'est aussi ma
51	les frères kouachi, auteurs de l'attaque	terroriste	contre charlie hebdo, tout comme hayat boumeddiene, compagne de l'
18	elle pense que c'est une nouvelle attaque	terroriste	. » son interlocutrice, qui travaille dans une brasserie près du
133	comparaît pour avoir envisagé de commettre une attaque	terroriste	en 2016, au nom de l'organisation etat islamique. «
84	faisant état de l'imminence d'une attaque	terroriste	les conduit dans un appartement de boussy-saint-antoine (essonne). les
38	238 personnes ont été tuées dans des attaques	terroristes	, contre 13 depuis août 2016. ce reflux sur le terrain
67	le djihad, et commettent parfois des attaques	terroristes	sont nombreux. plusieurs spécialistes analysent ce phénomène relativement ancien
104	dans notre « live » pendant les attaques	terroristes	. quatre jours après la mort des trois principaux suspects dans les
42	l'idéologie jihadiste - en commettant un attentat	terroriste	sur le sol français, par exemple, si elles ne parvenaient
66	est morte à la suite d'un attentat	terroriste	comme les autres victimes du bataclan », assurait -il auprès de

Appendix 4 - Concordancer for the form " idéologie "

Référence	ContexteGauche	Pivot	ContexteDroit
79	, qui n'étaient pas encore complètement plongées dans cette	idéologie	, des jeunes filles qui avaient pu tomber amoureuses de combattants sur internet sans
106	veuve noire. « les femmes de djihadistes partagent leur	idéologie	, la soutiennent, considère farhad khosrokhavar, directeur de recherches à l'école
30	la maternité est une arme de guerre pour pérenniser une	idéologie	. c'est l'idée que si l'ei disparaît, une génération a
30	: celui des filles est d'enfanter pour pérenniser l'	idéologie	. mais dans les pays occidentaux, elles peuvent être mobilisées pour commettre des
90	où est votre responsabilité alors ? - avoir embrassé l'	idéologie	de cet homme [djihadiste dont elle est tombée amoureuse sur internet, voir
62	l'existence de cette police féminine est crédible : l'	idéologie	de daech, basée sur la non-mixité, impose qu'il y ait des
92	crue de jeunes femmes radicalisées, en accord avec l'	idéologie	de daech. et soudain, les accusées se font moins volubiles. le
62	, il sera très probablement en mauvaise posture. l'	idéologie	de daech est fondée sur la complémentarité des sexes : si les femmes en
78	en syrie comme en europe, les adhérentes à l'	idéologie	de daech sont dans le rejet du féminisme classique occidental et de ses acquis
78	officiel, on pourra vraiment l'affirmer. dans l'	idéologie	de l'ei, les femmes sont censées être préservées, ce n'est
43	et hommes qu'elle séduit et encourage à épouser l'	idéologie	de l'ei. des faits qui lui ont valu d'être condamnée,
44	elle comptait mourir en martyr. son immersion dans l'	idéologie	de l'état islamique (ei), poursuit le médecin, a permis
78	ou dans des attentats en europe est contraire à l'	idéologie	de l'organisation terroriste. la doctorante sur le djihad féminin à l'université
42	détermination des femmes à participer de manière active à l'	idéologie	djihadiste - en commettant un attentat terroriste sur le sol français, par exemple
95	, le choix de la soumission totale » à l'	idéologie	djihadiste, « qui fonde leur responsabilité ». seconde défense balayée, celle
44	qui amène un homme ou une femme à épouser l'	idéologie	djihadiste ? comment savoir quand un sujet a quitté sa « cuirasse islamiste »
100	son mariage la comble, elle s'enferme dans l'	idéologie	djihadiste. la jeune femme accompagne à plusieurs reprises amedy coulibaly à artigat,
96	l'autre pour n'avoir « aucun désengagement de l'	idéologie	djihadiste ». dans leurs derniers mots à la cour, certains ont fait
48	avait « une connaissance précise et claire » de l'	idéologie	djihadiste de son ami et « de ce qui allait se passer »,
149	collective de leur situation, auprès de semblables : l'	idéologie	djihadiste donne sens à leur expérience d'isolement social et à un goût pour
116	l'organisation état islamique. ils sont radicalisés dans l'	idéologie	du complot, du « moi contre eux », dans la mégalomanie d'
30	occidentales peuvent se tourner librement vers le djihadisme : l'	idéologie	est liberticide pour la femme, qu'iraient -elles chercher là-dedans ? on a
78	justifier avec des références de l'histoire islamique. leur	idéologie	est malléable et l'utilisation des femmes est purement stratégique. toutefois, s'
70	? le héros est, aussi, le porte-drapeau des	idéologies	extrêmes, des fondamentalismes religieux et autres sectes millénaristes. à vous lire,

Appendix 5 - Concordancer for the form " radicaliser "

Référence	ContexteGauche	Pivot	ContexteDroit
13	farhad khosrokhavar : « un kamikaze ne se	radicalise	pas seul » le sociologue farhad khosrokhavar, spécialiste des phénomènes de
13	moins un des piliers du groupe. on ne se	radicalise	pas tout seul dans son coin derrière son écran. merah était
19	hasna ait boulahcen, jeune frivole	radicalisée	sur le tard procès des attentats du 13 novembre 2015dossier la jeune
19	une vie plutôt frivole, la jeune fille se serait	radicalisée	ces dernières années. sur sa page facebook, consultée par le
25	retrouvées à paris : un couple entendu et une jeune	radicalisée	recherchée une voiture contenant des bonbonnes de gaz a été retrouvée dimanche
31	39, 23 et 19 ans, elles sont «	radicalisées	, fanatisées, et préparaient vraisemblablement de nouvelles actions violentes et de
31	sur la messagerie telegram, ou celui d'une jeune	radicalisée	de 18 ans à clermont-ferrand, elle aussi écrouée à la mi-août
33	de l'enquête, cette femme convertie et considérée comme	radicalisée	, vivant près de montargis (loiret), aurait assuré un
33	qu'inès. m entretenait des contacts avec des belges	radicalisés	de la région de charleroi (sud) et qu'elle aurait
35	à l'administration et non à des professionnels. aucun	radicalisé	ne se dit radicalisé et encore moins volontaire pour être « déradicalisé
35	non à des professionnels. aucun radicalisé ne se dit	radicalisé	et encore moins volontaire pour être « déradicalisé ». ces décisions
39	pseudonymes ou kunya, noms de combattants), les	radicalisés	parlent projets de mariage avec des « sœurs », échangent points
40	juges sont revenus sur l'itinéraire des deux jeunes filles	radicalisées	, entre souffrance et aspiration à la violence. « je veux
41	« lionnes » : deux jeunes femmes	radicalisées	condamnées mercredi après-midi, le tribunal correctionnel de paris a condamné janna
42	de prison pour son rôle de mentor auprès de jeunes	radicalisés	. également renvoyé : rachid kassim, membre de l'état islamique
42	aux femmes », avait expliqué durant l'audience cette	radicalisée	à la « personnalité déroutante », dixit le procureur. celui
43	influençable, complexée par son corps, qui s'est	radicalisée	en 2014 après une rencontre. « expliquer, expliquer … c'
43	reconnaissance », développe la psychiatre devant la cour.	radicalisée	, la mère de famille partira en syrie en janvier 2015.
44	tant, et au contact de laquelle elle s'est	radicalisée	. grâce à son avatar masculin, inès madani a pu expérimenter
45	propagandiste de l'état islamique ont incité ces jeunes femmes	radicalisées	à passer à l'action. tout comme il avait encouragé quelques
48	il entretenait « des liens forts » et décrit comme	radicalisé	. dix-sept contre amar ramdani, le séducteur du dossier, et
57	. et parmi ces croyantes, un petit nombre se	radicalise	drastiquement. les groupes islamistes armés assurent maintenant une médiatisation importante à
59	sur écoute pour trafic de stupéfiants qui « alimente les	radicalisés	, en armes et sur le plan financier », explique une
59	de 26 ans, la jeune femme s'est rapidement	radicalisée	. « jver biento aller en syrie inchallah biento depart pour la

Appendix 6 - Analysis of co-occurrences of the form "gilligmann"

Occ	Fréq	CoFréq	Indice	DistMoy
ornella	266	211	301.6008	0.08056872
madani	470	79	46.0906	4.0
inès	431	65	35.1233	3.8307693
principales	32	13	13.5953	4.4615383
accusées	72	15	10.7745	4.4
attentat	355	29	9.346	5.4827585
d'	1577	70	8.5324	3.2428572
mère	141	16	7.415	4.125
version	31	8	6.8086	4.0
divorce	8	5	6.7256	4.4
emprise	14	5	5.588	4.625

Appendix 7 - Co-occurrence analysis of the form "sarah"

Occ	Fréq	CoFréq	Indice	DistMoy
hervouët	110	107	194.8714	0.0
amel	106	30	30.0332	3.6333334
sakaou	87	24	23.8807	3.4583333
joseph	11	7	10.5474	3.4285715
ans	623	33	10.0395	3.6969697
hazan	12	6	8.246	2.6666667
aberouz	26	7	7.326	5.857143
policier	129	12	6.591	4.9166665
inès	431	21	6.0707	3.5714285
entièrement	10	4	5.1598	2.25
connue	21	5	5.0881	5.8
couteau	98	9	5.052	5.3333335
poignarde	4	3	4.9923	0.6666667
voilée	12	4	4.797	2.5
couteaux	14	4	4.5007	4.75
jeudi	93	8	4.3494	4.875
guidée	6	3	4.3022	4.0

Appendix 8 - Concordancer for the form "djihadisme" for articles from the newspaper *Le Monde* (texts 101 to 150)

Référence	ContexteGauche	Pivot	ContexteDroit
109	un outil essentiel de propagande active contre le	djihadisme	, car ils portent en eux des accents de vérité et une
109	auditionné par la commission d'enquête sur le	djihadisme	du sénat fin novembre 2014, convié à déjeuner par l'ex-patronne
109	insiste le sociologue farhad khosrokhavar : « le	djihadisme	est l'affaire de la société civile et il faut que ce
110	« stop	djihadisme	» : 40 % de femmes parmi les radicalisations signalées depuis les
110	djihad. comment fonctionne le numéro vert stop	djihadisme	? mise en place le 29 avril 2014, cette plate-forme téléphonique
110	l'analyse des chiffres de la cellule stop	djihadisme	montre également ce que l'on percevait à travers les profils comme
110	dans le cadre de cellules de prévention du	djihadisme	. l'objectif est d'avoir une réponse adaptée : suivi psychologique
111	« le	djihadisme	, une radicalisation adolescente » avant qu'ils ne sombrent totalement,
112	sur le processus qui conduit un jeune au	djihadisme	: derrière la banalité de la vie d'avant se dissimulent parfois
112	a publié un article intitulé : « le	djihadisme	est une révolte générationnelle et nihiliste », éclairant les différents aspects
115	mentale. la mutation de la haine en	djihadisme	sacralise la rage et leur fait surmonter leur mal-être par l'adhésion
115	ce constat scellé intérieurement par l'adhésion au	djihadisme	soit reconnu par les autres, notamment par les médias. ces
115	et qui constituent le second groupe amoureux du	djihadisme	depuis la guerre civile en syrie en 2013. ces jeunes de
115	afghanistan, libre encore de l'emprise du	djihadisme	. a présent, le voyage initiatique est une quête de pureté
115	adhésion des jeunes adultes des classes moyennes au	djihadisme	dans sa version exportée vers la syrie pose la question du malaise
115	version crapuleuse (criminalité) ou sacrée (	djihadisme	) sont des attitudes qui se situent soit en deçà du politique
115	ne fonde plus son identité là-dessus. le	djihadisme	est, pour elle, la conséquence de l'éclipse du politique
120	on entre dans une forme de féminisme du	djihadisme	» après l'arrestation de trois femmes à boussy-saint-antoine, le sociologue
120	. il y a une réelle vocation du	djihadisme	chez les femmes. dans cette dernière affaire, ce sont visiblement
120	. sommes -nous dans une nouvelle phase du	djihadisme	avec cette apparition des femmes ? ce genre d'action ne peut
120	occident. il y a un féminisme du	djihadisme	qui est en train de se mettre en place. ce degré
120	on entre dans une forme de féminisme du	djihadisme	. les femmes montrent qu'elles peuvent aller jusqu'au bout,
120	femmes, notamment, sont attirés par le	djihadisme	.
125	constitué un marchepied vers son basculement dans le	djihadisme	. « ça a eu une grande influence parce que c'était
125	attentat dans le monde à distinguer islam et	djihadisme	, mais produisent sur lui l'effet contraire à celui recherché.

Appendix 9 - Analysis of the specificities of the "kamikaze" form according to the *date_ partition
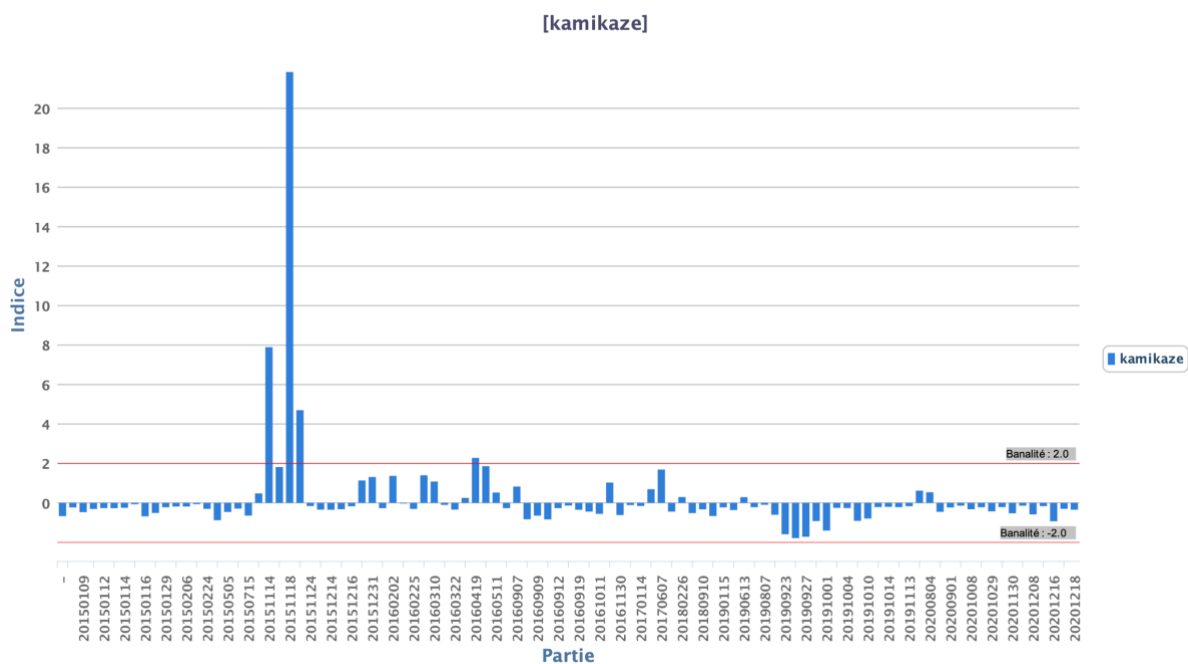
Appendix 10 - One-page summary (requested by ULB)

Awareness of jihadist radicalisation and its implications in France is relatively recent. Moreover, since the 2015-2016 attacks in France claimed by the Islamic State organisation, the involvement of women in jihadist groups, particularly in terrorist attacks, has been the subject of growing new media attention. When a woman commits a violent act, in particular a terrorist attack, the discourse produced differs significantly from that used when the act is perpetrated by a man. This difference reflects the persistence of stereotyped representations based on gender in the media. For this reason, the aim of this study, which analyses French media discourse on women's involvement in armed violence, using jihadist groups as a case study, is to understand how this media discourse represents women's involvement in armed jihadism and what the implications of these representations are. More specifically, we will attempt to test the hypotheses that media representations of women's participation in jihadist groups can influence public perception by positioning these women as passive actors who are manipulated or under male influence, and that women's involvement in jihadism is frequently psychologised and depoliticised in dominant media representations, which fail to recognise their ideological motivations and political agentivity.

By addressing the concepts of discourse, gender and social representations, our first theoretical and conceptual part enabled us to understand that the media, by conveying stereotyped representations of these women, fail to recognise the agentivity of violent women. This is why we chose to use critical discourse analysis and feminist standpoint theory as our theoretical framework, in order to uncover possible androcentric biases, gender blind spots and problems of women's agentivity in media coverage of women's participation in violent groups. In order to test our hypotheses, our empirical approach consisted of a lexicometric analysis of press articles from the French newspapers *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* and *Libération*, using TXM software. The results show that there is still a marked focus on the personal and marital dimension of female jihadists, even though there is a growing recognition of their responsibility. Ideological motivations are not systematically denied, but are often psychologised and reduced to the emotional. The initial hypotheses therefore need to be qualified. The empirical findings echo the theoretical perspectives by revealing the tensions between, on the one hand, the persistence of stereotypical narrative schemes reducing women to the private and sentimental sphere, and on the other, the growing need to recognise the complexity of their violent political commitment.

Introduction

For almost 20 years, terrorist attacks in Europe have placed the issue of 'combating radicalisation' at the heart of the preoccupations of public authorities and the media in France. In the academic world, the notion of radicalisation, previously marginal, has become central to the study of terrorism. Researchers have turned their attention away from the root causes of extremist commitment, which are difficult to pin down, to the processes and mechanisms by which violent acts are committed. Because of its association with deviant forms of thought, the concept of 'radicalisation' can easily become a tool for stigmatising any 'unconventional view'. So we will think of radicalisation, as defined by Xavier Crettiez (2016) as "the gradual and evolving adoption of a rigid way of thinking, an absolute and non-negotiable truth, whose logic structures the world view of the actors, who use violent repertoires of action to make it heard, most often within clandestine, formalised or virtual structures, which isolate them from ordinary social references and give them a grandiose projection of themselves". France was the first European country to be hit by jihadist terrorism in the 1990s. These attacks were perceived as being linked to foreign conflicts rather than to religious radicalisation or internal social problems. Conventional anti-terrorist measures (such as the Vigipirate plan) protected France from major attacks in the 2000s. It was only with the mass departure of young French people for Syria from 2012 onwards, and the attacks by Mohamed Merah and others in 2015-2016, that the issue of radicalisation and prevention became a priority. Today, public and scientific debate has taken up this issue: understanding the reasons for jihadist involvement, preventing radicalisation and encouraging the reintegration of extremists. As we have just seen, awareness of jihadist radicalisation and its implications in France is relatively recent. Moreover, since the 2015-2016 attacks in France claimed by the Islamic State organisation, the involvement of women in jihadist groups, particularly in terrorist attacks, has been the subject of growing new media attention. While their involvement in violent acts is not a new phenomenon, it continues to arouse astonishment and incomprehension. Women's involvement in jihadist violence has long been ignored or played down in French public debate. Women were relegated to the passive role of "companions to jihadists". But in recent years, the growing involvement of women, whether in jihadist networks, in terrorist acts or within armed groups themselves, has become a reality that can no longer be ignored. When a woman commits a suicide attack, the discourse produced differs markedly from that used when the act is perpetrated by a man. This difference reflects the persistence of stereotyped representations based on gender in the media. Far from being a passive reflection of reality, media discourse plays an active part in its construction. It disseminates representations, value systems and power relationships that

influence the worldview of individuals and the societies in which they live. The aim of this work will therefore be to analyse the gendered discursive mechanisms used in the French press to report on women's involvement in armed jihadist groups, and thus to understand how the media represent women's participation in jihadist groups and what implications these representations have for understanding the role of women in armed conflicts. More specifically, we will attempt to test the hypotheses according to which, on the one hand, media representations of women's participation in jihadist groups can influence public perception and government policies, by positioning these women as passive actors who are manipulated or under male influence rather than as autonomous actors. On the other hand, female jihadist involvement is frequently psychologised and depoliticised in dominant media representations, which fail to recognise their ideological motivations and political agentivity.

In the first part, the theoretical part, we will begin by reviewing the literature on the various concepts used in our work, such as media discourse, gender, social representations and women's armed violence. We will then present the theoretical framework used, justifying the use of critical discourse analysis and feminist standpoint theory to study our subject, before specifying the research interest of this theme. In the second part, the practical part, we will attempt to verify our working hypotheses using TXM software, which will enable us to carry out a lexicometric analysis of a corpus of press articles from three French dailies with distinct editorial lines, Le Figaro, Libération and Le Monde. The articles selected for our lexicometric analysis will focus, on the one hand, on the attack on Charlie Hebdo (12 dead), the hostage-taking at the Hyper Cacher (4 dead) and the shooting in Montrouge (1 dead), and on the other hand on the attempted terrorist attack with a gas canister near the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris, on the night of 3 to 4 September 2016, as well as on the so-called 'gas canister trial' that took place in 2019. These events illustrate the emergence of a new phenomenon in France: the direct involvement of women in violent terrorist projects based on jihadist ideology. The lexicometric analysis will reveal recurring lexical associations and possible gender bias in media coverage of women's involvement in jihadism. This empirical work will enable us to validate or invalidate our initial hypotheses concerning recurrent gender bias in media coverage of the phenomenon under study.

Theoretical exploration

By looking at various concepts and theories, our first theoretical section enabled us to situate our research subject within a conceptual framework and existing state of the art. This part helped us to understand that the involvement of women in violent extremist groups is a

phenomenon that, while long-standing, is nonetheless complex and calls into question traditional representations of gender. When women carry out attacks, public opinion reacts with incomprehension and fear. Their violence is mainly perceived as deviant and illegitimate, contrary to the presumed feminine qualities of gentleness and non-violence. The media, by conveying stereotyped representations of these women, fail to recognise the agency of violent women. In this first part of our theoretical exploration, we began by discussing the notion of discourse, and in particular the implications of media discourse, which we defined as a social construction of reality that conveys systems of norms and power relations. Discourse can therefore refer to a single statement, but also to all the statements that constitute knowledge at a given time. Some schools of thought emphasise the constructive dimension of discourse, which plays a part in shaping social reality. Discourse analysis developed in France in the 1960s, focusing on the forms of expression of media or political messages in relation to their context. It considers that language is an ideological filter that constructs visions of the world rather than simply reflecting reality. In this way, media naming helps to construct representations and implies a positioning in relation to the object named. As a result, media discourse constructs and reconstructs selective definitions of reality through framing choices. The media highlight certain aspects of events, providing oriented reading grids. The critical study of media discourse aims to reveal the ideological implications hidden behind a claim to objectivity. In this way, we have understood the importance of the media as a social process capable of giving meaning to society, and consequently its influential role in the perception of terrorist events in our society.

We then looked at the concept of gender and social representations, two analytical tools that have proved relevant in analysing media discourse on women's participation in armed violence. On the one hand, the concept of gender, as it has developed since the 1970s in feminist studies in a break with an essentialist conception of the differences between the sexes, refers to the social and cultural constructs associated with the masculine and the feminine, as opposed to biological sex. This concept reveals the stereotypes and power relations that underpin media representations of women involved in armed groups. Applying a gendered analysis to the study of discourse on women jihadists therefore promises to renew the usual reading grids, by deconstructing stereotyped visions. The concept of social representations, which emerged in social psychology in the 1960s and 1970s, refers to the symbolic universe of meanings shared within a group, enabling individuals to understand the social world. Various theories have sought to explain how they are formed and how they function. The main idea is that social representations exert a constraint on practices by disseminating stereotypes that legitimise inequalities between social groups, particularly gender inequalities. Gender stereotypes relegate

women to the domestic sphere and men to the public sphere, naturalising male domination. We therefore emphasise the key role of the media in the production and dissemination of social representations, through their symbolic power to name and define reality. Media representations are based on pre-existing stereotypes and collective imaginations. Analysis of their production and their effects on representations is essential. Ultimately, these concepts offer relevant keys to studying the media coverage of women's participation in armed violence.

Although historically a minority issue, women's participation in armed political violence is a long-standing phenomenon that has long been a blind spot in mainstream studies of terrorism. Feminist approaches have sought to reveal this hidden phenomenon, to historicise its emergence from the end of the 19th century and to criticise its systematic delegitimisation. Indeed, women's involvement in armed struggle has mainly been approached as a phenomenon of exception rather than as a rational political choice. However, since the 1980s and the emergence of the first female suicide bombers in groups such as Hezbollah and the Tamil Tigers, the growing involvement of women in armed violence and suicide attacks has begun to be studied more systematically. Research has highlighted both individual and organisational motivations dictated by specific contexts. Nevertheless, despite this growing involvement, the dominant media discourse continues to deny the agency of women terrorists. Infantilised and reduced to the status of manipulator or male prey, their involvement is explained by psychological disorders or simple marital compliance. Gendered constructs therefore persist in media representations, obscuring the diversity of female roles within certain contemporary armed groups. Deconstructing these media biases is therefore essential to understanding the complexity of the gendered dimension of modern terrorism. A critical analysis of the discourse would reveal the gap between the stereotypes conveyed about women terrorists and the reality of their political agentivity within violent organisations.

This is why, in order to verify our working hypotheses, we have adopted a theoretical framework combining critical discourse analysis and feminist standpoint theory. The value of combining critical discourse analysis (CDA) and feminist standpoint theory as a theoretical framework for a study of media discourse on women's participation in armed violence lies in the complementary nature of these two approaches. CDA makes it possible to analyse how media discourse on this specific subject can reflect and reinforce certain ideologies and power relations. It invites us to examine the language choices, the dominant media framings, the blind spots and the things left unsaid in the journalistic coverage of this issue. Feminist standpoint theory brings a sensitivity to gender issues and relations of domination between the sexes. It leads us to pay attention to the way in which women are represented, named and constituted as

subjects in these media discourses. It also invites us to reflect on the place given or not given to the voices and points of view of the women concerned. By combining these two approaches, it is possible to carry out a detailed and complex analysis, which combines both the critical dimension of the discourses and the feminist dimension. This will reveal any androcentric biases, gender blind spots and issues of women's agency in media coverage of women's participation in violent groups.

In conclusion, having defined the concepts relevant to our analysis in this section, it is now time to move on to the empirical phase of this research. The practical part will set out the approach adopted to collect, process and analyse the data, in order to verify our working hypotheses on the representations conveyed in media discourse about women's involvement in armed jihadist groups.

Empirical Analysis

In the previous section, we demonstrated the value of analysing the representations conveyed in French media discourse on women's involvement in armed violence, particularly in jihadist groups. This analysis raises two major methodological challenges: how to collect and analyse the information published in the media on this subject? And how can the large volume of data generated be processed? To answer these questions, it appeared necessary to adopt a digital research approach, mobilising textual data analysis techniques. After exploring different methods, we decided that a lexicometric analysis of a corpus of texts using TXM software was the most appropriate way to carry out our empirical analysis. We opted for a three-stage approach: firstly, the creation of a corpus of media texts, secondly, the automated analysis of this corpus using lexicometric tools, and thirdly, the interpretation and visualisation of the results.

Our text corpus is composed of 150 articles from the French dailies Le Figaro, Le Monde and Libération, published between 1/01/2015 and 31/12/2020. These articles were selected according to various keywords ("femme kamikaze", "attentat", "femmes djihadistes"). This editorial opposition will enable us to analyse any differences in media treatment of women's participation in armed jihadism, depending on the newspaper's political line. Our corpus therefore incorporates three unique but undoubtedly complementary perspectives on our subject of study. We constructed and partitioned our corpus using the Alceste method, which will then enable us to introduce it into the TXM lexicometric analysis software. TXM incorporates a range of statistical and visual tools for quantitatively studying the distribution of words in a text. By identifying the appearance of specific forms in a discourse, the Alceste

method makes it possible to identify the latent signifying structures in a corpus of text and to extract the dominant themes and representations. The special feature of this method is that all our texts (in this case our newspaper articles) are grouped together in a single Word file, which are then separated by a tag system that allows the TXM software to distinguish each text. To distinguish the texts, we have assigned the following tags to each of them: *text_ ; *date_ *journal_. Partitioning the corpus according to these different tags will enable us to compare sub-corpuses with each other, according to date or type of newspaper, for example. Lexicometrics is a methodology resulting from the convergence of quantitative analysis of textual discourse and modern data processing statistics. It enables the humanities and social sciences to process very large volumes of text and qualify phenomena that were previously done manually. This methodology follows in the footsteps of work on social representations, while incorporating the benefits of digital technology for processing a massive corpus. The main objectives of this method are to determine the specific vocabulary of a text or an author, to highlight the dominant themes addressed in a corpus, to compare the vocabulary of several texts or authors, and to follow the evolution of vocabulary within a text or between historical periods. In short, lexicometric analysis studies the statistical distribution of words in texts to reveal their linguistic structures and meaning. In concrete terms, performing a lexicometric analysis using TXM software will enable us to calculate word frequency, identify co-occurrences between terms, construct comparative lexical tables and perform a specificity analysis and a factorial correspondence analysis. However, this method also has certain limitations. Purely quantitative lexical analysis needs to be supplemented by a qualitative interpretation of the results. Furthermore, it does not take into account the semantic ambiguity of words or their context of enunciation. Despite these reservations, lexicometric analysis remains very useful for our purposes. Coupled with a content analysis, it will enable us to validate, or invalidate, our hypotheses about media representations of female jihadists.

We carried out a hypothetico-deductive analysis based on two main hypotheses. The first hypothesis was that media representations of women's participation in jihadist groups can influence public perception and government policies, by positioning these women as passive actors who are manipulated or under male influence, rather than as autonomous actors. However, the results of our lexicometric analysis reveal a more nuanced picture. Firstly, the factorial correspondence analysis revealed an opposition between, on the one hand, the lexicon relating to women's jihadist involvement and, on the other, that evoking their private and conjugal lives. This tension reflects a still marked focus on the personal dimension rather than on women's political autonomy. Similarly, a study of the concordances showed the recurrence of infantilising terms ("jeune femme", "fille") ("young women, "girl"), or linking their actions

to a male figure ("femme de", "épouse de") ("wife of"). These lexical elements tend to minimise their full agentivity. However, a second analysis of co-occurrences nuances this observation. The recurring use of their names and their status as defendants shows a form of recognition of their responsibility, even if the markers that diminish responsibility persist. In addition, the identification of formulas such as "femmes djihadistes", "commando de femmes" or "femme kamikaze" ("women jihadists", "women commandos" or "female suicide bombers") in the analysis of concordances indicates an emerging awareness of their active role, although this is often put into perspective by the context. However, although the analysis of the corpus shows that these expressions are highly contextual and linked to the attacks of 2015-2016, it would be relevant to extend the reflection to other theatres of operation where women use suicide tactics. Indeed, the use of female suicide bombers seems to be increasing in some recent conflicts, such as in Chechnya, Sri Lanka, Iraq and Nigeria with Boko Haram. A comparative study with these conflict zones would make it possible to determine whether we are witnessing a global trend of increasing involvement of women in kamikaze actions. In the final analysis, the persistence of infantilising markers and the designation by the marital relationship testifies to a partial concealment of the autonomy of female terrorists. But the growing recognition of their criminal responsibility, through identification by name and their status as defendants, also demonstrates a form of awareness of their active role, albeit ambivalent. When we compare the media coverage of the January 2015 attacks, focusing on Hayat Boumeddienne, and the failed attack on Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris in September 2016, focusing on Inès Madani, Ornella Gilligmann and Sarah Hervouët (the 3 main defendants in this attack), we see a difference in the way they are named. Although Hayat Boumeddienne is accused of having actively financed and participated in the 2015 attacks, the analysis of co-occurrences shows that she is almost always portrayed by the media as the companion or wife of Amedy Coulibaly (who killed a policewoman in Montrouge and was one of those responsible for the attack on the Hyper Casher shop). However, analysis of the co-occurrences of the forms "madani", "gilligmann" and "sarah" revealed a certain evolution in the way female terrorists are identified. While the age of these women and the terms "jeunes filles" ("young girls") or "jeunes femmes" ("young women") are still regularly used to represent them, there is less use of terms relating to their marital or parental status. These women are not described as "black widows", "mad for Allah" or "little pieces of woman", as was the case with Hayat Boumeddienne, but as terrorists who chose to take up arms, in the same way as the men.

The second hypothesis assumes that female jihadist involvement is frequently psychologised and depoliticised in the dominant media representations, which struggle to recognise the ideological motivations and political agentivity of these women. While the

ideological and political dimension is not central to the corpus, neither are women systematically portrayed as mere manipulators. Their motivations are diverse, ranging from ideology to a quest for identity or family. Admittedly, the factorial correspondence analysis revealed an opposition between a vocabulary of radicalisation on the one hand, and a lexicon of feelings on the other, which may reflect a focus on personal motivations. However, an analysis of the concordances shows that the ideological dimension is not totally obscured. Initially, we could say that the articles emphasise women's adherence to the same ideological principles as men, despite their different roles, and attempt to understand the motivations of these women, beyond simple sentimental manipulation, for their commitment to jihadism. However, if we go into more detail by analysing the contexts in which the form 'ideology' appears, it is regularly associated with verbs such as 'marry' or 'embrace'. Consequently, the fact that women are described as espousing or embracing an ideology evokes a stereotypical view of female engagement as primarily emotional and passionate rather than rational or political. Thus, these repeated segments tend to psychologise and depoliticise women's ideological commitment, anchoring it in the register of emotions or sentimental relationships rather than as an autonomous political act. Furthermore, the study of co-occurrences indicates that, depending on the woman, her motivations are presented in a variety of ways, between politics and the quest for identity. No systematic depoliticisation can be deduced. So, behind the divergent trends, media representations appear to be riven by tensions, between emphasising political motivations and reducing them to individual psychology. In short, despite a number of changes, media representations continue to be marked by tensions between the persistence of stereotyped narrative schemes and the growing need to recognise the complexity of the phenomenon and the variety of women's profiles and pathways to involvement. While the initial hypotheses need to be qualified, this analysis opens up some stimulating perspectives. Deconstructing the sclerotic media discourse on women jihadists would be salutary for adapting state responses.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research aims to analyse French media discourse on the participation of women in armed jihadist groups. Theoretical exploration has enabled us to frame the key concepts for our research, namely the notions of media discourse, gender and social representations. We highlighted the fact that media discourse helps to construct a certain vision of social reality through framing choices that reveal ideological issues. The social representations broadcast may convey gendered stereotypes that define women's violent

behaviour. A lexicometric analysis of a press corpus enabled us to highlight certain gendered biases in media representations of these women. The results show that there is still a marked focus on the personal and marital dimensions of female jihadists, even though there is growing recognition of their responsibility. Ideological motivations are not systematically denied, but are often psychologised and reduced to the emotional. The empirical findings thus echo the theoretical perspectives by revealing the tensions between, on the one hand, the persistence of stereotypical narrative schemes reducing women to the private and sentimental sphere, and on the other, the growing need to recognise the complexity of their violent political commitment.

Nevertheless, this study has certain methodological limitations that it is important to bear in mind. Firstly, the corpus analysed remains relatively limited, focusing only on the French press over a recent period (2015-2020). This may bias the results and limit generalisation to other media and time contexts. In addition, the analysis method used, lexicometric analysis, has advantages in terms of processing a large volume of data, but also disadvantages. While the statistical analysis of lexical occurrences reveals overall trends, it must be supplemented by a more detailed qualitative analysis of the text segments and their context of enunciation. Lexicometrics alone cannot capture all the ambiguity and polysemy of discourse. Furthermore, this work has focused on the analysis of media discourse, but does not provide a detailed understanding of the production processes that determine it. Interviews with or observations of newsrooms would provide a better understanding of the economic, organisational and ideological constraints on media coverage of this subject, and would shed additional light on the rationale behind the production of discourse. Finally, this work is set in a specific time frame, that of the attacks in France in 2015-2016. It would be relevant to adopt a diachronic comparative approach, for example by studying the longer-term historical development of representations of politically violent women. These various limitations suggest that we should be cautious about the scope of the results of this study, and open up stimulating avenues for future research. Beyond these limitations, this work opens up perspectives for continuing to deconstruct the androcentric discourse on women in contemporary armed conflicts. Firstly, it would be useful to extend the corpus to other types of media such as television, radio and even social networks, in order to analyse any specificities in the discourse depending on the medium. We could also make comparisons with media in other countries, to identify cultural constants or differences in representations. A comparative analysis with conflict zones where the armed participation of women is increasing, such as Chechnya or Nigeria, would enable us to determine the existence of global trends in media discourse on this phenomenon. These research perspectives would contribute to a more detailed and global understanding of gender issues in media discourse on women's political violence, and are

essential if we are to continue to change media representations that are still all too often stereotyped.

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Adopté le 6 septembre 2016

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Le   21 septembre 2023

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