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THE CRISIS OF IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE:  
RENEGOTIATING SELF AND THE OTHER

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## ABSTRACT

Understanding the dynamics of identity is key to addressing the issue of integration. The existing political approach to integration focuses on the majority, but does not take identity into account. The cultural perspective addresses identity, but emphasizes the minority perspective. Despite these differences, both methods of analysis assume the majority identity is static and constructed independently from Others. Employing a theoretical framework that foregrounds the dynamic and co-constructed nature of identity allows for a more comprehensive approach towards integration. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's understanding of social constructivism highlights the dynamic nature of identity; Michael Crang's definition of Othering underlines identity's co-construction, the defining of Self relative to the defining of the Other. It is thus theorized that if majority identity, specifically in the national context, is dynamic and co-constructed it can incorporate the minority populations without losing its integrity. This study utilizes the case of contemporary France through discourse analysis to question the extent to which French majority identity is dynamic and co-constructed vis-à-vis France's minority populations. Research findings demonstrate the majority population engaging in debate and introspection as well as Othering of the minority populations in the public discourse, confirming the dynamic and co-constructed nature of the French majority identity.

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## INTRODUCTION

As Europe entered the modern political era, nation-states took shape across the continent. Fixed geographic boundaries were established, myths of common cultures and histories were created, and linguistic and economic systems were organized. Thus, France and the French became distinct from Germany and the Germans, etc. Established relative to each other, these European national identities were solidified by the historical phenomenon of colonialism. The imprint of colonial history on the national identities of European countries has endured through the present.

Although colonialism has ended, former colonists have immigrated to Europe in search of economic and political stability. This colonial Other, in contrast to whom the European national identities were solidified, is now established within the physical borders of the nation and its descendants are beginning to cross national socio-cultural boundaries. Socialized in the European context, the descendants of immigrants are increasingly able to claim part, or all, of a national European identity. This challenge of national identity from within, compounded by the external identity challenge of the European Union, which has also blurred the geographic boundaries of European nation-states and is beginning to do the same in the socio-cultural dimension, has created an identity crisis within the individual European nations.

Challenged from within and without, autochthons of European nation-states are under increasing pressure to define their unique national identities. What constitutes being French or German in an ever-mobile and globalizing world? Otherwise stated, if there is no longer a “Them” to define oneself in contrast to, or if the “Them” becomes one of “Us,” how does one define “Us”? Can “Us” continue to exist without a “Them”? Essentially, contemporary Western Europe is in a state of identity crisis. As a result, it is scrambling to create policies of

immigration and integration that could allow each nation to preserve its identity while faced with the threatening presence of a growing, permanent population of Others who are shedding layers of their Other identities over the generations and seeking to integrate themselves into the autochthonous identity as fellow nationals.

This calling into question of the autochthonous European identities, particularly by the former colonial minority populations, has generated an abundance of literature on immigration and integration in search of political and cultural solutions. However, this literature makes two core assumptions: the majority identity is static and constructed independently from Others. This assumption needs to be analyzed because the nature of the majority identities bears important implications for the integration process: If the autochthonous identity is static, the parameters of a national identity will be able to be clearly established. This will force minority populations to assimilate to be accepted, but they will know what is required of them to do so. Alternatively, if a European national identity is concrete and impermeable, there will be no possibility for minorities to enter. Minorities will therefore have to pursue their rights on the premise of being “separate but equal”. If, however, the majority identity is dynamic and co-constructed, the parameters of a European national identity will be questioned by the autochthons themselves, and will exhibit change over time vis-à-vis Others. This will render the majority identity permeable, and provide opportunities for minorities to assume the national identity through integration.

This research project shall thus examine the case of contemporary France, as this European nation possesses a particularly rich colonial history, as well as a relatively recent and highly permanent immigrant and minority communities. Thus, the researcher poses the following

question: Is the contemporary autochthonous French identity dynamic and co-constructed vis-à-vis France's minority populations?

The potential dynamism of the contemporary autochthonous French identity shall be examined vis-à-vis the former colonial minority populations, and will not explore the relationship of identity between France and the European Union. The former colonial Other shall serve as the relative point of analysis due to its high visibility in recent public discourse, which renders a multitude of narratives available for analysis, particularly given the researcher's geographic limitations. Thus, this project will not be able to illustrate the full picture of integration in Western Europe; however, it shall provide a venue for analysis on the micro level, which can ultimately reveal crucial elements of the dynamics of national identities to inform future integration policies in the national and supranational contexts.



## Chapter One

### Literature Review

The preponderance of scholarly discourse examining the influx of immigrants in Western Europe takes one of two approaches: political or cultural. The literature in both camps is profuse, and each plays an important function in the complex issue of integration. However, as the researcher shall demonstrate, the political and cultural approaches only address the apparent avenues of analysis. Indeed, the reason such literature continues to proliferate, yet only confound the situation, is because it only addresses the surface of this multilayered phenomenon.

#### **Political**

The political perspective entails the explanation of political contexts and policies created by governing bodies to manage immigration and integration and to minimize societal tension. The politics of integration are then discussed and critiqued by scholars, primarily within the field of Political Science.

It is important to first examine the contextual aspect of French politics as it is portrayed in the literature, because it is on the foundation of the French brand of secularism that this entire branch of literature is built. The crucial concept of *laïcité* is addressed in almost every journal article and book chapter written on the subject, highlighting its centrality to the understanding of the political debate surrounding integration in France. The term directly translates to English as “secularism;” however, the nuances of *laïcité* can only be understood within an explanation of the French socio-historical context. Its definition is widely agreed upon by scholars as a form of separation of church and state in which the state is protected from the church’s attempt to encroach upon its power; the citizens of the state are thus freed from the forced influence of

religion and tradition.<sup>1</sup> This version of secularism springs from French history and the Catholic Church's attempts to insert itself into the power structure of the Republic. In 1905, a seminal law was established, which banished religion to the private sphere and inhibited the Catholic Church in particular from playing a role in the French government. From this law comes an aversion to any attempt of religion to influence or exert power within the civic realm.

Indeed, the relationship and interactions between Muslim minority communities and the French State around the historically established paradigms of Church-State relations is the central hypothesis of the joint works of Fetzer and Soper. They argue the "inherited Church-State institutions ... have structured the political debate around Muslim religious rights and practices."<sup>2</sup> *Laïcité*, which has been in the French public discourse for over a century, is at the core of these institutions. By separating religion, considered to be one element of society, and the State, conceptualized as the universal community through which all citizens receive their freedom, the ability of Muslim groups to lobby for particular rights from the State is greatly impeded.<sup>3</sup> Although *laïcité* looms large in the minds of the French politicians and populous, alike, Fetzer and Soper do not venture beyond the scope of the political with the concept. They do not consider how this theme reverberates in French society or culture. Furthermore, while the historicity of *laïcité* is important to the French political system, Fetzer and Soper do not

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<sup>1</sup> See Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaisse, *Integration Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2006); Elaine R. Thomas, "Keeping Identity at a Distance: Explaining France's New Legal Restrictions on the Islamic Headscarf," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (2006): 237-259; J. Christopher Soper and Joel S. Fetzer, "Religious Institutions, Church-State History and Muslim Mobilisation in Britain, France and Germany," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (2007): 933-944; and Nicolas Weill, "What's in a Scarf? The Debate on *Laïcité* in France," *French Politics, Culture & Society*, (2006): 59-73. These authors are particularly representative of, and influential in the politically-oriented study of integration in Western Europe, specifically regarding the French case.

<sup>2</sup> Soper and Fetzer, 934.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 937.

themselves discuss the deeper levels of its historic nature, specifically the creation of the French nation and national identity. They do not delve into why *laïcité* is so important to the French citizenship, or moreover, the national psyche, beyond its historical surface value.

Thomas, and Weill both begin to show the further implications *laïcité* has on citizenship due to the latter's links with communitarianism. Thomas makes the connection explicit, stating, "Among French proponents of the law, citizenship is commonly exalted as a realization of individuality ... [which is] further equated with emancipation of the individual as a rational agent from groups seeking control of their members through force or superstition."<sup>4</sup> Thus, as a citizen, one subscribes to the super-community of the State, directly relating to it as an individual. It is from the State that the individual citizen is given the freedom to participate (or not) in any particular social community, such as a religion. What Thomas does not mention is the rooting of this specific conceptualization of State-citizen relations in the Republican tradition, which is not only a governmental structure, but also a universal ideology that unites the political, ethical, and cultural self by granting authenticity to an individual identity.

Weill further clarifies the meaning of *laïcité* by extracting it from the American understanding of communities.<sup>5</sup> In the American political context, communities are the source of identity and specific rights (i.e. Jewish-, gay-, women's-rights advocates). It is by associating oneself with various communities that one compiles an identity as an individual (as a Jewish, gay woman, for example). However, from the French perspective, these special interest groups threaten the unity of the nation and the freedom of individuality thus bestowed upon each citizen. The individual relates directly to the State, instead of relating to it through a particular

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas, 239.

<sup>5</sup> Weill.

community; in this way, all are equal citizens respective to the State. Thus, *laïcité* specifically ensures no religious group will be able to exert power over the State and threaten the liberties of its citizens.

The definition and role of *laïcité* is important to establish before one can explore the political realm surrounding integration of Muslim minorities in France. Nevertheless, while it is the axis around which the political discourse turns, it still remains at the surface of the complexities of the integration issue. Current politically-oriented literature explains the role of *laïcité*, suggesting that it springs from France's history, but it does not explore the importance of the role of history in the national psyche and identity, issues that lie closer to the root of the situation.

Instead, scholars continue to scrape the surface within the political realm, analyzing policies that have spawned from the philosophy of *laïcité*. Two such policies widely discussed are the 2004 ban on conspicuous religious symbols in schools and the proposed socio-economic solution of "positive discrimination". Both policies are directly linked to the two case studies examined in the analysis chapter of this paper, selected in part because the 2004 *affaire du foulard* (the headscarf affair) and the urban rioting of 2005 have been so widely discussed in existing literature. This literature, although it sometimes incorporates discussions of Muslim cultures, does not venture far beyond the limits of the political sphere. The following authors were selected due to the key linkages and nuances they bring to light, themes that help to distinguish their works from the rest of politically-oriented literature. These authors nonetheless characterize this scholastic perspective because they exemplify the restrictions the political framework places upon analyzing the issue of integration with the full degree of nuance it requires.

The full history of the *affaire du foulard*, from the first incident in 1989 through the ultimate piece of legislation in 2004, is described in detail by Freedman. Any examination of this public saga must consider its development over fifteen years, which grew in intensity until coming to a head in 2004. Muslim girls wearing the veil were first excluded from French schools in 1989. The issue reemerged in 1994 when concerns over immigration and the growing influence of Islamic fundamentalism in Algeria spurred François Bayrou, the Minister of Education, to publish a circular disapproving of overtly religious symbols in the schools. This missive, however, did not have the power of law. Thus, between 2002 and 2003, the Stasi Commission was gathered under the Chirac administration to seek a legal resolution to the question of the veil in public schools. Veiled Muslim girls were again excluded from French schools, inciting the rapid development of the ultimate legislation on the issue, which was passed in February 2004.<sup>6</sup>

The significant contribution of Freedman's article to the literature on the headscarf affair, however, is her linkage of the history of the affair with the issues of nationality and immigration. This is where Freedman distinguishes herself in pushing the boundaries of the political framework. Not only is the veil discussed as an example of the challenges the French brand of integration and Islam pose to each other, but assimilation is linked to the transition of minorities from immigrants to French nationals. The establishment of this link is crucial in examining the core issues underlying the political discussion, although Freedman does not go beyond the political. Freedman begins to intimate *laïcité*, exemplified in her work in the *affaire du foulard*,

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<sup>6</sup> Jane Freedman, "Secularism as a Barrier to Integration? The French Dilemma," *International Migration* (2004): 5-27.

is a manifestation of deeper mechanisms at work in the French public sphere: the *affaire* is only a reflection of the complexities of French citizenship and its implications of identity.

Maillard makes a further, key connection: the relationship between citizenship/identity and communitarianism/the Muslim veil. Not only does he explain both the political dynamics of French citizenship *contra* communitarianism, but he addresses the veil as an element of Muslim identity.<sup>7</sup> If it is a personal expression of an individual citizen, the veil is acceptable in the French *milieu*; if it is imposed by the Muslim community, it is not. Indeed, Maillard is incapable of removing himself from the mindset of the Republic, as evidenced by his final statement: “The secular system of the French republic cannot but follow Clearmont Tonnerre’s famous injunction during the debate about the assimilation of the Jews during the French Revolution: no rights as a community, every right as individuals!”<sup>8</sup>

He arrives at this conclusion, however, after contextualizing immigration in France vis-à-vis the country’s colonial history. “Immigration,” Maillard underlines, “posed to France as a nation a kind of colonial problem planted within itself, triggering strong political reactions that tended to overshadow complex phenomena of mutual repulsion.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, Maillard recognizes the French model of integration is more than an immigration issue or a matter of *laïcité*; indeed, the historicity is more complex. The influx of foreigners to France is not an influx of total strangers, but rather one of peoples with whom the Republic has a long-standing relationship – that of colonialism. Fear of Algerian immigrants, in particular, was reflective of the brutal Algerian War

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<sup>7</sup> Dominique Maillard, “The Muslims in France the French Model of Integration,” *Mediterranean Quarterly* (2005): 62-78.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

through which the former colony gained its independence from France. Maillard also mentions what he deems the incompatible anthropological outlooks of the Algerians and the French; both believe in the universal man, but each maintains contrasting values in this respect.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, Maillard makes linkages important to understanding the complexity of the French integration situation and incorporates the significant element of French colonialism. However, although his article is more nuanced than most in the political camp, his analysis is still situated within this very limited field. Although bringing the former colonial relationship between France and many of its immigrants to light, and mentioning its contributions to negative perceptions of immigrants, Maillard does not explore the development of the image of this Other, not to mention its effect on the French conceptualization of Self. He does not discuss the structure of colonialism and how it precipitates Othering and nationalism.

The role of colonialism in French immigration history is further explained and addressed in Haddad and Balz's article on the 2005 October Riots. Indeed, the authors emphasize the very structure of colonialism, purporting the colonial policy of *mission civilisatrice* (civilizing mission) continues to influence French immigration policy through the present day.<sup>11</sup> The outbreak of urban violence across France in 2005, however, is cited as evidence of the failure of this policy. Housing, unemployment, crime, and poor schools are enumerated as obstacles to integration, and the policy of positive discrimination (similar to the American program of affirmative action) is cited as political effort to overcome what are considered to be the socio-

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>11</sup> Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Michael J. Balz, "The October Riots in France: A Failed Immigration Policy or the Empire Strikes Back?" *International Migration* (2006): 23.

economic disadvantages of immigrants and their descendants.<sup>12</sup> Thus, although Haddad and Balz have dug deeper into French history to find the source of the social discontentment surrounding integration, their excavation still only addresses actions and outcomes within the political sphere, specifically its effect on policy.

The other major stream in the politically-oriented literature analyzes the political structures created by the French government in attempts to engage the Muslim communities through incorporation, as they are new to incorporation and neither the government nor the Muslim communities are sure of how best to do so. In an extensive article by Jonathan Laurence, the timeline of Islam-State relations is explained in-depth, culminating in the formation of the *Conseil Français du Culte Musulman* (CFCM) [French Council of the Muslim Religion]. Laurence is thorough in his contextualization of the institutionalization process, noting the government's desire to decrease foreign influence and increase control over crime and religious radicalization, as well as Islam's shift to the central focus of French integration policy.<sup>13</sup> One of the inspirations for this governmental effort, which strikes close to the root of the issue of integration, is its belief that if "Islam could be incorporated into the institutions of the Republic, then Muslims could identify with the state, too, rather than with their community."<sup>14</sup> Thus, the issue of identity and its relationship to the definition of French citizenship is brought to the foreground, if still only within the paradigm of politics. Moreover, the *laïque* (secular) structure of the French government is not being challenged; institutions founded upon *laïcité* are perceived as unproblematic.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>13</sup> Jonathan Laurence, "From the Elysée Salon to the Table of the Republic: State-Islam Relations and the Integration of Muslims in France," *European Yearbook of Minority Issues* (2003/2004): 237-262.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 243.



The issue raised by Laurence, and expanded upon by Peter is that of finding a legitimate authority to represent Islam in France.<sup>15</sup> The question is indeed multifaceted. The structure of the Muslim faith in the preponderance of sects does not have any form of religious hierarchy. Furthermore, there is not one Islam in France, but many Islams, practiced by diverse Muslim communities. Essentially, the problem arises in that the French government is attempting to fit Islam into its republican paradigm. In forcing the Muslim communities to produce a representative, or a board of representatives (with inevitably highly diverse perspectives), the government extracts figureheads with little to no authority in the eyes of the Muslim populations in France. This has been the major critique of the CFCM and the explanation of previous institutions' failures amongst scholars. Thus, the institutions of *laïcité* are portrayed as problematic in integrating Islam in the political domain.

Indeed, it is crucial to analyze and scrutinize the political efforts to resolve integration to learn from the past and improve the process of policy-making in the future. This method of analysis is one of the strengths of the politically-oriented literature, in conjunction with the fact that it reflects the issue of integration is being addressed on a national and governmental level. Nevertheless, the political actions taken have not worked, and scholars engaged in the political discourse have yet to find a viable solution to France's failed integration policies. The reason lies in the limitations of the political framework; policies thus far have served as bandages to the social challenges of contemporary France, but the wound of an increasingly diverse French population is not healing. If a wound is bandaged but not cleaned, it will not be able to heal in the long-term. In other words, policies are attempts to put quick stops to the societal problems

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<sup>15</sup> Laurence; Frank Peter, "Leading the Community of the Middle Way: A Study of the Muslim Field in France," *The Muslim World* (2006): 707-736.

generated from integration; however, politicians are not taking the cultural aspects and components of integrating the minority perspective into consideration.

## Cultural

The first task the cultural camp sets out upon is dispelling the myth of the monolithic Muslim minority. As *laïcité* resides at the core of the political debate, the diversity of the minority population is significant in the scholarly writings from the cultural perspective, as exemplified by the following works of the preeminent culturally-oriented thinkers. Laurence and Vaisse open their book, *Integrating Islam*, which examines political and cultural aspects of the integration process, with the following remark: “Outside observers of Islam in France often paint a picture of a homogeneous Muslim community that is fast gaining on the ‘native’ French population, one whose religious allegiance stands in stark contrast with its secular environment.”<sup>16</sup> It is this very image Leveau and Hunter dispel in the first chapter of Hunter’s compilation of works in *Islam, Europe’s Second Religion*. The two authors describe the Muslims in France through both qualitative and quantitative data, including historical background vis-à-vis France, religious ideological variations, ethnic composition, and countries of origin.<sup>17</sup> This diversity serves two functions: first, it weakens the ability for political assertion as a group, which would be met with hostility by the Republic if self-initiated, and which has contributed to the failure of State-initiated attempts to organize the Muslim communities. Indeed, Cesari remarks, “Muslim fragmentation along ethnic lines stands as the major obstacle to Muslims’

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<sup>16</sup> Laurence and Vaisse, 15.

<sup>17</sup> Remy Leveau and Shireen T. Hunter, "Islam in France," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 3-28.

unification into a single coherent religious minority in France.”<sup>18</sup> Secondly, and more importantly, although not explicitly stated by the current literature, it serves to deflate the threatening image of the Muslim Other in the European context.

Nonetheless, Laurence and Vaisse explicate the long history of anti-Muslim sentiments in France.<sup>19</sup> Negative images of Muslims in the French public discourse date back to the Crusades and were compounded during colonization, when their Muslim colonial subjects were seen as backwards and needing to be civilized. A brutish, bloody image was developed during decolonization, specifically concerning Algerians during the Algerian War, which contributed to racism during the influx of post-colonial immigrants in the 1970s. The Other image shifted to that of the fanatical Islamist in the 1980s and 90s, taking cues from the rise of political Islam in Iran. All of these images have built upon each other over time to solidify Otherized enemy imagery of the Arab/Muslim in the French public discourse.<sup>20</sup> It is the assertion of the researcher that this process over time of Othering those who are now settled immigrants and their descendants in contemporary France plays a pivotal role in not only the French approach to integration, but also the way the autochthonous French conceive of themselves.

Negative imagery aside, having established the plurality of the Muslim population in France, scholars writing within the cultural framework react to the strict political assessment of the integration situation by insisting upon the importance of the minority perspective, placing particular emphasis on cultural differences. Prominent European Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan

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<sup>18</sup> Jocelyne Cesari, "Islam in France: The Shaping of a Religious Minority," in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 39.

<sup>19</sup> Laurence and Vaisse, 50-51.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

promulgates the refocusing of discourse on the minority perspective, stating that “analysis of Islam and Muslims in Europe must be centered on how they – the Muslims – define themselves and how they understand Islam, and not how they are viewed and classified by the Europeans.”<sup>21</sup> This point, however, must be qualified. Although it is imperative to take the perspectives of the minorities themselves into equal consideration, assuring they have a voice in the public and scholarly discourse and that it is listened to, there are two parties involved in the integration question. This is the assertion of the researcher: both the minority and majority communities are involved, and thus, must both be engaged in the integration process. The minority self-concept is essential; however, the majority’s self-conceptualization, as well as how they perceive the minority is also important. The majority perspective is particularly relevant because the autochthonous French continue to hold power over the public discourse; thus, they maintain the ability to shape the image of the minority populations.

Cesari delves into the identities of first-generation immigrants, specifically from North Africa. She notes the relationship of religious identity to national identity, which is played out in the shadow of colonial history. “No first-generation North African immigrant,” Cesari explains,

“can contemplate his religion without remembering a painful time when preservation of Islam played a crucial role in his nation’s struggle against French domination. ... For the same reason, they were reluctant to acquire French nationality, viewing that acquisition as a betrayal of their nation’s prior struggle against colonialism.”<sup>22</sup>

Thus, Cesari makes an important link between different aspects of identity, while invoking the vital dimension of colonialism. Although discussing the minority point of view and focusing on

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<sup>21</sup> Tariq Ramadan, “Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?” in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 208.

<sup>22</sup> Cesari in Haddad, 38.

cultural aspects, she does not neglect the role of politics, which cannot be disentangled from the discussion on integration.

The segment of the minority population most drastically affected by multiple, shifting facets of identity is the minority youth – particularly those who are second- and third-generation. Appropriately, much literature has been devoted to researching these young people who are still forming as citizens, who can claim parts of both minority and majority identities, and are therefore most often the subjects of discrimination and social debate. The researcher theorizes this discrimination and debate is generated by the threat these minority youth represent to the autochthonous French identity. The two events analyzed in this paper, the headscarf affair and urban rioting, exemplify the resulting discrimination and debate generated by the fearful French in reaction to perceived encroachment upon the French identity.

Kiwan has written an excellent piece of qualitative research, which takes a socio-cultural approach to the identities of youth in France of North African origin. Through a series of interviews and participant observation in French *banlieues*, she finds minority youth identities to be both highly dynamic and individualized. Kiwan articulates, “The young people in question are continuously circulating between social and cultural forms of identification, while simultaneously drawing on community-oriented and more universal elements of identity.”<sup>23</sup> Kiwan’s observations are directly pertinent to the current research project in further breaking down the monolithic image of minority (youth), largely utilized in the public discourse during the 2005 urban rioting analyzed in the proceeding analysis section. Furthermore, she confirms

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<sup>23</sup> Nadia Kiwan, "Shifting Sociocultural Identities: Young People of North African Origin in France," in *The Construction of Minority Identities in France and Britain*, eds. Gino G. Raymond and Tariq Modood (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 83.

the dynamic, multifaceted nature of identity in the minority context; the research shall explore if the same is true for the majority identity.

Islam plays a role in the identities of many minority youths in France. Indeed, it is the young people who have served as one of the greatest vehicles for the creation of a “European Islam”. According to Mandaville, “Young Muslims are ... constructing both new identities and new frameworks ... in response to the conditions of life in contemporary Europe.”<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, “The majority of Muslim youth understand themselves to be stakeholders in European society. For them, the fate of European Islam is tied to the fate of Europe. Participation, cooperation, and dialogue are the operative terms.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, not only are youth identities dynamic, but so too are Muslim identities. This dynamism bears positive implications for gradual integration into French society.

This desire for engagement in the European context has led to the increasing demand of the minority populations for recognition in the political and social spheres. This movement has particularly arisen out of the multicultural discourses spreading across Europe, although they are not favored in France. Indeed, they are often perceived as a threat to the ideals of the Republic. Modood and Kastoryano explain this invocation of the politics of recognition as a search for equality, understood “as not having to hide or apologize for one’s origins, family or community, but requiring others to show respect for them and adapt public attitudes and arrangements so that

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<sup>24</sup> Peter P. Mandaville, “Muslim Youth in Europe,” in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 227.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

the heritage they represent is encouraged rather than ignored or expected to wither away.”<sup>26</sup> The authors are moving towards the merging of surface discourses, interweaving the political and the cultural; however, they do not delve further into the origins and implications of the politics of recognition, a philosophy of multiculturalism expounded upon by Charles Taylor and discussed shortly in greater detail.

In considering the literature within the cultural framework as a whole, its strengths lie in its promotion of the minority voices and its recognition of the importance of culture and its role in minority/majority interactions. However, addressing the cultural aspect of integration, while cleaning out the wound, does not inquire after the source. It does not address how culture came to exacerbate the issue of integration or why it does so. This group of scholars also tends to focus too heavily on minority perspectives, frequently rejecting assertions of the majority point of view. Hence, it does not recognize the dialectical dimension of identity, only discussing identity's dynamism. Moreover, it oftentimes tends to neglect the political side of the equation, which is important to understand in order to ultimately translate cultural understanding into feasible policies.

### **Political-Cultural**

Thus, a school of theorists has developed in an attempt to fully bridge the two types of literature. The result is insightful and critical works on cross political-cultural theory. These scholars concentrate on debating how best to incorporate culture into the political framework, an

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<sup>26</sup> Tariq Modood and Riva Kastoryano, "Secularism and the Accommodation of Muslim Identities," in *The Construction of Minority Identities in France and Britain*, eds. Gino G. Raymond and Tariq Modood (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 23.

academic discussion which largely revolves around the elements, forms, and implementation of multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism is most clearly discussed by Bhikhu Parekh in his extensive text, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*. It is Modood, however, who condenses Parekh's discussion in stating, "For Parekh, multiculturalism is not about the rights of minority cultures but about the value of cultural diversity."<sup>27</sup> In this way, Parekh steps away from the pure politics of multiculturalism, emphasizing the need for the reorientation of societal values. From this foundation, Parekh makes an interesting point:

"If cultural differences were accepted as a normal part of life, those involved would not need to ground them in something as intractable and non-negotiable as religion and ethnicity. Religious and ethnic differences would ... remain, but they would not become politicized, turned into the last bastions of cultural defense, and given more importance than they deserve."<sup>28</sup>

Thus, Parekh advocates for the naturalization of cultural variance in society, removing it from the common, uniting, political national identity, which he insists grows in importance the more diverse a society is. Modood, however, challenges this proposition as too restrictive, critiquing, "If national identity is located in the political structure and not in ethnocultural terms, then how can ethnic identities be included in the definition of a national identity?"<sup>29</sup> Indeed, because the public and private spheres are so intertwined and interdependent, diversity, if fully naturalized in social identity, would also be fully naturalized in the political identity. The French Republic and

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<sup>27</sup> Tariq Modood, *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity, and Muslims in Britain* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 173.

<sup>28</sup> Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 199.

<sup>29</sup> Modood, 176.



society has experienced much difficulty in attempting to deny this very relationship between public and private identities.

Thus, in search of this “diversity naturalization,” the politics of recognition has flourished within the scope of multiculturalism. As Taylor explains in his definitive essay on the subject, the modern concept of identity is perceived to be derived from the politics of recognition; everyone’s uniqueness must be recognized.<sup>30</sup> This is a somewhat oxymoronic notion, in that uniqueness denotes a particular distinction amongst a group. One must inquire as to how one can be distinct if all are recognized as distinct.

Nonetheless, Taylor emphasizes the increasing multicultural nature of societies and asserts the socio-political challenge is therefore how to manage the minorities’ sense of marginalization without compromising the basic political principals of a given nation-state.<sup>31</sup> It is precisely this question, which not only inspires this paper and with which the researcher is most in agreement, but also which serves as the impetus for the development the literature surrounding multiculturalism.

Habermas pushes the question further, exhibiting further insight into the interrelatedness of politics and culture, remarking the very

“ethical-political self understanding [of the nation]... is affected by immigration; for the influx of immigrants alters the composition of the population in ethical-cultural respects as well. Thus the question arises whether ... immigration runs up against limits in

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<sup>30</sup> Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 35.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

the right of a political community to maintain its political-cultural form of life intact.”<sup>32</sup>

Habermas thus introduces the need to balance the politics of recognition: minorities have the right to be recognized, but the preexisting State and its people do, as well. This is a crucial counterpoint for this research project, in that both sides must be taken into consideration when the dynamics of a socio-cultural-political community are in motion. Interestingly, the modern concept of human dignity, which is highly valued by democracies, appears to run counter to the preservation of a preexisting nation-state. Thus, Habermas raises the question of which has priority – human dignity or the dignity of the State; however, this question is irrelevant if identity is considered to be dynamic and dialectical. The flaw in Habermas’ argument, therefore, is his assumption that identity is static – a notion which the researcher rejects as antithetical to the concept of identity itself.

These loopholes in the concept of multiculturalism have provoked many critiques of this approach that seeks to bridge politics and culture. Zemni and Parker raise a key issue inherent in multiculturalism: it locks cultural communities into a static identity through institutionalization. It creates a national community composed of many Others and develops a pervading sense of cultural relativism. Indeed, the authors purport “the extreme tolerance that comes with cultural relativism encompasses the danger of seeing ‘others’ as completely different within their ‘communitarian cage,’ and thus obliterates every possible idea of universal humanity.”<sup>33</sup> This critique is reified by Caglar, who confirms multiculturalism is both a political guarantee of the

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<sup>32</sup> Jürgen Habermas, "Struggles for Recognition in the Democratic Constitutional State," in *Multiculturalism*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 137.

<sup>33</sup> Sami Zemni and Christopher Parker, "Islam, the European Union, and the Challenge of Multiculturalism," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 242.

survival of a cultural community, as well as a danger that does not permit the natural and organic changing of a culture.<sup>34</sup> This freezing and compartmentalizing of cultural communities, which consequently serves to institutionalize the Other, is the central, significant flaw in multiculturalism. A society can, as many are, be multicultural in the nature of its composition; however, the researcher purports multiculturalism is neither a viable nor desirable political solution nor schema. As it is premised on the bounded existence of cultures, it does not allow for the nurturing and emergence of an identity that binds the groups without threatening them to develop over time. Unlike integration, multiculturalism does not encompass the nuances of dynamism and multilateral exchange.

The ultimate goal of this research project is therefore to work towards integration. In his discussion of multiculturalism, Parekh stresses the need for balance between unity and diversity. Despite the previously discussed limitations of such a platform, when considered in conjunction with two further points of Parekh's – the organic growth of a common culture and the encouragement of cross-cultural interactions – the parameters for what the researcher shall deem "integration" can be established.<sup>35</sup> Essential to the fostering of integration, a dynamic, multilateral process between the societal majority, minorities, and the State, is allowing for multiple identities without challenging the loyalties of the identity bearers, be they national or communitarian.<sup>36</sup> Although Modood's critique of Parekh's restricted concept of national identity is valid, Parekh is correct in his assertion in the pivotal role of national identity within the scope

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<sup>34</sup> Ayse S. Caglar, "Hyphenated Identities and the Limits of 'Culture,'" in *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe: Racism, Identity and Community*, eds. Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner (London: Zed Study Editions, 1997), 179.

<sup>35</sup> Parekh, 219-223.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

of integration. Indeed, it is national identity which is the source of the societal wound discussed in this research, and which requires further understanding through exploring the existing literature on the subject.

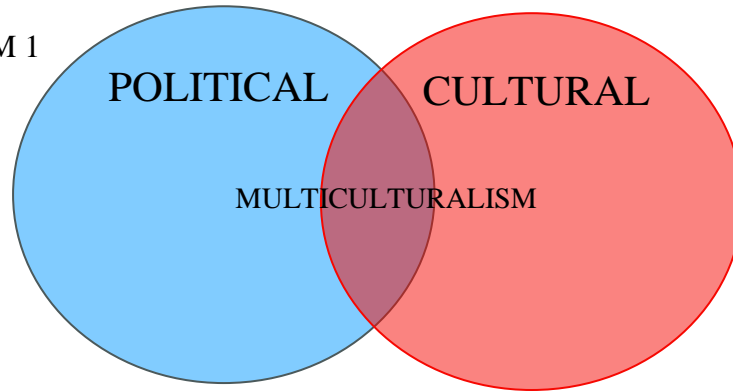
Essentially, if one is to examine the existence of cultures within a country where the presence of different people from different countries is acknowledged, the question of how to go about understanding the complex processes of changing concepts of national and cultural identities is raised. The researcher shall thus offer a more detailed framework for analyzing these processes, which shall enable a more nuanced understanding of the contemporary issue of integration.

## Chapter Two

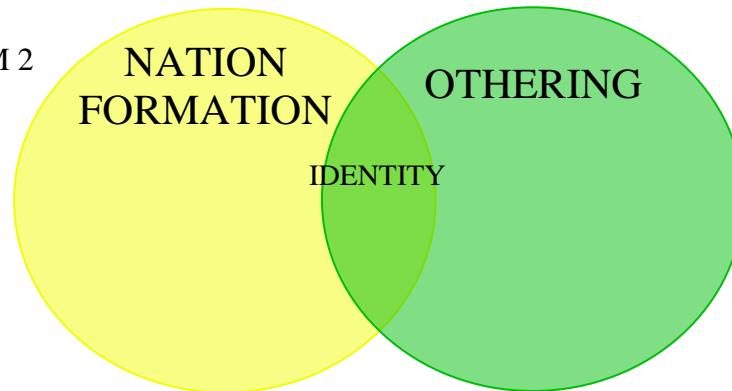
### Theoretical Framework

Analyzing and eventually managing integration – the exchange of elements of identity and the forging of a new and expanded collective identity – is a highly multifaceted and interdisciplinary task, which requires not only a comprehensive, but also a detailed and nuanced framework. The researcher asserts there are two levels to the issue of integration. The first is that which has been discussed in the literature review: political-cultural. Multicultural theories and politics have emerged where these two perspectives overlap (Venn Diagram 1). The second is that which will follow in the theoretical framework: nation formation-Othering. The concept of identity emerges where the processes of nation formation and Othering overlap (Venn Diagram 2). These two levels, themselves, overlap, creating a vertical link between the political perspective and nation formation, and between the cultural perspective and Othering. The point at which multiculturalism and identity overlap, and thus, where the political and cultural perspectives as well as concepts of nation formation and Othering, all meet is where integration develops (Venn Diagram 3). Thus, the researcher's comprehensive framework for integration emerges.

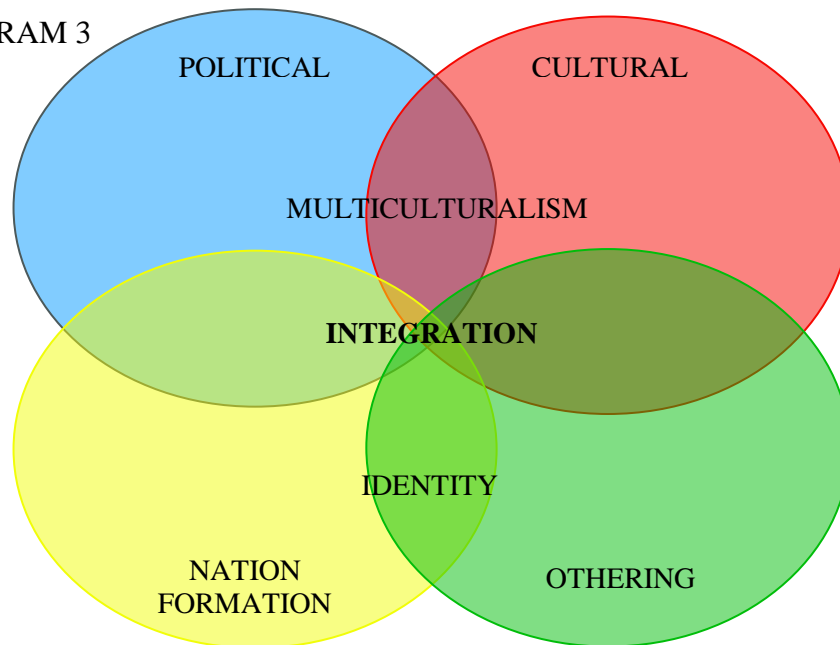
VENN DIAGRAM 1



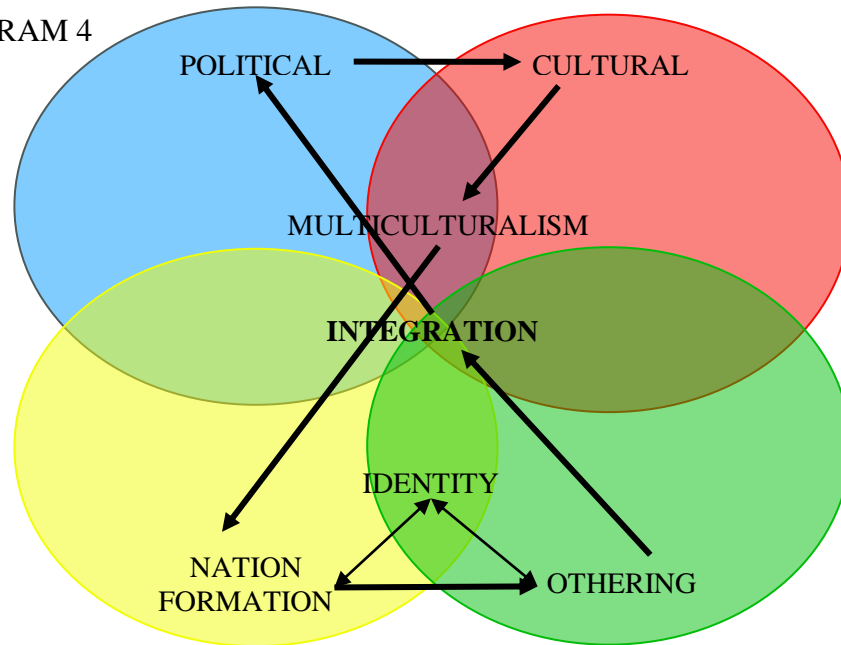
VENN DIAGRAM 2



VENN DIAGRAM 3



VENN DIAGRAM 4



This framework, like integration, is a dynamic process (Venn Diagram 4) and represents a complete cycle in the renegotiation of identity in the national context. This cycle can most clearly be explained through an extended metaphor, in which a society with large, permanent minority communities is represented by a child who has been playing outside and has gotten a large scrape on his knee. The child runs inside to his father (the government) and shows him his wound. The father puts a bandage over the wound to stop the bleeding and to keep any debris from exacerbating the child's injury (policies such as regulating the conduct of resident minorities and limiting further immigration). Later on that evening, the wound is throbbing; the child is in more pain than before. His mother (culturally-oriented scholars) scolds the child's father for not cleaning out the wound before bandaging it (analyzing the minority perspectives and cultural backgrounds). To prevent further injury, the parents both tell the child to be more

careful (multiculturalism). This warning, however, does not discover the source of the wound, and therefore, cannot prevent further injury.

The parents ask their neighbors if anyone saw how the child got injured, and find out the wound resulted from falling out of a tree (nation formation). Moreover, the child had not been wearing shoes (Othering) and had climbed onto an old, weak branch (identity). All of these factors combined to result in a very large, painful scrape on the child's knee (autochthonous identity crisis due to the increasing ability of minorities to claim part or all of the majority identity). After analyzing all of this information, the father makes a new household rule that sneakers must always be worn (policy that takes the underlying causes of identity crisis in multicultural societies into consideration), and the mother insists there must be adult supervision when the child is climbing trees to help watch out for old branches (continued awareness of identity dynamics, monitored and analyzed by scholars who will inform the government of necessary policy adjustments).

Essentially, the researcher's framework takes into account the underlying causes of the issue of integration and brings to light new opportunities for creating effective integration policies. Within this framework, the researcher focuses on the element of identity, analyzing the "tree" to discover which branches are old or weak, and therefore likely to soon break under the weight of society, as well as the trunk and roots to determine the key, foundational elements of a specific identity. Before the parts of the tree can be examined, however, the researcher must define the underlying elements of her framework (those located in Venn Diagram 2) and explain them within their overarching context, social constructivism.



The theoretical school of social constructivism, founded by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, purports only that which is biological is natural and inevitable; that which is societal is created by man.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, as everything is constructed, it must be legitimized in some way in order to continue.<sup>38</sup> Society is built upon layers of constructions, beginning with reality. The three key characteristics of reality are that it is constructed, intersubjective, and “taken for granted *as* reality.”<sup>39</sup> Reality is reified by its intersubjectivity; when more than one person participates in a particular reality, it is confirmed as valid.

This reality-sharing garners human interaction, which eventually leads to the construction of society. As a society exists over time, it develops a history, which ultimately results in the construction of a symbolic universe. Berger and Luckmann explain, “The symbolic universe is conceived of as the matrix of *all* socially objectivated and subjectively real meanings; the entire historic society and the entire biography of the individual are seen as events taking place *within* this universe.”<sup>40</sup> Within the context of the current research, the symbolic universe can be seen as the nation boiled down to its purely theoretical form: like the symbolic universe, the nation is constructed, functions and gives meaning by virtue of its own reality, is legitimized by a complex set of developed symbols, and is the context from which identities are created and become meaningful. Indeed, identity formation and maintenance is entirely reliant upon the social structure, the symbolic universe.<sup>41</sup> Essentially, man creates society and man is a product of

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<sup>37</sup> Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

society. Man creates society, which is an objective or externalized reality. This objective reality is institutionalized and naturalized, then internalized by man, becoming subjective reality and creating his identity. Furthermore, as the symbolic universe is constructed and “the symmetry between objective and subjective reality is never static ... it must always be produced and reproduced *in actu*.”<sup>42</sup> Stated in terms of the nation, “flagging” is required to maintain the “imagined community”.

The nation is most comprehensively described by Anthony D. Smith, one of the most influential scholars on the subject. Smith defines the nation as “a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.”<sup>43</sup> His definition has been critiqued as too “Western,” particularly concerning the element of a “common economy;” however, Smith is careful to define both Western-oriented and non-Western-oriented models of the nation. Both are boiled down and incorporated into his overall definition, which the researcher utilizes in this paper to analyze the calling into question of French national identity. Indeed, in understanding what a nation is, one goes beyond the limits of the political framework and is able to analyze the inner dynamics of the political entity, itself.

Smith further roots his definition of the nation by linking it with identity, stating, “A national identity is fundamentally multi-dimensional; it can never be reduced to a single element,”<sup>44</sup> and adding, “It is this very multidimensionality that has made national identity such a

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>43</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 14.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

flexible and persistent force in modern life.”<sup>45</sup> This inherent dynamism and multifaceted quality is crucial to the present research, as it implicates the theoretical potentiality of a national identity to change over time. Moreover, the non-static nature of the nation and national identity directly link to social constructivism: the nation is a product of society, a symbolic universe, from which a national identity develops. Neither are natural nor independent entities; thus, they are both reliant upon man for their perpetuation and maintenance (or change) over time.

The process of national identity maintenance has generated its own niche in the literature on nations and nationalism, and requires examination to understand the dynamics of national identities well. Ernest Renan, a Frenchman in the post-Revolutionary era, was one of the earliest figures to explicitly address the then-emerging concept of the nation. In his famous lecture delivered at the Sorbonne entitled, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (*What is a nation?*), Renan highlights one of the elements Smith considers essential to the creation of a nation: “a heritage of memories.”<sup>46</sup> Perhaps more importantly, however, Renan emphasizes the need for “a will to continue validating that heritage of memories.”<sup>47</sup> Thus, the nation, as a symbolic universe, must be willfully perpetuated in the minds of its citizens, lest it cease to exist.

In both these dimensions, Renan is considered the forerunner to two contemporary scholars who have greatly contributed to the study of nations: Benedict Anderson and Michael Billig. Anderson builds off of Renan’s element of a “heritage of memories” in developing the

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>46</sup> Ernest Renan as quoted in John E. Joseph, *Language and Identity: National, Ethnic, Religious* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 112.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

concept of the “imagined community”.<sup>48</sup> Because the nation is a vast, constructed entity, it is impossible for every individual bearing a certain national identity to know every other fellow-national. Thus, each individual must imagine the national community, believe in it, and believe in their membership of it. Anderson’s vital contribution to the literature is therefore the activation of one of the key elements that composes the nation and the explanation of the relationship of the individual as a bearer of an identity to the abstract notion of the nation. In explicating its ephemeral, “imagined” nature, Anderson renders the “community” tangible.

Billig, on the other hand, expounds upon Renan’s point of perpetually validating the set of shared memories; national identity must be constructed and continually reconstructed. This construction, however, must be forgotten in order for it to be internalized and believed. The continual validation, despite conscious forgetting, of the nation’s creation is what Billig calls “banal nationalism”<sup>49</sup>: “Daily, the nation is indicated, or ‘flagged’, in the lives of its citizenry. Nationalism, far from being an intermittent mood in established nations, is the endemic condition.”<sup>50</sup> Thus, while Anderson activates that which ties the bearers of a national identity together, Billig puts in motion the actual process of the national identity’s perpetuation.

This creation and continued affirmation of the nation is key in examining the demographic realities of contemporary Europe and in working towards comprehensive integration. Indeed, it is the source of the societal wound because although national identity is flexible and thus, theoretically capable of incorporating new members and cultural dimensions, it must establish limits at some point. There is, after all, an element of sameness inherent in a

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<sup>48</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006); Joseph, 115.

<sup>49</sup> Joseph, 115.

<sup>50</sup> Michael Billig as quoted in Joseph, 117.

forged group identity, which plays a role in the identity's maintenance. It is this specific meaning of national identity, formed and perpetuated via a "pattern of similarity-cum-dissimilarity,"<sup>51</sup> which the researcher employs in examining the case of contemporary France.

The case of France is particularly relevant to the current debates surrounding integration; it is well-established in the existing literature as playing a major role in the development of the national concept itself. Indeed, in his discussion of the evolution of the nation, Joseph asserts the modern concept of nationalism began with Revolutionary, and continued with Napoleonic, France.<sup>52</sup> After the French Revolution in 1789, the Third Republic launched a nation-building campaign, comprised of cultural unification, asserting the values of citizenship, establishing a secular education system, and separating Church and State.<sup>53</sup> This nation formation, however, was not an isolated process; rather, it was relational. As Beller explains, in referencing Rogers Brubaker, a prominent sociologist exploring the many facets of nationalism, "Revolutionary France ... defined itself in opposition to *étrangers* – literally 'foreigners' – but these could be either foreigners in the traditional sense or internal opponents of the new order."<sup>54</sup> It is this co-constructed nature of the formation of national identity that is crucial to the researcher's hypothesis: the creation of the French citizen necessitated the creation of the foreigner. In directly addressing this dialectic, one must not only realize the nation's role in creating an insider and an outsider, but also inquire as to how this delineation is made. If the boundaries of

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<sup>51</sup> Smith, 75.

<sup>52</sup> Joseph, 96.

<sup>53</sup> Cécile Laborde, "Republican Citizenship and the Crisis of Integration in France." in *Lineages of European Citizenship: Rights, Belonging and Participation in Eleven Nation-States*, eds. Richard Bellamy, Dario Castiglione and Emilio Santoro (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 46.

<sup>54</sup> Elisa T. Beller, "The Headscarf Affair: The Conseil d'État on the Role of Religion and Culture in French Society." *Texas International Law Journal* (2004), 592.

geography, language, culture, and shared history created by the nation are crossed, blurred, and/or erased by immigrants and their descendants, where do the lines of distinction then lie?

Symbolic universes, however, do not just face the challenge of their own constructed nature; they are also constantly challenged and threatened by other realities;<sup>55</sup> this parallels the relationship between national identity and Other, when the Other is no longer subjugated, but begins to gain power and attempt to exert some degree of influence over the nation. Otherwise stated, as minority communities begin to campaign for recognition and equal rights, they challenge the balance of power between the Self and the Other. The true threat to the Self, however, arises when the Other claim sameness/belonging to the Self, when minorities proclaim they are both French and Muslim – a proclamation that challenges the very reality upon which the French symbolic universe is constructed.

Thus, when two societies with conflicting realities meet, they must engage in universe-preservation, which is performed through a variety of means, all of which are socially constructed: mythology, theology, philosophy, science, therapy, and nihilism.<sup>56</sup> Mythology is defined as “a conception of reality that posits the ongoing penetration of the world of everyday experience by sacred forces.”<sup>57</sup> Theology is essentially a more sophisticated form of mythology which is further removed from the general knowledge of society. Philosophy and science are the secular developments of theology. Although they are rooted in secularism, they are “bodies of knowledge ... increasingly removed from the common knowledge of the society at large.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Berger and Luckmann, 103.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 109-112.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

Therapy and nihiliation, however, are the two most powerful and effective tools. The former creates a “theory of deviance,”<sup>59</sup> convinces the bearer of the alternate reality they are deviant, and treats them via resocialization to incorporate them back into the fold of society.<sup>60</sup> The latter seeks to destroy any deviant reality by giving the deviant reality an inferior/negative status through the invocation of the society’s set of universal symbols. The dominant reality then absorbs the deviant reality by translating it into its own terms; thus it does not and cannot exist outside the “true” reality, and is therefore destroyed.<sup>61</sup> In terms of the nation, these two means of universe-preservation can be equated to assimilation and Othering, respectively.

In a dialectical understanding of national identity, there are two related and interdependent groups, the nation, or in-group (the “French”) and the Other, or out-group (foreigners, immigrants, non-French). The process of creating this out-group is called Othering, and is defined by Michael Crang as the creation of unequal relational identities.<sup>62</sup> Otherwise stated, to delineate a nation, there must be an Other, and that Other must be inferior to the nation. Thus, there are two elements at play: relativity and power. Both are linked to the boundary-drawing of defining a nation. When a border – whether social, geographical, historical, etc. – is established, group identities are formed in relation to that border: one is both inside and a member (a national), or outside and an Other (foreigner). Ironically, exclusion becomes a by-product of inclusion. In creating a nation, that which is foreign, or not part of the nation, is not only created, but also excluded.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 113-114.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 114-115.

<sup>62</sup> Michael Crang, *Cultural Geography* (London: Routledge, 1998).

Preservation of these borders then becomes the preoccupation of the national institutions. The imagined community is not only proliferated by banal nationalism, but also by Othering. The image of the Other must be created and continually reinforced, just as the nation, but negatively so as to maintain group cohesion. If the in-group, the nation, provides a positive identity juxtaposed to the negative identity of the Other, or a sense of security in contrast to a threatening Other, members will want to subscribe to and maintain the integrity of their collective identity. This negative portrayal of the Other is most clearly explained by Sam Keen's image theory. Keen outlines five images of the enemy, which have been employed throughout history to shape the image of the Other: the enemy as an enemy of God, as a barbarian, as a rapist, as a beast/insect/reptile, as death, itself.<sup>63</sup> This imagery framework shall be employed in the analysis chapter of this paper, serving as an aid in analyzing the process of Othering the minority communities in the French public discourse, which is a component of preserving the French national identity.

Given the importance of Othering to the maintenance of a national identity and considering how it is performed, inquiry must be made into who is being Othered and why. In the French case, the "who" is not arbitrary. Indeed, the researcher purports the French Other is predominantly peoples of its former colonies, creating a particularly strong Other because it is derived from the concept of national identity itself. Returning to Smith's definition, the strength of the French former-colonial Other is clear: the French historic territory is geographically distinct from its former colonies, particularly in the Maghreb. Othering the Germans, for example, would be more challenging, as contiguous borders have shifted between these two

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<sup>63</sup> Sam Keen, "Faces of the Enemy," in *Culture, Communication and Conflict: Readings in Intercultural Relations*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 408-409.



nations over the course of history. Although the Other's territory was once associated with that of the French nation, it was considered *land owned* by France; its resources (terrestrial and human) were considered possessions, not equals. Here the aspect of stratified power in Othering enters the equation: the colonized were subjects to be civilized, although they could never attain equal status with a Frenchman. The Germans, on the other hand, have exercised power over the French. Furthermore, although the Revolution is at the helm of French nation formation and the nascence of the French national identity, French colonialism enabled the creation of a more powerful Other, beyond the "bad citizen".<sup>64</sup> French colonialism gave birth to, to utilize Keen's paradigm, the "barbarian" Other. This very Other remains strong through the current day partly because colonialism did leave such a large mark on French national history. Colonialism is part of the French national identity; thus, in reaffirming the former-colonial Other, the nation itself is doubly reaffirmed. The researcher therefore argues it is because of the remarkable strength of this Other image that the blurring of the boundaries around the French national identity by their Other has had such a powerful effect on the French identity.

As the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu confirms, group divisions are perpetuated in society to maintain regional boundaries and to cultivate power.<sup>65</sup> Othering, in maintaining the distinction between the in-group and out-group, between Us and Them, is ultimately a means in identity preservation. Without an Other, there can be no nation, there can be no Self. Indeed, it was Bourdieu who wrote social representations (images of the Self and the Other) create "divisions of reality and contribute to the reality of divisions [translation author]."<sup>66</sup> Thus,

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<sup>64</sup> Jean Lambert Tallien as quoted in Beller, 592.

<sup>65</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Ce Que Parler Veut Dire: L'Économie des échanges linguistiques* (Paris: Fayard, 1982), 137.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 144-145.

Bourdieu brings to light the fact that not only is identity the true principal actor in the scene of social divisiveness, but furthermore, the struggle over identities is a struggle over realities – realities which are constructed by society.<sup>67</sup>

Given the sum of the previous discussions on existing literature and theory, the following assertions can be made:

1. Identity can be defined as a multi-dimensional, dialectical, contextual, relational social construction, which is above all a dynamic exchange.
2. Othering is central to identity formation, particularly in the case of the nation.
3. Maintenance of national identity via an Other conflicts with integration.

The researcher therefore rejects multiculturalism on the basis of its lack of nuance necessary for analyzing the multifaceted issue of integration. Berger and Luckmann's social constructivism thus serves to solidify the interconnected nature of reality, identity, and society, all of which are constructs. Their artificial nature has two important implications reflected in the above assertions: none are organic (man has control over what becomes of them), and all are dynamic (they can change and remain legitimate).

The practical issue at hand is how to rectify national identity formation/preservation with integration. At the root of this question are identity and its dynamics, not only of the minorities, but also of the majority. As demonstrated by the preceding examination of existing scholarly literature, the dynamics of the minority identities have been widely explored; however, those of

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 142.

the majority have been largely assumed to be *a priori*. This assumption has resulted in ineffective policies and cultural misunderstandings, all in the name of defending a national identity upon which there is not truly a consensus. Indeed, the characteristics of the French national identity have become so banal that it is difficult for the autochthons to define, nonetheless agree upon a definition. Thus, the current discourse needs to be balanced by focusing on autochthonous Self and the process of Othering to determine if the majority identity is dynamic and co-constructed, and therefore, able to facilitate integration. It is here where the researcher positions herself in the academic discourse concerning integration in contemporary Western Europe – at the exploration of the autochthonous European identities vis-à-vis immigrants and their descendants.

This research project shall explore this missing link in the literature through the case of contemporary France to examine her theory: that the autochthonous Western European identities are not only dynamic, but also reliant upon the maintenance of their Others – a process which has been challenged by the immigration and settling of the Other within European nations. Essentially, the researcher argues the autochthons of Western European nations are experiencing an identity crisis. Given its strong national identity, colonial history, large immigrant/minority population, and failed integration policy, France is an exemplary case through which this theory can be analyzed. Therefore, this paper shall examine the autochthonous French identity, analyzing if and how the French national identity has been changing over time vis-à-vis the increasing presence and permanence of minorities in France.

## Chapter Three

### Analysis

Discourse analysis shall be employed to examine the dynamics of the contemporary French identity. This methodology goes beyond the scope of content analysis, in that it provides a means of qualitatively examining and interpreting narratives. The relevance of content analysis is limited in this research context, as the media is inclined to latch onto a few key terms in discussing a particular current event. Word choice is not the only element of discourse that should be taken into consideration; conversation, much like identity, is an exchange given meaning by its context. Thus, it is necessary to examine not only the words used, but their immediate and extended context. In other words, a news event is not a free-standing element in public discourse; rather, it is given further meaning by the lines of discourse generated around it, all of which are interrelated.

Thus, two recent events shall be examined: *l'affaire du foulard* (headscarf affair) in 2003/2004 and the eruption of violence and rioting in the *banlieues* (suburbs) of Paris in 2005. These events were selected as they are two incidents in the twenty-first century that sparked significant amounts of discussion on what it means to be French in the public discourse. *L'affaire du foulard* revolved around the question of whether or not Muslim girls should be allowed to wear the *foulard* (Muslim veil) to French public schools. The headscarf was the surface issue. The underlying issues of national identity manifested in highly public debates over the French identity, the role of the French nation, the duties of the French citizen, and the relationship between the French nation and citizen. A clear, public questioning of the French identity by the Muslim minority populations spawned mass introspection: what are the core French values; do

and can people who publicly demonstrate their religion share those values; are these minorities' claims of sharing the French identity valid? Thus, *l'affaire du foulard* provides an example of bottom-up dynamism – the French identity being challenged by the minority. The examination of this event shall be restricted to the time period of February 2004, as the climax of the event's publicity occurred around the period in which the law governing the wearing of religious symbols was voted on 10 February 2004. The second event to be examined is the prolonged rioting in the Parisian *banlieues* in October and November 2005. This contagious urban violence elicited extensive media coverage, and was selected due to its multidimensionality and the explicit debates of integration it provoked. It is representative of top-down dynamism, in that the autochthonous French reframe the French identity vis-à-vis the minorities. It shall be demonstrated that although these two events may have seemed only loosely related, they are in fact not only linked by the overarching discourse on French identity, but together represent a complete cycle in the maintenance of the French symbolic universe.

Two of the foremost French newspapers, *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, both printed in Paris, serve as the sources of narratives. Newspapers are by nature public and contain a range of discourse types. The formal, more official reporting of an event serves both to inform the public and frame the event, establishing the tone and parameters of public discussion. Investigative journalism provides more qualitative information to the public via interviewing and on-scene reporting. Editorials and submitted opinion pieces by readers provide printed forms of the debates and sentiments generated by a particular event. The various forms of discourse present in newsprint provide the researcher with samples of discourse representative of multiple aspects of public discourse. Furthermore, the plurality of these forms enables the interactions of these diverse forms to be examined. Otherwise stated, the newspaper is a condensed, printed version of

the discussion that circulates in society. Moreover, newsprint not only generates and prints public discourse, but it also controls it to the extent that the autochthonous-owned print media decides what elements of discourse will be reproduced and represented in society. Newspaper articles are thus reflective of the majority-controlled discourse on the French identity.

*Le Figaro*, a center-right leaning paper, currently has a circulation of approximately 410,194 (2008).<sup>68</sup> Its circulation was approximately 440,911 in 2004 and 436,401 in 2005.<sup>69</sup> *Le Monde* is a center-left paper with a current (2008) circulation of approximately 436,375.<sup>70</sup> Its circulation was approximately 505,763 in 2004 and 481,805 in 2005.<sup>71</sup> Two of the most read papers in France, *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde* were chosen for efficiency of research, providing the most representative narratives from both sides of the political spectrum. Both papers also provided a sufficient quantity of narratives, as they are printed daily. The events shall be addressed chronologically; however, each event shall be analyzed synchronically. *Grosso modo*, both papers addressed similar veins of discourse surrounding the two events; however, it shall be noted where the two papers greatly diverge or where one publication is the unique generator of a particular vein of discourse and its significance explained. Unless specifically denoted as an opinion/editorial or piece of investigative journalism, all citations are to be assumed as extracted from standard reporting-style news articles.

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<sup>68</sup> Association pour le Contrôle de la Diffusion des Médias, “*Le Figaro*,” Association pour le Contrôle de la Diffusion des Médias, [http://www.ojd.com/engine/adhchif/chif\\_fiche.php?adhid=353](http://www.ojd.com/engine/adhchif/chif_fiche.php?adhid=353), March 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Association pour le Contrôle de la Diffusion des Médias, “*Le Monde*,” Association pour le Contrôle de la Diffusion des Médias, [http://www.ojd.com/engine/adhchif/chif\\_fiche.php?adhid=625](http://www.ojd.com/engine/adhchif/chif_fiche.php?adhid=625), March 2009.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

### *L’Affaire du Foulard*

In October 2003, two Muslim sisters were forced to remove themselves from a public high school in France because they refused to remove their headscarves. Alma (age 16) and Lila Lévy-Omari (age 18) were accused of promulgating religion by wearing an overt religious symbol in a *laïc* (secular) public environment. Subsequently, many Muslim girls in public schools were forced to choose between removing their veils and leaving school. The “headscarf affair” precipitated the creation of the Stasi Commission in July 2003. Composed of researchers, teachers, and politicians, its role was to evaluate the situation vis-à-vis the principles of the French state. The Commission submitted its report in December 2003. After a short period of political debate, a law was passed on 10 February 2004, which banned “the wearing of symbols or clothes ostensibly manifesting a religious membership in the public schools, junior high schools and high schools.”<sup>72</sup> The law sparked much debate in French society and spawned many protests by the Muslim communities and sympathizers.

#### The Debate over Collective Self

The French value that was called into question by *l’affaire du foulard* is known as *laïcité*. The direct translation of the term is “secularism”; however, it is truly a French brand of secularism, rooted in the country’s history. In 1905, a law was passed separating the French state from the Catholic Church, established to stop the church from gaining and encroaching upon the political power of the state. Comparatively stated, while both the United States and France uphold the principle of separation of church and state, the American interpretation promulgates

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<sup>72</sup> Patrick Roger, “L’Assemblée a adopté à une large majorité la loi contre le voile à l’école,” *Le Monde*, February 12, 2004. All translations from French to English were performed by the researcher. The original French text can be found in the appendix under the number of the corresponding footnote.

freedom *of* religion, while the French provides for freedom *from* religion. Essentially, the French state provides for the liberty and equality of all citizens by the citizens relating directly to the state as individuals. These individuals are then free to live as they so choose. The key to this system is no intermediary community, such as a religious group, is to detract loyalty from the state. This *communautarisme* (communitarianism) is seen as a challenge to the ability of the state to provide freedom for its citizens.

Communitarianism is defined by an explanatory article in *Le Figaro* as “social and political model, of American origin, that places emphasis on belonging to identity groups, such as sex, religion, ethnicity, etc. more so than the adhesion to common and universal values.”<sup>73</sup> It is seen as a socio-political phenomenon that detracts loyalty from the nation in favor of a social community, and that places the specific beliefs of a certain group above the values of the French nation, which are promulgated as rendering all citizens equal. Communitarianism is perceived by some autochthonous French to be a particular problem amongst the Muslim populations of France.<sup>74</sup>

Signs and symbols of *laïcité* are race-, religion-, and gender neutral, contributing to the idealized image of the “normal” French citizen as race-less, rational, and genderless (despite a heavily gendered subtext, which is beyond the scope of this paper).<sup>75</sup> Thus, the *foulard*, perceived in the French symbolic universe to represent not only belonging to a specific religious

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<sup>73</sup> Alain-Gérard Slama, “Petit lexique des mots de la crise,” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> The standard French citizen is male. Thus, feminist movements in France have essentially earned the right for their gender to be ignored in the eyes of the State, meaning the right to be treated as men. In the French national context, promoting one’s gender can be interpreted as a form of communitarianism.



community, but also to be gendered and demeaning to women, sparked public debate and introspection focused around the concept of *laïcité* and its role in the French nation and identity.

Multiple groups emphasizing *laïcité* organized to support the law, insisting ‘that the immense majority of Frenchmen and women of all origins hope for a law,’ and that ‘the communitarianism defended by the adversaries of *laïcité* is sexism.’<sup>76</sup> These statements of militant secularists reveal two key elements of the public discourse: first, the presentation of *laïcité* as a value supported by the propensity of French people. Interestingly, this particular statement goes so far as to include non-autochthons as “French,” so long as they uphold the ideal of *laïcité*; thus, separating one’s religion from one’s public life is exercising one’s Frenchness. Secondly, communitarianism is clearly denounced as contrary to equality. In the case of Islam and the *foulard*, it is particularly an issue of women’s rights, the Western version of which is subscribed to by the “French”.

In a letter submitted to *Le Figaro* by a reader, *laïcité* is clearly defended as a legal and ideological concept integral to the French national identity, which is to be accepted unquestioningly by foreigners who come to live in France: “Those who want to come to live in *our* country must accept the democratically voted laws and conform to the Rights of Man or not come [emphasis author].”<sup>77</sup> Already framing of the Other is emerging, which is non-specific to the headscarf; rather, it addresses any and all foreigners/immigrants. The French country is explicitly qualified by the possessive pronoun “our,” indicating parameters of ownership, which are not open for interpretation. The Other must accept the ideals of the nation—indeed, the very “reality” upheld by the French “symbolic universe,” the intricate system of externalized and

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<sup>76</sup> Cécilia Gabizon, “Le mouvement laïc se mobilise,” *Le Figaro*, February 5, 2004.

<sup>77</sup> Daniel Kiffer, letter to the editor, *Le Figaro*, February 10, 2004.

internalized reality manifest as societal symbols – unconditionally. Nevertheless, this only affords the Other the ability to reside in France. It does not leave the French identity open to the Other upon condition of ideological assimilation. Furthermore, “image theory,” how the image of the Other is created by those who control the public discourse, is heavily at work here. The French nation is presented as democratic and protecting universal human rights; the Other is a stranger, a foreigner from a theocratic country that does not respect human rights. The Frenchman is enlightened; the Other is barbaric and backwards. If the Other does not come to France seeking democratic freedoms, they should not come at all. There is no room for the ignorant, particularly if they seek to challenge the ideals of the French nation. Stated in terms of social constructivism, immigrants must either accept social “therapy” and assimilate, or face “nihilation” by a process of Othering that would render the immigrant identity entirely relational to, and thus dependent upon, the majority identity, destroying it as an independent entity.

Indeed, much faith in the public discourse is placed in the ability of *laïcité* to maintain equality and liberty in French society. What causes societal conflict is the loss of confidence in this ideal. According to an opinion piece in *Le Monde*, the “crisis of common values” is a result of “*laïcité* [being] so insecure of itself.”<sup>78</sup> Thus, there is opposition to the existence of the debate over French values at all. Those who belong to the French national identity or had fully assimilated already respected the role of *laïcité* and found liberation in it. Society and French reality were undisturbed. Therefore, the positing of an alternate Muslim reality within the French identity by the un-assimilated, by those claiming to be French and Muslim, is met with reactionary responses and disdain. The French nation has no need to compromise its values; those who truly want to belong will assimilate. Those who do not are not socially French, but

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<sup>78</sup> Bruno Mattéi, editorial, “Cette introuvable laïcité,” *Le Monde*, February 4, 2004.

instead resident foreigners who must respect the laws of the country that allow them to live there. In other words, they must accept the French reality.

In the public's discussion of *laïcité*, therefore, an element of protectionism is clearly evident and a distinction between Us and Them is even more so. Thus, the discourse provides two possible venues for folding into the French nation: socialization via the public school system (therapy) or by the establishment and naturalization of an Islam *à la française* (nihilation).

Indeed, the role of the public school in France resides at the core of the debate surrounding the *foulard* and *laïcité*. The assertion is that the schools are the loci of socialization, where all young French boys and girls are indoctrinated into the values and ideologies of the French nation and develop their identities as French citizens. This role is seen as particularly crucial regarding the young French citizens who are the children of immigrants, who would otherwise not receive this education at home. It is this process of socialization in the French schools, which is supposed to turn French citizens of "foreign origins" into Frenchmen and women, replacing the child's familial "significant others," who indoctrinate a child into the social reality, with the State. As stated in an opinion piece published in *Le Figaro*, "School is not a simple space of tolerance. It is par excellence the place of the learning and formation of the critical spirit, a place of neutrality and of serenity."<sup>79</sup> Therefore, the division assumed to be created by the display of subscription to a religious group ruptures the neutrality of the school environment. This neutrality, however, is not objective, nor is it fully void of communitarianism. It is the state of the national ideals remaining unchallenged and the unconditional subscription of all to the national community. Thus, the headscarf not only introduces the presence of a physical

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<sup>79</sup> Xavier Bertrand and Éric Raoult, editorial, "Le choix de l'équilibre," *Le Figaro*, February 4, 2004.

symbol that challenges the legitimacy of the national construct, it threatens the coherence of the imagined community into which the students are being socialized.

Theoretically, swearing allegiance directly to this national community allows one access to the national identity. In other words, to assimilate is to gain a chance at entrance into the in-group, a condition which is recognized and scrutinized in one vein of the public discourse. An opinion piece submitted to *Le Monde* criticizes,

“If the visible manifestation of belonging [to a specific community] is perceived as a sign of the rupture of the republican pact, it is without a doubt because we only support the system of assimilation in the *laïc* schools that we subject ourselves to and globally approve of no longer functions with the same integrationist closure of fifty or one hundred years ago.”<sup>80</sup>

This quote exemplifies the acknowledgement in the public discourse of a need to expand the ways in which the French identity can be defined and interpreted while still maintaining its integrity.

This seeming element of openness is manifest in the public debate of how to create an Islam *à la française*, that is, how to develop a version of Islam that integrates the values of the French nation rendering the religious education of the Muslim “community” compatible with the formation of French citizens in the schools. This particular proposal was most prevalent in the left-leaning newspaper, *Le Monde*, exemplified in an opinion piece, which stated,

“We accept to frankly pose the question of the place of Islam in France, of its compatibility with modernity, *laïcité*, human rights. The separation of Church and State, the creation of a civil space of liberty, the conciliation between the spiritual sphere and civil law well required the challenges to enroll the Jews and the Catholic

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<sup>80</sup> Le groupe Paroles, editorial, “De l’inutilité d’une loi déplacée,” *Le Monde*, February 3, 2004.

Church in the republican contract. Islam will have to do the same, and the Republic must invite it to do so clearly and firmly.”<sup>81</sup>

This editorialist signals the need to absorb Islam into the French national structure and ultimately, the French identity, as has been previously done with Christianity and Judaism. The French state already has mechanisms for absorbing major religious sects, which is indeed necessary for it to maintain power and not allow it to slip into the hands of religious groups. The difficulty with Islam is, unlike Christianity and Judaism, the major Islamic sects do not have an intrinsic hierarchy; therefore, gathering religious representatives perceived as viable in the eyes of the diverse Muslim communities has proved challenging.

Indeed, the need to create an Islam of France, by France, for France is an important element of the public discourse, which often emphasizes national security, as promoted by an editorialist in *Le Monde*:

“The difference between the *laïcité* of 1905 and that of 2004 is above all the following: one hundred years ago, it meant to disassociate; today, it means to associate. 1905 was a separation: it was necessary that the French Church depended, no longer on Paris, but on Rome.<sup>82</sup> In 2004, on the other hand, the objective is that the Islam of France be governed, no longer by Algeria or by Riyadh, but by Paris.”<sup>83</sup>

Again, although opening access to French identity, Islam (ergo Muslims, ergo minorities) is framed as a foreign threat to the French identity and its ideals, promulgating loyalties to other countries. This brings to light to ulterior motive of what seems to be openness towards Islam in proposing its institutionalization and incorporation into the French national framework; creating

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<sup>81</sup> Alain Madelin, editorial, “Voile, la loi de trop,” *Le Monde*, February 6, 2004.

<sup>82</sup> As the idea of creating a secular citizen was being developed, the Catholic Church in France was forced to turn back to the Vatican as its source of inspiration and power.

<sup>83</sup> Paul Bernard, editorial, “De la nécessité d’une loi inutile,” *Le Monde*, February 3, 2004.

an Islam *à la française* is actually an exercise in nihilation. By defining the Muslim Other in terms of the French reality, the resident Other ceases to exist as an entity beyond the context of the State. Furthermore, the non-resident Other – the foreign governments and peoples that have been promulgating a foreign reality within the French nation – will become the newly reaffirmed Other, necessary for the continued existence of the French collective Self, but nonetheless a neutralized threat. Briefly, if the French state can succeed in absorbing Islam, having imams not only be born and raised in France, but also receive their religious training in the Hexagon, the Other will remain distinct and geographically separate from the French Us.

#### Image Theory: Differentiating the Other

Given the challenge of a persistent resident minority claiming to be both Muslim and French, refusing to assimilate, but instead striving for integration, efforts to reestablish the boundaries of the French identity in the public discourse were highly assertive. This was performed via two methods: the heavy employment of image theory to Otherize the members of the Muslim communities, and the profuse flagging of the nation. These methods shall be addressed and examined in different sections to enable more thorough analysis of the discourse narratives.

The first outsider image created was that of the immigrant, the foreigner living on French soil daring to assert his or her non-French ways of life on the autochthons of French society. Regardless of whether they were born in France, held French citizenship, were legal immigrants, or were clandestine, all members of the Muslim minority communities supporting the *foulard* were reduced to the same subjugated status and branded as not integrated.

In an article published in *Le Monde* under the section header “France: *Laïcité*” is the profile of a girl who had to leave school because she would not remove her headscarf. The article primarily discusses her inability to receive distance learning from the French government because her reasoning for not being able to go to school is considered outside the scope of the program, which is purportedly intended for seriously ill children, musical prodigies, and the like. The key to this article, however, is how the girl and her family are portrayed. The student is described as a “young thirteen year-old girl, of Turkish origin”.<sup>84</sup> Within the first two sentences, she is branded as a foreigner, as non-French. Her father is described as “speaking with a strong accent,” and “her mother expresses herself difficultly in French”.<sup>85</sup> This textual portrait of a non-integrated, immigrant family is juxtaposed with a cartoon image of a Muslim girl in a headscarf standing between two bookshelves: one full of texts, the other shelving only the *Qur'an*. Thus the intertextual message: the veiled girls in question not only come from immigrant (ergo foreign, ergo non-French) families, but are also choosing to remain apart from French society, to remain an Other. They are choosing a false reality. In effect, they are rejecting the French nation and its enlightened values; therefore, they have no claim to Frenchness and this fact must be asserted. One cannot dismiss the values of the Republic and simultaneously claim membership to the French identity. This belief is confirmed in an editorial published in *Le Figaro*, which accuses, “Behind the veil appears the refusal of a part of the French minority community of Muslim origin to integrate itself and to share the emancipating values of the Republic.”<sup>86</sup> In this respect, both the right and the left are in agreement.

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<sup>84</sup> Virginie Malingre and Xavier Ternisien, “Pour nombre d’élèves voilées et exclues, l’école s’arrête définitivement,” *Le Monde*, February 11, 2004.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ivan Rioufol, editorial, “Le bloc-notes,” *Le Figaro*, February 6, 2004.

The second image created is that of the incompatibility of Islam with women's rights, primarily generated by the right-leaning *Figaro*. It plays on the strength of French feminist groups and the national value of equality to portray Muslim men as controlling and Muslim women as oppressed. One prominent politico, François Bayrou, was reported as denouncing the veil 'not [as] a religious problem but [as] a problem that touches the status of women. The veil says that women and men are not equal (...). This vision is unacceptable for France and for the Republic.'<sup>87</sup> This extract from a report in *Le Figaro* clearly frames the *foulard* as antithetical to women's rights and makes a direct link to its necessary rejection from French society. The headscarf is a gendered symbol, which distinguishes women from men; in the construct of the French citizen, however, gender does not exist (or, more specifically, women have the right to be equal to men by not having their femininity recognized in the context of the State). Indeed, an editorial in *Le Figaro* goes so far as to pit Muslims in France against themselves, stating, "The liberal Muslims have a hard time convincing their co-religionists of the benefits of liberty."<sup>88</sup> Some Muslims have understood the superior values of the French nation, although they are still insufficient as members of the French community in two ways: firstly, they still belong to an intermediary community; secondly, they are incapable of converting their religious brothers and sisters to the religion of the Republic – the only reality from which they can assume an identity. Those who refuse to assimilate and reject the Muslim reality accept the identity the French national context bestows upon them – that of the inferior Other, with no claims to rights equal to those of a French citizen.

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<sup>87</sup> Sophie Huet, "Laïcité : Raffarin à la recherche d'un consensus avec le PS," *Le Figaro*, February 4, 2004.

<sup>88</sup> Emile Perreau-Saussine, editorial, "La loi et les mœurs," *Le Figaro*, February 4, 2004.



A third image was widespread in both the right- and left-leaning French newspapers, one that did not so much distance the Muslim communities as demean them: that of the failed Frenchman or woman. Multiple protests were held by various combinations of groups and community members against the law banning the wearing of religious symbols in public schools. As recognized in the public discourse, these Muslims were trying to prove their integration by protesting, a form of civic engagement for which the French are world-renowned.<sup>89</sup> Only one march, which took place on 14 February, was considered a success by French standards, due to its large turnout and the organization of its participants. Protesters sported *foulards* made of the French national flag and sang the French national anthem.<sup>90</sup> This bricolage of French national symbols to promote what is considered by the autochthons to be a divergent or delinquent reality, directly calls into question the French symbolic universe. The other marches were deemed “amateur[ish],”<sup>91</sup> “weak,”<sup>92</sup> consisting of “very few [participants] ... [only] a few hundred people,”<sup>93</sup> “hardly one-thousand,”<sup>94</sup> and a “failure,”<sup>95</sup> particularly due to low turnout. Thus, not only was the cause of the Muslim headscarf insufficient to rally the support of what was considered a significant number of protestors, but those who did protest were repeatedly portrayed in the public discourse as failures. This lack of success further solidifies the incompatibility of the philosophy of the *foulard* with that of the Republic, demonstrating that in

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<sup>89</sup> Xavier Ternisien, “4, 7 et 14 février : le calendrier des manifestations des opposants à la loi se précise,” *Le Monde*, February 4, 2004.

<sup>90</sup> Xavier Ternisien, “Des manifestations contre la loi sur la voile ont rassemblé quelques milliers de personnes,” *Le Monde*, February 17, 2004.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Angélique Négroni, “La manifestation contre la loi ne fait pas recette,” *Le Figaro*, February 5, 2004.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Cécilia Gabizon, “Très faible mobilisation des partisans du voile,” *Le Figaro*, February 9, 2004.

<sup>95</sup> Xavier Ternisien, “Echec de la manifestation ‘contre l’islamophobie,’” *Le Monde*, February 10, 2004.

order to be able to validly claim the French national identity, one cannot simultaneously claim that of a veiled Muslim woman. An individual cannot claim belief in two realities considered to be conflicting: one is either fully committed to being “one of Us” or belongs to the Other.

#### “Flagging”: Reinforcing Us

After generating multiple images distinguishing the Other and portraying them as incompatible with the French identity, the discourse had to reaffirm the French national identity. This occurred equally in the left- and right-leaning papers through “flagging,” the signaling of the nation in daily life, in three veins: the invoking of national history, the insistence upon national values, and the linking of the concepts liberty and *laïcité*.

Flagging is evident in the overtly nationalistic framing of the public discourse in both the right- and left-wing newspapers, indicating the universal need to affirm the French reality, ergo national identity, through national symbols that boast powerful meanings within the context of the French symbolic universe. This phenomenon is evidenced *par excellence* in an editorial that appeared in *Le Figaro* before the passing of the law on 14 February:

“The principle of *laïcité* is **at the heart** of our **republican** institutions. It is itself a **constituent of our national identity**, inseparable from the ideas of the **Enlightenment** and the **French Revolution**, which affirm the **implacability** of the nation to any **community**. **Including and above all religious** [emphasis author].”<sup>96</sup>

Here the identity of the nation is explicitly invoked and linked to republicanism, the Enlightenment, *laïcité*, and unity via opposition to communitarianism. Who the French are, as well as what typifies the core French values is clearly substantiated, that is, what makes an

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<sup>96</sup> Xavier Bertrand and Éric Raoult, editorial, “Le choix de l’équilibre,” *Le Figaro*, February 4, 2004.

individual ideologically, culturally, and socially French. The French are portrayed as enlightened, implicitly reinforcing the image of the Other as unenlightened. Furthermore, the philosophies of the Enlightenment are intertwined with the French Revolution; ergo, the highest ideals and freedoms have already been fought for and established. Challenging or changing them would denigrate the philosophical foundation of the French nation, and indeed, the basis of France's constructed social structure; thus, these philosophies must be reaffirmed as crucial to the identity of the nation in order to preserve them.

Calling upon national history to delineate claims to identity was also employed by the minority communities to assert the authenticity of their French identity, and was reported by both *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*. In protest, however, they evoked not the images of enlightened France, but rather those of a dark period in French history – the Vichy regime that complied with Hitler during World War II. ‘The Vichy government is a stain on the history of France ... It must not begin again,’<sup>97</sup> proclaimed one veiled student at a protest against the impending law. ‘An islamophobic law ... will remain a dark point in the conscience of the French, like the legislative arrangements and inhuman regulations adopted by the Vichy regime,’<sup>98</sup> decried another protestor.

Given the minorities’ “counter-flagging” by invoking national history to counter the autochthons’ use of flagging as a mechanism for Othering, the autochthonous discourse further developed the image of the nation. The French national identity is not only history and philosophy; it is key, indisputable values, as explicated by a report of the Prime Minister’s address to the French legislative body, *l’Assemblée nationale*, in *Le Figaro*:

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<sup>97</sup> Cécilia Gabizon, “Très faible mobilisation des partisans du voile,” *Le Figaro*, February 9, 2004.

<sup>98</sup> Xavier Ternisien, “Echec de la manifestation ‘contre l’islamophobie,’” *Le Monde*, February 10, 2004.

“We are conscious of the necessity to make the idea of equality live, which is at the heart of the republican project. ... Our values seem inaccessible to them. Our duty is to create the conditions to share these values. ... It [is] time for the Republic to recall its grand principles and to establish clear limits.”<sup>99</sup>

In this exemplification of boundary maintenance, the French State takes the onus of fostering environments (such as public schools) in which French values can be transmitted to the masses. Consequently, the French nation is portrayed as open to those who will accept its values; it is not open to those who challenge them. Assimilation is acceptable; integration is not, as there is to be no debate of French values. Thus, foreigners are welcomed to engage in therapy or face nihilation.

*Laïcité*, therefore, is depicted as a principle ‘that expresses the values of respect, of dialogue and of tolerance, [which] is at the heart of the republican identity of France.’<sup>100</sup> It is through *laïcité* that the inhabitants of France receive their personal freedoms. This link between *liberté* and *laïcité* is emphasized throughout the public discourse in both *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*.

This vehement public challenge of the French national identity reemerged slightly more than a year later when violence erupted in the *banlieues* of Paris. Having been recently shaken, the public discourse generated towards the end of 2005 was increasingly multivariate and more reactionary. Framing of the Other was significantly more extensive and requires analysis.

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<sup>99</sup> Sophie Huet, ‘Il était temps pour la République de rappeler ses grands principes,’ *Le Figaro*, February 4, 2004.

<sup>100</sup> Isabelle Mandraud and Patrick Roger, “Le Parti socialiste ‘souhaite voter’ la loi sur les signes religieux,” *Le Monde*, February 4, 2004.

## Rioting in the *Banlieues* of Paris

Thursday, 27 October 2005, two young boys died of electrocution in the Parisian banlieues of Clichy-sous-Bois. Ziad Benna (age 17) and Banou Traoré (age 15), believing they were being chased by police, had run and taken refuge amongst the transformers in a nuclear power plant. An electrical reaction killed the two boys and severely wounded a third who was with them. Sustained rioting erupted in the banlieues in response to the boys' deaths; the violence quickly grew in scale and spread to other French banlieues. An investigation was conducted. The police officers maintained they had not chased the boys, and in fact, had been searching for other youths on the evening of the incident. The police officers were cleared of charges.

### Framing the Incident

Reporting of the incident itself is framed by the use of two societal flags: that of "*origine*," an ethnic distinction employed by *Le Monde*, and that of the *banlieues*, a class distinction employed by *Le Figaro*. Before exploring the narratives themselves, the meaning of each of these two concepts within the French context shall be explained.

Invoking a person's "origins" does not hold the same meaning in French society as it does in American society. For example, in the American context, it is not uncommon to identify oneself as "Italian-American," "Irish-American," "African-American," etc. This hyphenated method of self-identification is largely accepted, as it is compatible with the national myth of America – America is a country of immigrants. Furthermore, these terms most often refer to more remote origins, as they are used by descendents of immigrants from the nineteenth century. The fact that these labels are self-designated is significant, as ownership of an identity indicates a

degree of power both possessed and able to be exerted by a particular group. In the French context, however, making reference to origins serves as a mechanism for distancing an individual or group from French society and for diminishing the Other. During the French Revolution, the principles of *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* were established as the links that bound society and defined “Frenchness”. The French national myth is such that all citizens are directly loyal to the state, without intermediary identifying “communities,” rendering equal all Frenchmen and women. The French do not take account of race or religion in their national census; a person is simply French – or not. Thus, referencing or highlighting a person’s origins serves to diminish or challenge that individual’s status as “French”. It further invokes a much more recent national history and waves of immigration, given the termination of French colonialism in the late sixties and early seventies and the subsequent influx of laborers from those countries. Thus, to label an individual or group as “*français d’origine algérienne*” (French of Algerian origin) implies a continuation of split loyalties – cultural, political, or linguistic – ergo, one is not entirely loyal to France, ergo, not entirely “French”. Otherwise stated, invoking foreign origins serves to distance a group or individual from French society; it is a form of Othering.

Thus brings us to *Le Monde*’s framing of the deaths of the two youths on the night of 27 October 2005. In the reporting of the incident and the following riots, the victims are described as follows: “The two deceased victims were two French youths of Malian and Turkish origins.”<sup>101</sup> Besides political figures, three other individuals are mentioned in the article: the imam of the neighborhood’s mosque, a teacher at the local high school, and the director of one of

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<sup>101</sup> Service Société, “Nuit d’émeute à Clichy-sous-Bois après la mort de deux adolescents,” *Le Monde*, October 29, 2005.

the local elementary schools. It is automatically implied the imam is of foreign origin, or at least of foreign education. As the French state has strict regulations concerning separation of Church and State, all funding of mosques in France is private; the most significant funding coming from Muslim countries abroad. Thus, most imams in France are either foreign nationals commissioned by a sending country to serve the immigrant population abroad, or have at least received their religious training abroad. The origins of the teacher and the director, however, are neither stated nor heavily implied by their occupation. Why is this? Why does the article merely state “the director” and not “the director of Gallic origins”? Two possible explanations arise: the director is assumed to be autochthonous – “French,” or at least fully enacts her direct loyalty to the French nation by virtue of her job as an employee of the government and promulgator of French values via the French school system. Given the possibility she is not autochthonous, the juxtaposition of mentioning the boys’ origins (who were fleeing the police) and not mentioning the director’s (who is by default a law-abiding citizen), both highlights the non-French origins of the boys and distances them from French society. This marginalization is recognized by the minority populations and reported in *Le Monde*: “We have had papers [legal status] for generations but we are not French like the others.”<sup>102</sup> Thus, although many descendants of immigrants hold French nationality and have lived in France for generations, these minorities continue to be Othered in public discourse as having foreign ties, that is, not being fully French. These people are characterized as a resident, internal Other, which threatens the well-being of French society at large. The discourse therefore affirms the implicit threat of the Other in the public discourse to tighten awareness of and allegiance to the French imagined community.

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<sup>102</sup> Luc Bronner and Catherine Simon, “Clichy-sous-Bois cristallise les tensions politiques et sociales,” *Le Monde*, November 2, 2005.

The right-leaning paper, *Le Figaro*, does not mention the origins of the youths involved. Rather, it relies on the social reference of the *banlieues* to frame the events. This is ironic given the political context. Typically, the French left-wing uses class-oriented vocabulary and the French right frames their arguments in ethnic terms. This reversal of framing tactics affirms Othering is the real issue being reinforced in the public discourse. The direct translation of *banlieue* is “suburb”; however, the term carries heavy socio-economic stigmas. *Banlieues* are usually constituted of government-built, low-cost housing, largely inhabited by minorities and immigrants. Briefly, they are considered ghettos, crime-ridden and non-integrated. “*Quartier sensible*” (“sensitive quarter”) is another synonym often employed to discuss the ghettos. The housing complexes themselves are called HLMs (*habitations à loyer modéré*, “low-rent apartment buildings”) and this term is sometimes used synonymously with “*banlieue*”. The name of a specific *banlieue* carries the same connotations, although some are linked with particular events, such as Clichy-sous-Bois and the 2005 riots. Use of the adjective or descriptive noun form of a *banlieue*’s name (“*clichoise*”<sup>103</sup>) denotes one who lives in the specified *banlieue*, and usually indicates minority or immigrant status.

Thus *Le Figaro*’s framing of the incident and subsequent riots in its reporting: the inhabitants, particularly the young people, are generalized and stigmatized by nature of living in the *banlieue*. The first article to describe the boys’ death uses a quotation from one of the boys’ mothers to highlight that although the event began with a group of adolescents playing soccer, when the police approached, one of the boys got scared because he did not have papers, and thus the running began.<sup>104</sup> This quotation serves as a flagging mechanism, reminding the public that

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<sup>103</sup> Delphine Chayet, “Détresse et consternation à Clichy-sous-Bois,” *Le Figaro*, October 29-30, 2005.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.



not only was one of the boys involved an illegal, but that the *banlieue* communities harbor many *sans-papiers* (“without papers”). This verbal cue is sandwiched between two visual cues: one image, which spans the width of the page, depicts a member of the French riot police using a shield against an evening city street illuminated by flames; the other is a map of the violence with an insert showing the location of Clichy-sous-Bois vis-à-vis Paris.<sup>105</sup> The intertextual meaning is clear: (illegal) immigrants cause violent delinquency, from which the civilized French society wishes to physically distance itself. As the violence continues in Clichy-sous-Bois and spreads to other *banlieues*, the rioters are increasingly generalized and characterized as wild, uncontrollable youths, who – the public is constantly reminded – are reacting to the misconception that the two deceased boys had been chased by the police.<sup>106</sup> The chase is branded as a “persistent rumor,”<sup>107</sup> and both sub-headlines and article text assert the boys “believed”<sup>108</sup> they were being chased. These “youths”<sup>109</sup> of the *banlieues* are depicted as uncontrollable, not only outside the control of French society (represented by the French police), but also beyond the control of the non-French body to which they are assumed to give their

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Delphine Chayet, “Violences : la banlieue parisienne sous le choc,” *Le Figaro*, October 31, 2005. Delphine Chayet, “Clichy-sous-Bois toujours sous tension,” *Le Figaro*, October 31, 2005.

<sup>107</sup> Delphine Chayet, “Clichy-sous-Bois toujours sous tension,” *Le Figaro*, October 31, 2005.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> An article published by *Le Figaro* during the time of the riots explicitly recognizes the use of the term “youth” as a euphemism: “Youth. Literally, youth signifies ‘not advanced in age’. In the *banlieues*, these ‘youths’ are between 12 and 19 years of age and the word no longer means anything significant. **It is often a precaution of language to not say ‘rioting demonstrator’ or ‘delinquents’** [emphasis author].” Alain-Gérard Slama, “Petit lexique des mots de la crise,” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005. Delphine Chayet, “Violences : la banlieue parisienne sous le choc,” *Le Figaro*, October 31, 2005. Delphine Chayet, “Clichy-sous-Bois toujours sous tension,” *Le Figaro*, October 31, 2005. Delphine Chayet, “Clichy-sous-Bois reste une poudrière,” *Le Figaro*, November 1, 2005.

loyalty – the community mosque. Although the local leader of the Muslim community begs for calm, the prognosis of French officials maintains there is “no reason for this to calm itself.”<sup>110</sup>

Both the right- and left-wing press further develop their framing of the riots by depicting specific profiles of individuals as event reporting gives way to what could loosely be categorized as investigative journalism. Two articles from *Le Monde* paint portraits of delinquents who have been interpolated and prosecuted by the authorities, and those who are still on the streets. The prosecuted youths are described as having “difficulties at school, family problems, troubles finding employment and, for some amongst them, juvenile records.”<sup>111</sup> Word choices such as “outrage,” “armed violence,” and “chaotic,”<sup>112</sup> reinforce the delinquent, almost bestial nature of the convicted, and thus, the negative enemy image of the Other.

The composition of one portrait is particularly noteworthy: a twenty-year old is described as “having left the Comoros islands, where he was born, at the age of fourteen, to join a boarding school in Libya in order to ‘learn Arabic.’”<sup>113</sup> The details of the young man’s crime immediately follow. Then it is mentioned he will soon take a test to qualify to learn how to be a warehouse forklift operator. This brief paragraph is exemplary in linking four key points that solidify the image of the Other: the individual is a foreigner, has ties to Islam, is a delinquent by nature and enacts this delinquency in Our country, and is of limited intelligence.

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<sup>110</sup> Delphine Chayet, “Clichy-sous-Bois reste une poudrière,” *Le Figaro*, November 1, 2005.

<sup>111</sup> Luc Bronner, “Les destins fracassés des jeunes gens jugés à Bobigny pour leur participation aux émeutes,” *Le Monde*, November 5, 2005.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

The “rioters”<sup>114</sup> still on the streets are portrayed as being full of “rage,” “ready” to “sacrifice everything, because [they] have nothing,” “menacing,” controlled by “neither gang bosses nor Islamists” and “wanting to ‘break everything’”.<sup>115</sup> They invoke nationalistic imagery of the French Revolution (‘If one day we organize ... we will go down to the Bastille and it will be war’<sup>116</sup>), but the article clearly frames the young people as ruffians, not revolutionaries – not part of the French national heritage. Moreover, these dangerous youths are given false names to protect their identities. All except one of the names selected, however, are stereotypical Muslim minority names – “Abdel, Bilal, Youssef, Ousman, Nadir and Laurent”.<sup>117</sup> Depicted as angry, uncontrollable, and Muslim, this article is one of many that use the subjects’ own words against them. “It’s like a dog against a wall, it becomes aggressive. We are not dogs, but we react like animals.”<sup>118</sup> Thus, the imagery of the Other has literally been taken to the extreme of bestiality, one of the quintessential modes of the creation of the enemy image as delineated by Keen’s image theory.

*Le Figaro* reiterates the uncontrollable nature of the “young delinquents, already well known by police services,”<sup>119</sup> as well as the irrational, animalistic imagery.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Yves Bordenave and Mustapha Kessous, “Une nuit avec des ‘émeutiers’ qui ont ‘la rage,’” *Le Monde*, November 8, 2005.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Cécilia Gabizon, “Emeutes: des meneurs au profil de récidivistes,” *Le Figaro*, November 5-6, 2005.

<sup>120</sup> Marie-Christine Tabet, “Ces émeutiers qui ‘n’ont rien dans la tête,’” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005.

An article from *Le Figaro* provides key insight into the underlying cause of intense imagery usage to Otherize the minority youth: it is a reactionary method of defense against those who threaten or challenge the French identity.<sup>121</sup> The adults in the *banlieues*, who recognize they are not French, pose no threat to the French identity; thus, they are not Othered or stigmatized. They are simply portrayed as a “housewife,” a “father of six children,” a “forty year-old father, who drives his children to school and picks them up every day.”<sup>122</sup> Trying to maintain neighborhood peace, they are powerless in the face of the uncontrollable youth. They are to be pitied. It is their words, however, which are used to embellish the image of the rioters: ‘The youth fear nothing’; ‘the youngest between 9 and 11 years of age, are in the streets uncontrolled.’<sup>123</sup> Indeed, efforts to frame the minority youth as the Other turn to blatant racism in editorials, letters to the editor, and cartoons.<sup>124</sup> An editorial from *Le Figaro* states, “The outbursts seen here and there in France bear more so the footprint of gratuitous barbarity and savagery than that of vengeance and despair.”<sup>125</sup> This framing of the rioters, this effort to firmly establish them as the Other in public discourse, is a reaction to the youth’s challenge to the French identity. It is the youth who are born in France, socialized in French schools, realizing their status as second-class citizens and demanding recognition as fully French, who pose a threat to the autochthons. Indeed, it is the blurring of the line between Us and Them by the minority youth that has

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Claude Bondonneau, letter to the editor, *Le Figaro*, November 12-13, 2005. Wozniak, cartoon, “L’insécurité,” *Le Monde*, November 9, 2005.

<sup>125</sup> The original French word, *empreinte*, translated by the researcher as “footprint” can also carry animalistic connotations, referring to an animal’s “track”. Yves Thréard, editorial, “L’éducation ou la sauvagerie,” *Le Figaro*, October 31, 2005.

triggered a defensive, public effort to reaffirm the Other and clarify the distinctions between the in-group and the out-group.

#### Debate over Inclusion in the French Identity

The prolonged rioting in the *banlieues* stirred public discussion over who was to be considered “French” by the autochthonous in-group, who was to be the Other, and why. Multifaceted discourse developed on both sides of the argument.

Many who affirmed the inclusion of the minority youth in the French identity asserted the need to recognize the multi-ethnic realities of contemporary French society. Jean-Marc Ayrault, president of the socialist group at the *Assemblée nationale* during the riots, wrote in an editorial for *Le Figaro*, “Too many young people, born in France, holders of a national identity card, feel like strangers to **their** country. Because society **throws them back to their origins**, because it forgets to transmit to them its values of solidarity and of civic responsibility [emphasis author].”<sup>126</sup> Ayrault’s inclusivity is also manifest in such phrases as “to all [the nation’s] children, whatever their origin, their name, their neighborhood,” and “all the young French”.<sup>127</sup> Thus, Ayrault not only stresses the equal ownership of France all national citizens are entitled to, but also confirms the Othering purposes of the employment in public discourse of making reference to one’s “origins”. These sentiments are reiterated in other editorials, letters from readers, and political interviews in *Le Monde*.<sup>128</sup> A sociologist interviewed by *Le Figaro*

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<sup>126</sup> Jean-Marc Ayrault, editorial, “Les cités, c’est la France !” *Le Figaro*, November 7, 2005.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Alan Depauw, letter to the editor, *Le Monde*, November 12, 2005. Michel Tubiana, editorial, “Etat d’urgence : qui sont les ennemis ?” *Le Monde*, November 11, 2005. Frédéric Lemaître and Virginie Malingre, ‘Il y a en France une xénophobie réelle,’ *Le Monde*, November 13-14, 2005.

confirms, “The young people from the *banlieues* ... are not immigrants but third-generation”.<sup>129</sup> Another intellectual, interviewed by *Le Monde*, emphasizes the very Frenchness of the youths’ revolt in the *banlieues*. “I interpret the events as a refusal of marginalization. All of this would not have been able to produce itself if these children of immigrants had not interiorized some of the fundamental values of French society, like, for example, the pairing of liberty and equality.”<sup>130</sup> Their rioting and refusal to be ignored is juxtaposed to that of the autochthonous French youth in May 1968, and indeed, invokes Revolution itself. Thus, these children of immigrants who have been effectively socialized by the national institution of the French public schools are, in fact, not Others. They are fully-fledged French citizens, who merit equal rights and respect because they are acting within and participating in the context of the French symbolic universe.

In President Jacques Chirac’s televised address to the public on 14 November, the head of state himself articulated that the ‘children of difficult neighborhoods ... are all the sons and daughters of the Republic’ and identified what he termed an ‘identity crisis’.<sup>131</sup> The two points of emphasis were centralized by both the right- and left-wing papers. Here, Chirac is recognizing the struggle of children of immigrants to rectify two sets of significant others, which have contributed to their socialization: their parents, perpetuating a foreign reality, and the State/schools, promulgating the condoned reality. However, such inclusivity is not prevalent in the media, as Jean-Claude Barrois, founder of a non-profit that works with high school students

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<sup>129</sup> Sophie Fay, “Pierre Billon : ‘Les inégalités se sont creusées depuis quinze ans,’” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005.

<sup>130</sup> Raphaëlle Bacqué, Jean-Michel Dumat and Sophie Gherardi, ‘Rien ne sépare les enfants d’immigrés du reste de la société,’ *Le Monde*, November 13-14, 2005.

<sup>131</sup> Béatrice Gurrey, “M. Chirac diagnostique une ‘crise d’identité,’” *Le Monde*, November 16, 2005. Philippe Goulliaud, “Le chef de l’Etat crée le ‘service civil volontaire,’” *Le Figaro*, November 15, 2005.

in Seine-Saint-Denis, the overarching department comprised of multiple *banlieues*, including Clichy-sous-Bois, explains in an editorial for *Le Monde*. “The media stigmatizes [these young individuals] by a collective name, [‘youths’].”<sup>132</sup> “How can [a child] feel French if the environment ceaselessly acts as if he were not?” he asks.<sup>133</sup> Thus, although official discourse may set the stage for therapy, maintaining the young people of the *banlieues* within the contextual control of the French State, the public discourse widely manifest in newsprint media promulgates nihilation.

Those who would deny the minority youths’ ability to make claim to the French identity stop at no limit to Otherize and estrange these people from the French Us. From likening the *banlieue* rioters to Palestinian guerillas, to invoking Islam, to citing “the refusal of certain people to integrate themselves,” to the illustration of “a massive and undesired immigration,” opinion columns insist, “It is urgent to open our eyes.”<sup>134</sup> The primary reason cited, however, for denying the acceptance of the minority youths into the majority identity is the lack of shared values. “The revolt of the rioting demonstrators defies our political and cultural values,” writes one opinion columnist in *Le Figaro*.<sup>135</sup> An article from the same publication on immigration distinguishes, ‘These youths that we see burning cars are legally French, but their social naturalization has not been accomplished.’<sup>136</sup> An article from *Le Monde* heavily implies that whether a legal citizen or a foreign resident, “immigrants and children of immigrants” are perpetually foreigners.<sup>137</sup> As

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<sup>132</sup> Jean-Claude Barrois, editorial, “Retour à Clichy-sous-Bois,” *Le Monde*, November 11, 2005.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ivan Rioufol, editorial, “Cités : les non-dits d’une rébellion,” *Le Figaro*, November 4, 2005.

<sup>135</sup> Alain-Gérard Slama, editorial, “La tentation de la mélancolie,” *Le Figaro*, November 7, 2005.

<sup>136</sup> Marie-Christine Tabet, “A chaque époque, sa vague d’étrangers,” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005.

<sup>137</sup> Patrick Jarreau, “La gauche déçoit l’attente des immigrés,” *Le Monde*, November 12, 2005.

opposed to previously cited articles, this perspective interprets the rioting as non-French, as manifestations of a deviant reality. This disagreement over the motivations and meanings of large-scale protesting exemplifies the dynamic nature of the French identity and its active discussion in the public sphere. If there were no disagreement, it would mean the concept of Frenchness would be solidified, fully defined, and unchanging.

### Failure of the Integration System

Thus, the French integration system of replacing the familial significant other for the children of immigrants with that of the State via the public school system was called into question. If these non-autochthons are not (fully) French, although they may have been born and raised in France, why have they not yet successfully integrated? To what extent is the failure that of the schools in their role of socializing youth, and to what extent can it be contributed to the persistence of immigrants' manifestation and perpetuation of a deviant reality? The interesting nuance of this thread of the public discourse is that the "Frenchness" of the minority is the primary variable in the debate. The propensity (although not all) of this facet of the identity debate agreed the so-called "integration system" had failed. It is important to note this exploration of the integration system occurred primarily in the right-leaning paper, *Le Figaro*, and was not particularly prevalent in *Le Monde*. Nonetheless, the most significant aspect of the discussion is the fact it took place – if the minority populations were truly considered fully integrated, fully and equally French, there would be no need to discuss the integration system. It would be an organic process.

Thus, one camp asserts the minority youth are French; however the system has failed to fully integrate them. This proposition bears two significant implications: first, these young



people are French by nationality, but not fully assimilated into French society.<sup>138</sup> Second, it is not their fault; the system has failed them. This failure of the integration system puts the Republic at risk, because it reflects the failure of the socially constructed nation to legitimize itself. “The difficult neighborhoods are the mirror of the degradations of our republican model, the reflection of our national crisis,” writes one editorialist in *Le Figaro*.<sup>139</sup> “Their revolt, which takes its source from a social failure, defies our political and cultural values,” decries another.<sup>140</sup> André Grjebine, head researcher at *l’Institut des Études Politiques* in Paris, expounds:

“Over the course of the last decades, the French model of integration has progressively been abandoned, the successive governments accepting the de facto formation of ghettos on the peripheries of the big cities and the mounting power of Muslim communitarianism. The current riots are the symptom of the drifting of a country that no longer believes in its own values and, all the more so, is no longer able to transmit them to those who come to settle there. The progressive segmentation of the French society brings the seeds of its disintegration.”<sup>141</sup>

The other side of the debate equally considers the failure of the integration system a danger to French society; however, it continues to frame the non-integrated as foreigners. These “children of the immigration” and “youths of foreign origin” are not blamed for not being French; nevertheless, such framing further prohibits Them from becoming part of the French Us.<sup>142</sup> A

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<sup>138</sup> It is important to note that most socio-political discourse uses the term “integration” as a political correct euphemism for “assimilation”. Therefore, it must be clarified that discussion of “integration,” particularly within the context of this particular thread of the public discourse, actually refers to “assimilation”.

<sup>139</sup> Jean-Marc Ayrault, editorial, “Les cités, c’est la France !” *Le Figaro*, November 7, 2005.

<sup>140</sup> Yves Thréard, editorial, “La France au pilori,” *Le Figaro*, November 7, 2005.

<sup>141</sup> André Grjebine, editorial, “Violences urbaines, l’engrenage des crispations,” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005.

<sup>142</sup> Marie-Christine Tabet, “Le chemin cahoteux de l’intégration,” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005.

minority of autochthons denies the failure of the system, claiming the questioning of the values of the Republic is the cause of the social disaccord and unsuccessful integration of minorities.<sup>143</sup>

The link amongst the three perspectives is the questioning of the core values that comprise the French national identity. If the values of the nation are in danger, they are being challenged; if the values are not being properly or fully put into action, they have been overshadowed by others. All angles on the integration system reflect a common source of light: “French values” have been challenged and are being questioned in this debate, rendering the French identity dynamic from both the majority and minority perspectives.

The cycle of discourse thus far is as follows: a challenge has been made to the French identity by the minority youths of the *banlieues*. Debate was sparked to determine what constitutes the French identity, ergo who can be considered French and why. The overall assertion was, whether considered French or not, these identity-challengers are not (fully) integrated. Thus, four concurrent policy-oriented discussions emerged: “positive discrimination” (perpetuated in both *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*), voting rights for “foreign residents” (discussed solely in *Le Monde*), expulsion of convicted rioters (both right and left papers), and immigration laws (both papers). Two are directly concerned with diminishing the prolonged violence in the *banlieues*: “positive discrimination” and expulsion of convicted rioters. The others are indirectly linked, but are relevant in that they are part of the context of the overarching identity debate; they serve to further frame the pretenders to the French identity as Others, societal outsiders with foreign loyalties and socializations.

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<sup>143</sup> Alain-Gérard Slama, “Impasse de la République,” *Le Figaro*, November 9, 2005.

## Attempts to Open French Society to the Other

Two lines of policy discourse reflected openness towards the Other. “Positive discrimination” was proposed as part of the solution to the failed integration system, which was considered a catalyst in the proliferation of urban violence and frustration.<sup>144</sup> “Policy needs to have the courage of this language of truth. True equality of chances implies to more massively support the disadvantaged neighborhoods than the others,”<sup>145</sup> wrote editorialist in *Le Figaro*. This refers to increasing support to schools in the *banlieues* as well as affirmative action in employment. The element of employment, in particular, highlights the discrimination and persistence of the image of the Other in French society. An article from *Le Monde* that juxtaposes the business success of model immigrants with the struggles of most ‘visible minorities’ from the *banlieues* cites a study from 2004, which reports, “a man whose first and last name sound French, residing in Paris, with a European appearance, is five times more likely to be called for an interview.”<sup>146</sup> Thus, societal preference is given to an individual who seems to be autochthonous than to someone seeming to be of “foreign origins” or the “child of immigrants”. The proposition is to expand the conception of a name that “sounds French” and to encourage and enable ethnic minorities to become active, contributing members of the French society – to integrate. The discourse is significant beyond the explicit statements of distinct elements of Frenchness; the occurrence of the discourse itself continues to Other the French pretenders. Whether or not children of immigrants that are born and raised in France with French

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<sup>144</sup> The French political concept of *discrimination positive* is comparable to that of affirmative action in the American context.

<sup>145</sup> Jean-Marc Ayrault, editorial, “Les cités, c’est la France !” *Le Figaro*, November 7, 2005.

<sup>146</sup> François Bostnavaron and Stéphane Lauer, “A quand l’entreprise black-blanc-beur ?” *Le Monde*, November 10, 2005.

nationality should be considered part of the French in-group is important, but the fact that their “integration” needs to be discussed is more so. It implicitly restates and reaffirms their Other status.

A concurrent debate in *Le Monde*, which arose amongst the clamor of the *banlieue* riots, was the debate over the right of “foreign residents” to vote in municipal elections. Foreign residents from within the European Union have this right as members of the EU; foreign residents from outside the European Union, however, do not. The role of this debate over people making no claims to French nationality, and thus, posing no threat to the French identity, serves to further frame the *banlieue* rioters as foreigners. By adding the discussion of verifiable foreigners to the context of the riots, the autochthons are able to associate the minority youths with foreigners and to distance them from themselves, if not by physical means, then at least by means of loyalty and origin.

Again, the concept of the French identity is called into question. Giving the right to vote to foreign residents risks confounding the distinction between French nationality and French citizenship. “If belonging to the French nation legally confounds itself with citizenship, then this relationship would have to be reciprocal: to be a citizen in France, it should and it suffices to be French by birth or to become French by naturalization or marriage,”<sup>147</sup> reasons an editorialist in *Le Monde*. Thus, there is a distinction: one can enter into French citizenship, but not into French nationality in the ethnic sense of the term. Belonging to the country is possible; belonging to the culture is not. This discourse concerning the different capacities in which one can be French is directly relevant to the *banlieue*-inspired introspection. It covertly distinguishes Us – the

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<sup>147</sup> Patrick Jarreau, editorial, “La nation et les citoyens,” *Le Monde*, October 29, 2005.

autochthonous French, French-by-blood – from Them – the self-elected or adopted children of the nation-state who will never be able to become fully French.

#### Attempts to Close French Society to the Other

Other attempts to distinguish and distance the Other were less subtle. As a solution to the *banlieue* situation, the Interior Minister at the time, Nicolas Sarkozy, proposed the “expulsion ‘without delay’ of foreigners, legal or not, convicted for the riots in the *banlieues*.”<sup>148</sup> Granted, Sarkozy was speaking of non-naturalized foreign residents, the majority of which were legal. However, the proposition was expanded by another politico to include “the possibility to ‘strip French nationality’ from naturalized foreigners ‘who participate in urban guerilla violence,’”<sup>149</sup> as reported in *Le Monde*. Thus, at the basic level, French society is literally being closed to the Other, who can never be fully French, even if born and raised there. The impacts of proposing expulsion, however, are the promise of physically distancing the Other that has become physically too close to the autochthonous community and must be demonized and estranged. Furthermore, by calling possessors of French nationality “naturalized foreigners,” the distinction between autochthon and perpetual foreigner is reiterated.

Again, the framing of the Other as a foreigner, whether they reside in France and are a citizen or not, is solidified by the current and interrelated spawning of discourse on immigration laws. As argued by an editorialist in *Le Figaro*, violence, communitarianism, lack of integration,

“are very well the consequences of an immigration policy without control that France is subjected to today. In opening, in 1974, the

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<sup>148</sup> “Sarkozy promet d’expulser les émeutiers étrangers,” *Le Figaro*, November 10, 2005.

<sup>149</sup> Leatitia Van Eeckhout, “Nicolas Sarkozy veut expulser les étrangers impliqués dans les violences urbaines,” *Le Monde*, November 11, 2005.

veins of family immigration that they then let transform into the immigration of legal beneficiaries ... the successive governments created the conditions of the saturation of the mechanisms of integration. It is of absolute urgency to control the flow of entrants, legal and clandestine, otherwise, in fifteen years, it will be the children of those who arrive today who will set fire to the 'neighborhoods'.”<sup>150</sup>

Immigration in the form of family reunification is particularly scrutinized, as it is seen to allow immigrants who are not necessarily qualified to work, and will thus become burdens on the social system. Moreover, they have little motivation to integrate; they will continue to perpetuate a deviant reality within the French symbolic universe. The issue is described as “worrisome” and having created “a new nation around the French nation,”<sup>151</sup> as reported in *Le Figaro*. The image created is an influx of immigrants superseding the capacity of the integration system, hence creating a population of resident foreigners who menace the French nation. This issue, while no doubt related to the riots in the *banlieues*, as these communities are partially comprised of immigrants, more importantly serves to once again flag the inhabitants of the *banlieues*, without distinction, as foreigners and to exclude them from the French in-group.

Both sides of the political spectrum contribute to the overall identity discourse by generating enemy images of the foreign and barbaric Other and closing access to the dialogue on identity by reestablishing the definitions of Us and Them. The extensive Othering shows the co-constructed nature of the French identity; an Other image must be perpetuated for the French Self to continue to exist. Moreover, the very existence of the preceding interrelated debates

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<sup>150</sup> Alexis Brézet, editorial, “Banlieues : trente ans après,” *Le Figaro*, November 4, 2005.

<sup>151</sup> Sophie Huet and Bruno Jeudy, “Regroupement familial : les pistes du gouvernement,” *Le Figaro*, November 15, 2005.

within the overarching discourse on French identity and its highly public reframing clearly demonstrates the dynamism of the contemporary French identity vis-à-vis the minority populations. Identities are social constructs, and therefore inherently dynamic. The “reality” in which the French identity is contextualized is confronted with the permanent presence of the nation’s historical Other. This juxtaposition of realities within the French context sets the autochthonous French identity in motion, generating self-questioning and internal debates. Furthermore, the discourse surrounding the violence in the *banlieues*, although spawned by the acts of minority youths, was largely controlled by the autochthons, as they control the production and dissemination of discourse, in the context of this paper, the major French newspapers. This creates a sort of top-down reformation or renegotiation of the French identity. This further reflects the locus of power in the relational autochthonous French/former-Colonial Other identities. Indeed, this locus remains with the autochthons, despite the presence of minority challenges to public discourse.

## CONCLUSION

The researcher has therefore shown the following: The political approach to integration in Western Europe is majority-oriented, but does not foreground identity. The cultural dimension tries to bring identity issues to the forefront by emphasizing the cultural aspects of minority identities. The hybrid perspective, which promulgates multiculturalism, attempts to take both the political and cultural aspects into account. That notwithstanding, all three approaches fall short in addressing integration because they assume the majority identity is static and independently constructed. Thus, the researcher has considered the perspective of the majority identity to see if it is dynamic and co-constructed, because these qualities would render the majority identity permeable and open to the integration of minorities.

The narratives presented from the French case demonstrate that the majority identity is dynamic and co-constructed through the analysis of two events – the 2004 headscarf affair and the 2005 urban rioting. The *affaire du foulard* was shown to be a highly public threat to the French reality and identity, consequently generating extensive public debate amongst autochthons concerning the definition of the French identity and where its boundaries lie. The rioting in the *banlieues* was shown to be a reactionary manifestation of an intense, multidimensional Othering campaign waged by the autochthons in light of the questioning of the French identity, which had recently occurred with the headscarf affair. Thus, the headscarf affair demonstrates the dynamism of the French identity, and the urban rioting exhibits its co-construction.

It is significant within the context of the narratives that the two politically-oriented newspapers analyzed by the researcher took opposite approaches to the discourse than their



typical respective points of view, especially in the case of the *banlieues*. Furthermore, it is significant that although specific veins of discourse were not always discussed by both sides, both consistently engaged in Othering. Briefly stated, Othering occurred on both sides of the political spectrum.

Therefore, the image of the Other was developed in order to maintain the nation – the French reality upon which the entire construct of French society is built. The French autochthons were engaging in universe maintenance in the face of two different alternative reality threats: the first, a passive threat from immigrants, specifically those possessing a Muslim reality; the second, an active threat from the descendants of immigrants who can claim to possess and combine both the Muslim and French identities, both realities. These challenges are problematic for the French reality and precipitated methods of universe maintenance. This directly results from the universal nature of realities; in other words from the fact that by definition only one reality can exist in a given social context. Even if the alternative reality is not actively challenging the principal reality, as in the case of the existence of immigrants, the existence of an alternative reality alone poses a threat to the French reality, and consequently must be managed. The narratives analyzed exhibited the employment of universe maintenance through therapy (most evident in the left-leaning newspaper, *Le Monde*), and nihilation (more prevalent in the right-leaning newspaper, *Le Figaro*). Ultimately, what is important is not the method of maintenance, but rather the fact that it is being both universally and relationally performed within the French social context, affirming the dynamic state and co-constructed nature of the French national identity.

Nevertheless, the question of intent must be addressed by revisiting Berger and Luckmann. In the French context, man is engaging in the protection of his objective reality (the

institutions of society) through his subjective reality (his identity, or more precisely the identity created for him by society and perpetuated through the social context). Thus, intent is limited to the extent that man is aware of the constructed, ergo non-organic nature of his society. Hence, man actively maintains his reality (both objective and subjective) by controlling public discourse, which is the most powerful tool of universe maintenance. However, since man is both creator and product of his reality, he cannot exhibit pure, self-driven intent, nor can he completely act without it. Thus, because the autochthons control the public discourse, they continue to engage in universe maintenance; they continue to define Us and the Other.

That being given, it is significant that the autochthons are discussing their identity in the public sphere. Their debating and questioning of the Self in relation to the Other demonstrates the autochthonous identity is indeed dynamic and co-constructed. Ergo, change is shown to be the constant for national identities; however, it is the autochthons who decide the direction and nature of that change.

The findings and implications of this research project are subject to the following principal limitations: In utilizing newspapers as the sole source of narratives, the public discourse must be understood as filtered through the mechanism of the mass media, which serves a special role in perpetuating the national discourse, but does not necessarily directly represent the entirety of opinions and views held by the public. Furthermore, although selected for their large readership and opposing political persuasions, the use of two Parisian newspapers cannot be considered entirely representative of the views of the multiparty French political system, and could potentially lead to the inadvertent portrayal of the autochthonous French as monolithic via the singular voice of Paris.

The scope of this research is further limited due to the analysis of only two events, which are in close proximity to each other in the timeline of French history and current events. Therefore, this work can only present one example of the process of challenging and managing the French identity, and cannot establish any patterns or presence of dynamism over time. The next step in continuing this line of research would thus be to explore more events over a longer period of time to investigate how the French identity is changing. This is essential for establishing the degree of dynamism present, which will implicate how open the French identity is and better indicate potential openings for minorities to integrate. The aspect of the European Union's challenges to the French identity from a supranational level should also be explored to provide a more complete picture of the contemporary dynamics of Western European identities. Moreover, the gendered subtext of the two cases that were analyzed (the headscarf affair deals with women; whereas, the urban rioting involves men) is an element that has further implications for the delineation of the French citizen, but which is outside the scope of this project.

The influence of the researcher's perspective and inadvertent natural bias must also be considered, particularly as she is not French, nor did she experience the context of the two cases examined first-hand. Finally, the imperfect nature of translation must be taken into account, as discourse analysis served as the guiding research methodology. The researcher, although qualified to analyze French text, is nonetheless not a native French speaker; furthermore, it is understood that not all concepts and terminologies have exact translations in different cultural-linguistic contexts. Thus, the researcher has attempted to fully explicate all seminal terminology, and has included the original French text of all citations that comprise the narratives in the appendix.

The dynamic and co-constructed nature of the French identity therefore implies that the demographic realities of contemporary France do not necessitate the ineffective and theoretically flawed policies of multiculturalism, which would only institutionalize the definitions of Self and Other by determining what expressions of minority identities are legitimate and restrict them to a static paradigm. Moreover, the French nation does not have to engage in therapy (assimilation) or nihilation (Othering) to preserve and continue to legitimate its national identity. Rather, an approach of true integration, which is the engagement in cross-cultural exchange to find similar values and components held within both the autochthonous French reality and the minority realities, would not only enable the maintenance of the French national identity, but would also strengthen its legitimacy by proving and promoting its malleability as a source of societal strength, rather than weakness.

## APPENDIX

72. 'le port de signes or de tenues manifestant ostensiblement une appartenance religieuse dans les écoles, collèges et lycées publics'

73. « Communautarisme. Modèle social et politique, d'origine américaine, qui met l'accent sur l'appartenance à des groupes identitaires, en fonction du sexe, de la religion, de l'ethnie, etc. plutôt que sur l'adhésion à des valeurs universelles et communes. »

76. 'que l'immense majorité des Français de toutes les origines souhaitent une loi' 'car le communautarisme défendu par les adversaires de la laïcité est un sexisme'

77. « Ceux qui veulent venir vivre dans notre pays doivent en accepter les lois démocratiquement cotées et conformes aux Droits de l'homme ou ne pas venir. »

78. « la crise des valeurs communes » « la laïcité est si eu assurée d'elle-même »

79. « ...l'école n'est pas un simple espace de tolérance. Elle est par excellence le lieu de l'apprentissage et de la formation de l'esprit critique, un lieu de neutralité et de sérénité. »

80. « Si la manifestation visible d'une appartenance est perçue comme un signe de rupture du pacte républicain, c'est sans doute parce que nous ne supportons pas que le système assimilateur de l'école laïque que nous avons subi et globalement approuvé ne fonctionne plus avec la même fermeté intégratrice qu'il y a cinquante ou cent ans. »

81. « Acceptons de poser franchement la question de la place de l'islam en France, de sa compatibilité avec la modernité, la laïcité, les droits de l'homme. La séparation entre l'Eglise et l'Etat, la création d'un espace civil de liberté, la conciliation entre la sphère spirituelle et la loi civile ont exigé bien des remises en cause pour inscrire les juifs and l'Eglise catholique dans le contrat républicain. L'islam devra faire de même, et le République doit l'y inviter clairement et fermement. »

83. « La différence entre la laïcité de 1905 et celle de 2004, c'est avant tout ceci : il y a cent ans, il s'agissait de dissocier ; aujourd'hui, il s'agit d'associer. 1905 était une séparation : il fallait que l'Eglise de France dépendit, non plus de Paris, mais de Rome. En 2004, en revanche, l'objectif est que l'islam de France soit gouverné, non plus d'Alger ou de Riyad, mais de Paris. »

84. « Cette jeune fille de 13 ans, d'origine turque »

85. « Le père de la jeune file, qui parle avec un fort accent... Sa mère s'exprime difficilement en français... »

86. « Derrière le voile s'affiche le refus d'une partie minoritaire de la communauté française d'origine musulmane de s'intégrer et de partager les valeurs émancipatrices de la République. »

87. 'n'est pas un problème religieux mais un problème qui touche au statut de la femme. Le voile dit que la femme et l'homme ne sont pas dans un rapport d'égalité (...). Cette vision est inacceptable pour la France et pour la République.'

88. « Les musulmans libéraux ont du mal à convaincre leurs coreligionnaires des bienfaits de la liberté. »

89. « La contestation anti-loi semble portée d'abord par une classe moyenne de diplômés qui fait la preuve de son intégration en manifestant. »

91. « amateurisme »

92. « faible »

93. « bien peu nombreux » « quelques centaines de personnes »

94. « à peine 1 000 »

95. « échec »

96. « Le principe de laïcité est au cœur de nos institutions républicaines. Il est même constitutif de notre identité nationale, indissociable des idéaux des Lumières et de la Révolution française, qui affirment l'irréductibilité de la nation à toute communauté. Y compris et surtout religieuse. »

97. 'Le gouvernement de Vichy est une tache dans l'histoire de France ... Il ne faudrait pas recommencer.'

98. 'une loi islamophobe ... restera un point noir dans la conscience des Français, comme les dispositions législatives et réglementaires inhumaines adoptées par le régime de Vichy.'

99. 'Nous avons conscience de la nécessité aussi de faire vivre l'idée d'égalité qui est au cœur du projet républicain. ... Nos valeurs leur paraissent inaccessibles. Notre devoir est de créer les conditions du partage de ces valeurs. ... il était temps pour le République de rappeler ses grands principes et de fixer des limites claires.'

100. 'qui exprime les valeurs de respect, de dialogue et de tolérance, est au cœur de l'identité républicaine de la France'

101. « Les deux victimes décédées seraient deux jeunes Français d'origine malienne et d'origine turque. »

102. « On a des papiers depuis des générations mais on n'est pas des Français comme les autres. »

107. « Les rumeurs persistantes d'une course-poursuite avec la police »

108. « ...nombre de jeunes croient encore que les deux adolescents électrocutés étaient poursuivis par la police. » 'Ils se sont crus poursuivis alors qu'ils ne l'étaient pas.'

109. « Jeune. Littéralement, jeune signifie ‘peu avancé en âge’. Dans les banlieues, ces ‘jeunes’ ont de 12 à 19 ans et le mot ne veut plus dire grand-chose. C’est souvent une précaution de langage pour ne pas dire ‘casseurs’ ou ‘délinquants’. »

110. « Il n’y a aucune raison pour que cela se calme. »

111. « Leurs parcours cumulent ruptures scolaires, problèmes familiaux, insertion professionnelle extrêmement difficile et, pour une partie d’entre eux, des condamnations par les tribunaux pour enfants. »

112. « outrage, » « des violences avec arme, » « chaotique »

113. « A l’âge de 14 ans, il a quitté les Comores, où il est né, pour rejoindre un internat en Libye afin d’‘apprendre l’arabe’. »

114. « émeutiers »

115. « la rage, » ‘On est prêts à tout sacrifier, puisqu’on n’a rien,’ « menacent-ils, » « Ni caïds ni islamistes ne semblent dicter leur conduite et encore moins les manipuler. » « ...avec l’envie ‘de tout casser’. »

116. ‘Si un jour on s’organise ... on se donnera rendez-vous à la Bastille et ce sera la guerre.’

118. ‘C’est comme un chien contre un mur, il devient agressif. On n’est pas des chiens, mais on réagit comme des animaux.’

119. « ...des jeunes délinquants, déjà bien connus des services de police. »

122. « une mère de famille, » « un père de six enfants, » « a 40 ans, ce père de famille, qui quotidiennement conduit et va rechercher ses enfants à l’école »

123. ‘Les jeunes n’ont peur de rien.’ ‘les plus jeunes entre 9 et 11 ans, sont dans la rue sans contrôle.’

125. « Les déchaînements constatés ici et là en France portent davantage l’empreinte de la barbarie et de la sauvagerie gratuite que celle de la vengeance et du désespoir. »

126. « Trop de jeunes, nés en France, titulaires d’une carte d’identité nationale, se sentent étrangers à leur pays. Parce que la société les renvoie à leurs origines, parce qu’elle oublie de leur transmettre ses valeurs de solidarité et de civisme. »

127. « à tous ses enfants, quels que soient leur origine, leur nom, leur quartier » « tous les jeunes Français »

129. « des jeunes des banlieues ... ne sont pas des immigrés mais de troisième génération »

130. « J’interprète les événements comme un refus de marginalisation. Tout ça n’aurait pas pu se produire si ces enfants d’immigrés n’avaient pas intériorisé quelques-unes des valeurs fondamentales de la société française, dont, par exemple, le couple liberté-égalité. »

131. 'Je veux dire aux enfants des quartiers difficiles, qu'ils sont tous les fils and les filles de la République.' 'crise d'identité'

132. « ce sont ces 'jeunes' que les médias stigmatisent par un nom collectif. »

133. « Comment pourrait-il se sentir français si l'environnement agit sans cesse comme s'il ne l'était pas ? »

134. « Cela ne vous rappelle rien ? Oui, les émeutes en région parisienne ont des airs de guérillas palestiniennes. » « En région parisienne, c'est l'idéologie islamiste qui cherche à tirer profit du chômage des cités et de leur bouillonnement. » « Mais les manifestations dévoilent aussi, plus gravement, le refus de certains de s'intégrer. » « ... une immigration massive et non désirée. Urgent d'ouvrir les yeux. »

135. « La révolte des casseurs défie nos valeurs politiques et culturelles. »

136. 'Ces jeunes que l'on voit incendier des voitures sont français en droit, mais la naturalisation sociale ne s'est pas faite. »

137. « Citoyens français ou résidents étrangers, les immigrés et enfants d'immigrés ... »

139. « Les cités en difficulté sont le miroir des dégradations de notre modèle républicain, le reflet de notre crise nationale. »

140. « Mais leur révolte, qui prend sa source dans un échec social, défie nos valeurs politiques et culturelles. »

141. « Au cours des dernières décennies, le modèle français d'intégration a progressivement été abandonné, les gouvernements successifs acceptant de facto la formation de ghettos dans la périphérie des grandes villes et la montée en puissance d'un communautarisme musulman. Les émeutes actuelles sont le symptôme de la dérive d'un pays qui ne croit plus en ses propres valeurs et, a fortiori, n'est plus capable de les transmettre à ceux qui viennent s'y installer. La segmentation progressive de la société française porte en germe sa déstructuration. »

142. « des enfants de l'immigration » « des jeunes d'origine étrangère »

145. « Le politique doit avoir le courage de ce langage de vérité. La véritable égalité es chances implique de soutenir plus massivement les quartiers déshérités que les autres. »

146. 'minorités visibles' « Ainsi, un homme dont le nom et le prénom sont à consonance française, résidant à Paris, d'apparence européenne, a cinq fois plus de chance de se faire convoquer à un entretien, selon une étude réalisée en 2004 par l'Observatoire des discriminations. »

147. « Si l'appartenance à la nation française se confond juridiquement avec la citoyenneté, alors cette relation doit être réciproque : pour être citoyen en France, il faut and il suffit d'être français par la naissance ou de le devenir par naturalisation ou mariage. »

148. « d'expulser 'sans délai' les étrangers, réguliers ou non, condamnés pour les émeutes des banlieues. »



149. « la possibilité de ‘déchoir de la nationalité française’ les étrangers naturalisés ‘qui participent à la guérilla urbaine.’ »

150. « Ce sont bien les conséquences d’une politique d’immigration sans contrôle que la France subit aujourd’hui. En ouvrant, en 1974, les vannes de l’immigration familiale qu’ils ont ensuite laissée se transformer en immigration d’ayants droit ... les gouvernements successifs ont créé les conditions de la saturation des mécanismes d’intégration. Il faut d’urgence maîtriser le flux des entrées, régulières et clandestines, sinon, dans quinze ans, ce sont les enfants des arrivants d’aujourd’hui qui mettront le feu aux ‘quartiers’. »

151. ‘inquiétant’ ‘une nouvelle nation autour de la nation française’

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