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# The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy

Amber Nichole Dillender

*University of South Florida*, [adillend@mail.usf.edu](mailto:adillend@mail.usf.edu)

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The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy

by

Amber Nichole Dillender

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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Major Professor: Bernd Reiter, Ph.D.  
Darrell Slider, Ph.D.  
Michael Solomon, Ph.D.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The numerous images of violence perpetrated by radicalized followers of Islam, has highlighted the complexities surrounding assimilation and integration of Muslims in Western society. Since the guest worker recruitment from French African colonies initiated after World War II, France has been witness to the unanticipated development of permanent communities of African laborers, many of whom are Muslim. Despite consistent promotion of French monoculture and specifically the use of the assimilation model for integration, segregation of African Muslims has occurred. Through the construction of a single country case study, I explore integration issues surrounding the French Muslim minority communities. I seek to assess the occurrences of segregation among African Muslims, and theorize that process established by the French government for the assimilation and integration of African Muslims into French society has culminated in the formation of segregated African Muslim diaspora communities. This topic was chosen because I possess a general interest in the integration of Muslims into Western society. Due to the broadness of the Muslim population, and given their high visibility I narrowed my focus on African Muslims. Furthermore, this topic was chosen to determine the viability of the French case as an alternative to the failed policies of multiculturalism. Therefore, I examine the assimilation strategy of French Republicanism established in France by the French Revolution of 1789. This thesis is relevant given the rising visibility of Muslims throughout Western society. Furthermore, the increased

visibility highlights the position of African Muslim communities in France. The evidence presented in my thesis demonstrates that the presence of segregated African Muslim communities is an unintended consequence of the historical development of French monoculture and colonialism. French assimilation of African Muslims is not a complete failure due to marginal successes of African Muslims in political and economic arenas. Furthermore, the segregation of African Muslims in France does not diminish the viability of assimilation strategy in the overall integration of Muslims into Western society, especially as politicians across the European continent denounce the failed policies of multiculturalism.

## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

My research question addressed in this thesis is simply: why has segregation of African Muslims occurred? My objective is to assess the viability of assimilation in the integration of African Muslims in France. My hypothesis is that the process established by the French government for the assimilation and integration of African Muslims into French society has constructed and maintained segregated African Muslim diaspora communities. This topic was chosen because I possess a general interest in the integration of Muslims into Western society. Due to the broadness of the Muslim population, I narrowed my focus on African Muslims.

My thesis is relevant given the increased visibility of the African Muslim presence in Western society. The Riots of 2005 were seen as a violent reaction to a singular event; on the contrary, the rioting was against systemic violence, stigmatization, segregation and poverty. The riots of 2005 serve as the visualization of the unseen “other” within French society. Arguably, Muslims and in particular African Muslims are the most visible and problematic immigrant group in France today. The situation of African Muslims in France is a crucial test case for the robustness of contemporary French democracy.

Immigration statistics are difficult to ascertain because information on immigrants based on ethnic identification is unknown. Since 2005, France no longer requires visa

permits for nationalities from member countries within the European Union. So data presented to provide a clear picture on immigrant nationality is left vague. However, yearly census surveys are conducted. While specific ethnic data is not collected, information is provided in cases where interviewees identify their country of origin. Much of the statistical data and corresponding information within this thesis is due to the annual census survey data collected by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) and translated by the National Institute of Demographic Studies (INED). In the table below, TABLE 1 I present region of origin for new entrants into France, providing some indication for the diversity in the French population.

TABLE 1: Nationalities of New Entrants into France

Nationalities	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU	50540	50270	46708	55941	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-EU	16438	17518	18529	21603	19238	16720	17656
Africa	94317	101658	100567	93309	92194	89100	90582
Asia	29070	30346	30458	29274	29918	29196	31700
America	14682	14958	14917	14941	15454	14272	15154
Other	660	642	684	756	826	864	963

Data found INSEE

While the information presented in TABLE 1 examines the nationalities on new entrants, TABLE 2 is a statistical snapshot of 2007, it presents number of nationalities within France along with the percentage of the population they represent on the basis that the total population in Metropolitan France is 62.8 million. This information is necessary to demonstrate how Africans represent nearly half the population of minority nationalities in France. European nationalities combined represent a greater population base; however the percentage of the population of African origin speaks to the visibility of this group. I believe that the data presented in TABLE 2 is important to establish just how visible the

African population is. The information from TABLE 2 taken with information providing in TABLE 3 demonstrates the visibility of Africans and Muslims as individuals and without conducting an ethnicity specific census, direct correlations are speculative, however lend credence to the visibility of Africans and Muslims themselves.

TABLE 2: Country of Origin and the Percentage of Population

Region	%	Actual Number
Europe	39.1	2013974
EU 27	34.9	1798894
Spain	5.1	262512
Italy	6.3	323305
Portugal	11.2	575745
United Kingdom	2.8	142539
Other Europe	13.8	709874
Africa	42.9	2210044
Algeria	13.6	702324
Morocco	12.5	645246
Tunisia	4.5	230821
Other Africa	12.3	631654
Asia	14.2	730324
Turkey	4.6	234512
Cambodian, Laos, Vietnam	3.1	160826
Other Asis	6.5	335627
America, Oceania	3.7	192740
Total	100	5147723

Data Found INSEE

Ethnic makeup is not the only identifying characteristics of an individual. The observance of religious affiliation is both a reaffirming and alienating. On one hand religion provides a guide to daily life and on the other a philosophical difference separating practitioners. The data in TABLE 3 identifies the major religions present in France, along with the percentage of the population which the religion represents. The religious affiliation is presented in order to determine the percentage of Muslims within

France. Although the statistical data indicating the proportion of African Muslims cannot be determined, Africans as previously indicated represent a large portion of new entrants and will be made further visible by their religious affiliation. While the majority of the people practice Catholicism, followers of Islam represent a growing population within France.

TABLE 3: Religious Affiliations and the Percentage of Population

Religious Affiliation	% of the French Population
Catholicism	82
Islam	10
Unaffiliated	4
Protestantism	2
Judaism	1
Other	1

Data found INSEE

In order to examine my research question, I utilize the qualitative method in my construction of a singular case study on France. I use a variety of secondary sources from scholars across social sciences in order to provide a varied perspective.

Throughout this chapter, I seek to elaborate further on the many components necessary for the development of my research. To achieve this, I first present the very issue analyzed in this study. Then, I conceptualize the relevant terminology seen throughout this thesis. I further detail the method utilized to complete my analysis of African Muslim segregation in France. Lastly, I provide a chapter overview.

### **Guided Discussion: Segregation of the African Muslim Diaspora in France**

Presently debates regarding the location of the African Muslim minority diaspora communities living in French society remains on the fringes of political discourse within France. The African Muslim situation within France cannot be answered without taking

various aspects into consideration. Therefore for in this project I seek to answer why such segregation has occurred in present-day France. The focus of this research is to determine the relationship between the political and cultural aspects of French society. I examine the role of French government in the creation of segregated African Muslim communities. I am interested in the examination of the negotiation process taking place between governance and religiosity. I analyze the role of French governance in the construction of segregated African Muslim diaspora communities in metropolitan France. Throughout this thesis three aspects of French governance are examined: philosophy, French colonialism, and the realities of African Muslims.

### **Removing Ambiguity in French Case**

There are conceptual limitations in identifying terms such as historical legacy, *la mission civilisatrice*, secularism, assimilation, and integration when examining social, cultural, and political embeddedness of French society. Therefore such terms shall be defined now.

Due to the ambiguity that surrounds the term historical legacy, I define it here as the historical record of events which France actively or passively engaged in which shaped the development of contemporary French society. (Bleich, 2005) This definitional understanding is central to my examination of the root causal mechanism for segregation of African Muslims in France. The French historical legacy developed over time following stages of growth, prominence, decline, and conflict. It is this concept of historical legacy which allows consistent patterns of state behavior to emerge. Furthermore, based on the emergence of such patterns, the nature of current state-to-immigrant relationship can be determined.

In order to assess the historical legacy of France in regards to African Muslims, I must examine France's colonial past. In doing so, I emphasize the philosophical reasoning which allowed the creation of colonies and the subjugation and oppression of colonized peoples. For the sake of this thesis, I present the concept of "la mission civilisatrice," which refers to the obligation and psychological reasoning by which the French colonized "barbarous" peoples to "civilize" them. (Bleich, 2005) While "la mission civilisatrice" justified colonization it also cemented traditional thought and policymaking decisions between Frenchmen and the colonized "other." Although "la mission civilisatrice" is no longer explicitly in use, I argue that it has shaped the French psyche and influenced immigration integration.

The institutionalization of secularism is the most recognizable attribute in the strategic policy approach for immigration integration. Institutionalization of secularism is the formalized separation of the state and public domain from religiosity. In France, it is not a simple case of separating governance from religion but rather the removal of religious affiliation and attachments from political and public spheres. Thus, France has passed laws making religion a completely private matter. Notably, secularization relies on the complete removal of religious entanglements within public spheres of society. Secularism is a tool utilized by the government of France to force rather than promote assimilation; assimilation is the processes by which immigrants navigate acculturation and integration; and integration of immigrants focuses here on the inclusion both socially and politically into France. Therefore the lack of integration is presented by the development of segregated Muslim African diaspora communities.

Assimilation is the minority ethnic acculturation and spatial dispersal through a one-way process of adoption and adaptation to prevailing cultural and political underpinnings within the host society by the ethnic minority. The French assimilation model is aimed at the total dissolution of ethnic minorities in the dominant culture. France is among a few European countries to adopt the policies of cultural universalism built upon secular and civic monocultures. The approach taken by the French government has promoted assimilation of minorities; in this case African Muslim minority, in order to obliterate the lingual and ethnic differences, thus creating a shared French identity.

Integration centers on the political and social inclusion of an ethnic minority, it is a two-way process characterized as a negotiation between the host society and the ethnic minority. There is an assumed willingness of the ethnic minority to alter its course of behavior while the majority of “native” peoples alter the course of their behavior to be accepting of the changes made by the ethnic minority. Integration is further defined as a process of common ethnic consciousness formation, “equal participation of individuals and groups in society, for which mutual respect for identity is seen as a necessary condition.” (Geddes, 16)

The Republican model of integration is based on a national conceptualization of citizenship that negates using certain criteria such as ethnicity, religion, or race to categorize individuals. (Oberti, 2008) This means that individuals devoid of categories interact independently and thus implies equal treatment for all individuals.

Dating to the French Revolution, the notion that belonging to a Nation was associated with belonging to a Republic. In the French case, citizenship is *prima facie* the citizen of the Republic, an individual who is loyal to the republican ideals of *Liberté, Egalité,*

*Fraternité*. There are three traditions of French citizenship; one, *jus soli*, citizenship is automatic to the individual born in the territory. The second, *jus sanguinis*, citizenship is determined on the basis of descent (an individual born abroad to citizen parents). Finally, the third which I will call, *colonial legacy*, immigrants can acquire citizenship through registration, naturalization, or declaration. (Brubaker 1994) France has established “a readiness to grant citizenship, but it has a republican conception of citizenship which does not allow, at least in theory, a body of citizens to be differentially identified.” (Lewis, 111)

### **Anatomy of Study: The French Case**

I explore French colonial practices in Africa, because I seek to assess the assimilation of individuals of the newly independent colonies in Africa into French society. My focus is on African Muslim diaspora communities established between 1960 into the early 1970s. Although my focus is on this timeframe, I utilize literature which examines the earlier migration of people of similar ancestral origin. The work I present here narrows in on present-day immigration integration, relying heavily on historical data. In order to examine the assimilation and integration of African Muslims, I first study the philosophical underpinnings from the 1789 French Revolution in the creation of policies put in place for such negotiation. This work is important because it identifies the processes which lead to the development of segregated communities. It also sheds light on the unintended negative consequences of public policies, which in the case of France, I argue, have led to the segregation and hindered successful integration of immigrants into prevailing French society. Spatial segregation, in addition, has worsened life conditions of immigrants and exposed them to a culture of marginalization that is not

only potentially explosive, but also detrimental to their own wellbeing. Determining the causal mechanisms for the creation of segregated communities, allows researchers to assist in the construction of better more conscious policies.

The mainstream assessment of Muslim immigrants, by the West, focuses too narrowly on linkages between Islam and violence under the guise of religion. The riots which took place in 2005 were seen by many within France as an action by a religious radical “other,” acting against the secular government. Such a view, however, overlooks the socioeconomic deprivation as the causal mechanism which united people with similar ancestral identification, igniting a riot. The images of violent Muslim youth rioting in Parisian suburbs that for a while were circulated widely in French and international media have certainly contributed to the hostilities from non-Muslims towards Muslims, because too often, the appearance of linkages between religion and violence, are perceived as a threat aimed directly against Western world order. (Bertossi, 2006) It is the increasing visibility of Muslims within the traditionally non-Muslim country of France that brought about a host of challenges to the forefront of political discourse. The most important challenge as discussed here, are issues of assimilation and integration of Muslims into French society. The French reliance of secularization and assimilation for the integration of Muslim immigrants, ultimately results in a policy too narrowly focused on the reduction of the influence of religion (Islam) neglecting the broader goal of the actual assimilation and integration of Muslims.

This thesis illustrates how the integration policies undertaken by the French government have been moderately affective in reducing the influence of Islam but have created pockets of Muslim communities deeply embedded with the Islamic tradition. This

outcome can be in part attributed, I argue, to the very policies focusing on the reduction of religious influence and favoring secular policies of assimilation. The institutionalization of secularism has resulted in the alienation of African Muslim communities. In the French case, secularism is forced upon immigrants who themselves may publicly recognize the secular laws, but privately cling to vestiges of religious self-identification which in turn leads to the creation of hidden communities built by individuals with shared commonalities such as religious observance. Ultimately French governance has neglected the community level of integration of Muslims by focusing solely on the broader implications of extremism associated frequently with the spread of the Islamic diaspora.

Many theoretical approaches have been used to observe the negotiations which occur between Muslim immigrants, Muslims already in France, and non-Muslims within the traditionally non-Muslim communities of France. The current work examines the interrelationship between French governance and African Muslim minorities. Therefore, I utilize that theoretical put forth by Max Weber as it relates to contemporary formulations of systems theory such as rationality, functional differentiation, and specialization of roles within the frame work of the state. (Chilcote, 99) I am analyzing the role of the state in the creation of segregated African Muslim diaspora minority communities, therefore my theoretical framework centers around the state, its institutions, policies, and the impact on society. In the French case, the government of France is reliant upon an assimilation model which places emphasis on the construction of one common shared or universally held identity. This work conducts a case study of one country negotiating the integration and assimilation processes associated with immigration.

The limitations of my thesis include the sole focus on one country alone for the construction of my case study in examining the cause of segregation of African Muslims in France. The French case is not typical given the constant objective to maintain a monoculture, however, given the overwhelming denial of multiculturalism it serves as an alternative course which makes examining the viability assimilation and integration policies necessary. Moreover, France is a perfect example of the linkages between host nation and the country of origin for African Muslims given the pre-existing historical connections between France and former African colonies.

### **Chapter Overview**

I leave it to the historians themselves to confront the contradictions and paradoxes the acquisition and subsequent rule by force colonies were subjected to by the most advanced societies. While many scholars study the coercive practices of colonization, there is little data on the migration patterns of North Africans during the colonial conquest by France. In this chapter I present the terminology necessary for the completion of a case study. Furthermore, throughout this introduction I have constructed the methodology and focus thereof. The lack of reliable data just means that the information is not present, but does not indicate an absence of African movement into France. In chapter II I present the philosophical underpinnings of immigration integration policies tracing the ideological foundation to the 1789 French Revolution. It is necessary to discuss the French Revolution because so many of the current philosophies which today seem innocuous were the radical ideologies of the revolution. Furthermore, I provide the development of the assimilation model of integration. An assessment is made of secular policies of the assimilation model by examining the general issues of

assimilation. Highlighted within this assessment is the issue of the headscarf, but also the creation of Afro-Muslim media outlets. Both of which serve to illustrate how Muslims, of African descent, have maintained ancestral linkages by adapting and overcoming various obstacles of social, cultural, and religious stigmatization. The timeframe of colonial conquest in Africa is itself cause for debate, which I leave for historians. Likewise, I leave the development of migratory patterns to experts in migration. However, easily determined are linkages between country of origin and the African Muslim communities which are in existence today. Therefore, Chapter III serves to establish the very presence of African Muslims in France. Drawing on linkages between France as a colonial power and the colonial experience in North Africa, I create ancestral and historical heritages between France and Muslim peoples of African origin. Chapter III also examines the creation of segregated communities which are still in existence today, which illustrates how Muslim communities were developed and maintained. Through the colonial examination, I conclude geographical proximity and historical connections establish the African Muslim diaspora communities in France. France has benefited from decades of relaxed immigration policies, which have increased the overall population with higher birthrates most notably since the end of World War II in 1945. According to the Migration Policy Institute, 45% of migration to France comes from Africa, of which approximately 35% from North Africa, where many former French colonies are located. (MPI Data Hub) Chapter IV examines the issues which I believe are the everyday realities for residents of *banlieues*. I examine the existence of racism even though French culture is centered on the absence of racial and ethnic categorization. I examine who lives in *banlieues*, focusing on African Muslims to illustrate how segregation has occurred.

Lastly, in Chapter IV I explore violence, as a reactionary consequence of segregation. Finally I conclude in chapter V that the government of France has neglected the overall goal of immigration integration of African Muslims by focusing too narrowly on reducing the influence of Islam in the country. This case study shows the legacies of colonial forced segregation and racism left in place have created and maintained segregated communities in France. The very nature of the policies implemented in France for the assimilation and integration of immigrants, have resulted in the segregation of Muslim African diaspora communities. Although a multicultural plural society, France has implemented policies based on the creation of a mono-cultural society, but as I conclude focused too narrowly on the religious aspect of Islam and neglected the people. While my objective is to identify the development of segregated African Muslim communities, there are signs of successful assimilation and integration into French society.

## **CHAPTER II: ASSIMILATION**

In this chapter I seek to illustrate how France developed and subsequently utilized the Republican model of assimilation to integrate African Muslim immigrants. The segregation of the African Muslim diaspora community can only be understood first by analyzing French governance in constructing the processes for immigration assimilation and integration. To do this, I examine the philosophical outcomes of the French Revolution of 1789, where I put special emphasis on the ideologies fundamental to the creation of “Frenchness” or monocultural French society. Once I have established the historical development upon which integration policies are founded, I demonstrate how the revolutionary ideologies impacted the development of assimilation model itself. Furthermore, I conceptualize components of assimilation model. Then, I illustrate the current conditions of and general issues in assimilation of African Muslims.

### **Legacies of the French Revolution (1789)**

The great awakening of Enlightenment period of the sixteenth century ushered in the age of thinkers, but ran against various Christian traditions. Even during the French Revolution, Christianity was met with violent fervor. The hostilities did not stem from a rejection of the Christianity as a religious institution, but rather a rejection of system of privilege and corruption surrounding its ties with the function of the French government. (De Tocqueville, 1955) Therefore the French Revolution was not an anti-religious

movement, although there might be a resemblance of. The revolution served as a direct but subtle challenge to religion, that is to say the state organization of religion. “The revolution set out to replace feudal institutions with a new social and political order, at once simply and more uniform, based on the concept of the equality of all men.” (De Tocqueville, 20)

While the French Revolution may not have spurred the actual development of foundational ideologies upon which French policies are created, it certainly provided the clean slate for the formation of a new beginning where philosophies and policies could be combined. Furthermore, it is the creation of a secular state reliant upon the three symbols of *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité* developed in the republican spirit of the French Revolution, that directly influence the current shape of immigration integration policies. The ideologies of the French Revolution are examined in order to provide the backdrop for present-day policy and implementation.

Upon closer examination of the French Revolution, ideologies fundamental to the development to contemporary French policies are revealed. Well educated men, with revolutionary ideas known as “Men of Letters” are the inventors and proponents of the ideologies expressed in the revolution. These “men of letters” who would take over administrative offices were thoroughly hostile to deliberative assemblies, to secondary organizations vested with powers, and, generally speaking to all those counterpoises which have been devised by free people at various stages of their history to curb the domination of a central authority.” (Tocqueville, 159) The notion of political freedom was not on the radar as it was so long extinct that any resemblance to it was foreign.

National ideals established from the ideologies expressed in the French Revolution influenced the structures of integration policies and the policymaking institutions. The continuity between principles and results of France's immigration integration policies is linked to the power of Republicanism, which is the culmination of universalistic and republican principles of the French Revolution. Ultimately Republicanism was forever cemented in French society with the separation of church and state signaling a triumph of the secularization of authority. Even more important outcomes of the development of Republicanism meant the adoption and applicability of principles of due process and equality before the law. Republicanism is the cornerstone for the development of political and legal culture and has remained influential in contemporary policy development in France.

French republicanism emphasizes the supremacy of French nationality as a political identity and eschews intervening attachments or group identities leading to the adoption as assimilation as a guiding principle of race policy. (Lieberman, 19) Universalism is at the core of Republicanism, and remains instrumental to the maintenance of national solidarity. Based on the French ideal of universalism, French society was to be a nation of interconnected citizens' void of divisive elements such as race ethnicity or religion. "In 1833 a law granted citizenship to all freemen in the colonies (creating a theoretical explosion of citizenship when slavery was abolished in 1848), this is extremely important in determining how with great ease Algerians would become French citizens under French rule." (Lieberman, 50)

Although ambiguous, “French racialism and romanticism mingled in an evolving ideology of French nationalism that insisted on the unified organic, biological (and sometimes Catholic) roots of French identity, an ideology that has cast a long shadow over French intellectual and political life in the twentieth century, culminating in Vichy.” (Lieberman, 51) Republicanism combines two approaches to immigration integration policy formation and citizen membership: universalism and assimilation. Republicanism embodies these ideologies stemming from the French Revolution, utilized in the development of social policies of integration. The social policies of France are steeped in the colorblind tradition of French republicanism. Although republicanism is not contextualized or conceptualized for immigration integration policies, it nevertheless has influenced the development of such policies. Republicanism is ideologically universalistic but is particularistic in application as it guards against the erosion individual rights.

### **Liberté Egalité and Fraternité**

Liberté, égalité, and fraternité (liberty, equality, and brotherhood) are linked to the republican spirit rather than the French Revolution; the ideologies expressed in French republicanism were rooted in the revolutionary ideas of the revolution. Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité are found in the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen 1789. Articles four and six are applicable to liberté, and égalité. Article four, Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. (Postgate, 1921) These limits can only be determined by law. Article six says: Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right

to participate personally, or through his representative, in its foundation. (Ibid) It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all dignities and to all public positions and occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinction except that of their virtues and talents. (Postgate, 1921) The third term, fraternité is not explicitly incorporated into the declaration. Although various interpretations exist to explain the adoption of fraternité here it is applied as a universalistic ideal expressed as a moral obligation that links the individual with the community focusing on group solidarity.

Although this section does not present the complete history of the French Revolution, it accomplishes my goal of illustrating the development of influential ideologies developed in France. Although centralization occurred just prior to the revolution, many other attributes of today's government are solely based on revolutionary ideologies, such as, secularization, universalism, and the development of the republican assimilation model as the strategy for immigration integration.

### **French Republican Model**

In the French Republican ideal or the Jacobin model, the objectives of integration are both cultural and political. (Schain, 2003) The expectation is that immigrants will want to conform to French cultural and legal norms, and that there is an acceptance of common public spaces there is separation from religious faith and expression. (Ibid) Although the adoption of the republican model has policy application, it has not prevented special programs or laws aimed targeting specific groups from being implemented. The French Republican model provides an explicit process of integration; by recognizing the legitimacy of collective identities in the private sector, republicanism

prevents the public acknowledgment of ethnic and religious groups; affording them no direct special privileges in public policy. This means that there is “color-blind” support and recognition of the individual but not the collective.

Until recently public policy research, has neglected religion as a relevant input factor with exception of a few welfare and social policy studies, however, there is little knowledge and empirical data for its policy implications. (Minkenberg, 2004) Religion is commonly considered by social scientists to be an aspect of culture, and is uniquely held by some to be an aspect of social life that must be kept separate from the state, and policies to institutionalize secularism are characteristic of Western European society. (Minkenberg, 2007) Historical linkages between state and religion have resulted in the French aversion to the existence of entanglements of religion and state. Policies of secularism within Europe are based on past and recent historical memory of conflict between Europe and Islam. This is not the place to retell the long history of conflict but suffice it to say the expulsion of Muslims from pre-modern Europe has left an indelible imprint on the shared historical memory of Europeans.

Most recent work put forth by political science scholars has focused on particular events or issues plaguing Europe; the events such as terrorist attacks in July 2005 in London, the 2005-2006 riots in Paris, and issues like the headscarf debate. (Roy, 2007) However, religion and religious legacies need to be included in the analysis of these policies to underscore the fact policies have changed throughout Western Europe since the September 11, 2001 attacks. The debates on Muslim immigration and integration have focused on the religious linkages. (Minkenberg, 2007) The debate over Muslim immigration and integration highlight a bigger question regarding the compatibility of

Western culture with Islam. The recent debates illustrate how religious arguments draw divisions along distinctive boundaries of access and membership.

Europe has a long history of state sponsored religion or at least a dominant religion has been interwoven with the state apparatus. The French Revolution of 1789 for example was as much an event to remove the monarchical government system as it was to overthrow the shackles of hierarchical system of privilege and excesses associated with the Church. According to Minkenberg (2004), “historical legacies of state religion (Catholic, Anglican, Protestant churches) meddling in the public and private lives of people facilitated the creation of institutional arrangements in church-state relations.” (2) Many countries in Western Europe, in particular France, are heavily influenced by the historical religious legacies shared with the Muslim world. Therefore their approach to Muslim immigration is met with caution and skepticism. Subsequently, Europeans are threatened by the visibility of Muslims, which represent the widening sphere of influence of Islam in the region. (Minkenberg, 2007) It is this tension between the religious and non-religious that intensifies the secularization of French society. Theoretically the institutionalization of secular as experienced in France has made it possible for Muslims to live within the secularized world while maintaining their personal Muslim identity.

Notably, cultural biases assume religious practices are embedded with specific traditions that either need to be erased or incorporated into multicultural spaces. Throughout his work, Roy (2007) cites the need for compromise if Islam and secularism are indeed compatible. However, these compromises cut both ways affecting Muslim and non-Muslims alike. European society needs to back away from Islamaphobia (paranoia marked by extreme fear and practice of avoidance towards Islam, by prevailing non-

Muslim majority) and institute policies of integration rather than the separation of religion from identity. (Roy, 2007) Although the French case is an extreme example of religious avoidance, there are instances of successful integration of religious peoples within the country of France.

### **Development of Assimilation Model of Immigration Integration**

In dealing with settlement and integration of immigrants, France has adopted the assimilation model. The assimilation model is shaped directly by the French Revolution. The increased Muslim visibility has heightened fears and anxieties about cultural and national security, further narrowing the discourse on inclusion of Muslim immigrants. (Phillips, 2010) The increased politicalization of Muslim integration has reinforced commitment to policies believed to promote common values, national unity and ethnic desegregation. (Ibid) France has adopted the assimilation model, which it is built upon cultural universalism, secular and civic ideals.

France has maintained policies aimed toward assimilation, rejecting any forms of cultural or linguistic differentiation or racial identification. This tradition is built upon ideologies of equality, liberty, and fraternity; outcomes of the French Revolution. These ideologies are coupled with secularization. France has constructed a series of immigration integration policies that are both explicit and implied.

According to Michael Schain (2003), “trends in civic integration policies create an obligation for immigrants who wish to attain the rights of citizens to individually demonstrate that they have earned those rights. (1)” The government of France has introduced a three-pronged approach to immigrant integration: a revised integration plan, a proactive campaign against discrimination, and a more open but still highly selective

immigration policy. (Simon, 2003) The transition from open worker recruitment to restrictive family regroupment illustrates the French method of narrowing the channel between country of origin, mainly former colonies and the former colonial empire.

“Since 1945 the French Civil Code (Article 21-24) has stipulated that no one can be naturalized without demonstrating his or her “assimilation to the French community” through the knowledge of the French language.” (Schain, 13) The decree of November 1945 formalized the principles of immigration policy but came up against uncertainties surrounding Algerian migration. Although the aim of the decree was to encourage European immigration to France, the flow of immigrants was stifled due to the war. The Interior Ministry played a key role in Algerian and in quelling the rebellion of the National Liberation Front (NLF) with part of the solution being the development of bachelor housing for the migrant workers. France instituted policies of control including immigration monitoring policy between 1957 and 1958. (Maillard, 65) In 1958 the political leaders of France, Maurice Bouges-Maunory and General Charles de Gaulle voiced different perspectives on the assimilation of Algerians illustrating a divide among those that were color-blind and those that had color-consciousness. While public discourse was diverse, immigration steadily increased as Algerian gained independence.

The 1980’s marked a change in French society, as a myriad of antiracist-often socialist inspired associations sprang up in the *banlieues* in order to express the demands of second-generation North Africans (*beurs*) helping them to integrate into civil society with the redistribution of goods and services. (Maillard, 2005) Throughout the 1980’s elected officials began preemptively purchasing land in order to prevent the building of mosques, thus ignoring the 1905 law clearly stipulating that the French Republic

guarantees right of worship. (Maillard, 74) In 1981 new immigration policies made it possible for immigrants to obtain three-month working permits and ultimately offering work permits to all French immigrants including those undocumented. This amounts to a conditional amnesty period marked with relaxed sanctions to against employment establishments who employed illegal immigrants and extended working permits it was aimed at further facilitating integration. In 1989 the Council of State made public its opinion on the Muslim veil case, ultimately setting limits of student expressions of freedoms. In 1998 there were demonstrations which resulted in the legalization of residence permits for thousands of illegal immigrants. In 2000 immigration shifted from worker oriented to family reunification or *regroupment familial*. (Maillard, 67) “It is legally different concept from the America idea of family reunification, since the purpose of the *regroupment* is to allow the family of immigrant workers to join him but not the legal right of a French citizen to have his parents and certain relatives join him. (Ibid) In the French case, the term *regroupment* is identifying women coming for marriage or a wife and children joining their husbands. In 2003 the French government created the French Council of the Muslim Faith in order to provide a voice for the Muslim people. In 2004, the French parliament passed a law to ban the Islamic headscarf in public primary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Furthermore, “wearing signs or clothes through which students conspicuously demonstrate their belonging to a religion is prohibited.” (Maillard, 77)

Although immigration integration policies of France have varied over time and lack consistency these policies, however, are consistently aimed at the assimilation of immigrants, in this case Muslim African immigrants. French policies for integration and

naturalization focus on knowledge of French history, cultural, and language, and most importantly the ability for the individual to demonstrate that knowledge. The focus is on the individual not group of individuals.

Arguably, the assimilation model of integration aims at the rapid incorporation and integration of immigrants into French culture both socially and legally by providing easy access to citizenship. The issue of citizenship is not directly addressed in this work. Although citizenship is relevant, here I am focusing on immigration of Muslim Africans immigration, therefore many of these individuals already have citizenship due to colonial practices in North Africa.

Two aspects of the assimilation model are examined within the confines of this chapter: segmented and downward assimilation. I believe these terms to be vital in understanding the lack of integration of African Muslims in French society. The final section within examining the assimilation model of integration focuses on citizenship, which is necessary in understanding the issues of assimilation which follows.

**Segmented assimilation.** Presented in the French case segmented assimilation, a vague term which is reliant upon work completed in 2007 utilizing data from a previous study *Génération 98* a survey of individuals that left school. The term is left ambiguous; however inferences can be made on the nature of its awareness. Roughly stated segmented assimilation refers to the adaptive processes and experiences immigrants have as they integrate into a host society. Segmented assimilation, however, includes many different ways that a new immigrant may adapt to a new society. They may follow the traditional model and assimilate into the middle class. Alternatively, they might follow a less prosperous path and assimilate into the underclass. Therefore, segmented

assimilation demonstrates that the assimilation process for immigrants is not cut and dry. There are various avenues which immigrants navigate the processes already in place.

The authors Richard Alba, Irene Fournier and Roxane Silberman (2007), test their notion of segmented assimilation as developed in the American context however, applied to the second generation of African Muslims in France. The outcome of their study found that the most disadvantaged individuals were from former African colonies predominately of Muslim faith. (Alba and Silberman, 2007) Resulting disadvantaged African Muslims enter the labour-market with educational credentials lower of their native French counterparts. The authors conclude that higher unemployment rates among of African Muslims cannot be explained by educational differences alone, citing discrimination practices in hiring processes. The authors also concede that the utilization of an American conceptualization of segmented assimilation is not entirely applicable to the French case. The greatest contribution made by presenting this literature is conceptualization of second generation: “constituted by immigrant’s children who are born and raised in the receiving society.” (Alba and Silberman, 2007:1)

In the French case, ethnic inequalities exist in the education system, however, in the last two decades fewer individuals have dropped out from school, and although though it may be cost prohibitive, there is greater ease of access to higher education. (Alba and Silberman, 2007) While the authors draw distinctions between individuals based on ethnic or racial basis, I am reminded that France strives to avoid such distinctions.

French republicanism is fundamental to integration policies for the incorporation of second generation. Although the foundation of policies focuses on the creation of

French identity without ethnic or racial distinctions, it has not prevented the creation of policies targeted for the benefit of France's second generation. "The government has designated certain zones of priority in education (ZEP) where schools receive additional support because they meet certain indicators of distress such as high rate of repeaters or foreigners." (Alba and Silberman, 2007: 6) The disadvantages of the second generation are confirmed when analyzing unemployment as a function of education and ethnic generational divides. The authors conclude their analysis of the *Génération 98* asserting that coupled with their understanding of segmented assimilation, second generation from former French colonies in Africa are by far the most disadvantaged actors in the labour-market. (Alba and Silberman, 2007) These individuals enter the labour-market with deficiencies in education but they are further alienated by self-perception that by belonging to the second generation they themselves are individually disadvantaged and discriminated against. "Although French census data does not permit quantitative analyses of segregation, a variety of journalistic and ethnographic accounts strongly suggest that Maghrebin families are concentrated in some of the poorest neighborhoods in France and that youthful members of the second generation are relatively likely to be engaged in petty crime and gang violence." (Alba and Silberman, 2007: 22)"

**Downward assimilation.** A component of segmented assimilation, downward assimilation, focuses on second-generation children of immigrants deemed at risk for downward mobility. This is seemingly an alternative path in society that children of immigrants face. The true definition is rather vague but safe to infer that downward assimilation is the process by which masses become dispossessed within society. Although the notion of downward assimilation is not an exact match aspects certainly fit

the African Muslim second and third generation immigrant experience. While downward assimilation is a product of racism in the United States, the very processes are exhibited in the French case. The second and third generation African Muslim immigrant encounters racism in schools and then the labour markets, combined with the presence of an indigenous racial minority, from whom the second generation can learn a repertoire of oppositional attitudes and behavior. These experiences profoundly influence future behaviors.

Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993) examine factors on the processes of social adaptation of immigrant second generation. Using ethnographic material and survey data the authors illustrate the processes of integration. Although Portes and Zhou focus on the United States, I believe the work completed has broader implications in examining immigration integration policies and their outcomes. “There is an expectation that foreign-born and their offspring will first acculturate and then seek entry and acceptance among the native-born as a prerequisite for their social and economic advancement.” (Portes and Zhou, 82) Prejudices arise from the processes of immigrant incorporation. “Prejudice is not intrinsic to a particular skin color or racial type, and indeed, many immigrants never experienced it in their native lands.” (Portes and Zhou, 83) The movement of different peoples into a monocultural society creates visible distinctions between the various populations. “It is by virtue of moving into a new social environment, marked by different values and prejudices, that physical features become redefined as a handicap.” (Ibid) Although multiple modes of incorporation exist, three types of resources challenge contemporary assimilation processes: political refugees are eligible for government programs education loans; foreign groups exempted from

prejudices (mostly of European descent); and immigrants who join well-established and diversified ethnic groups. (Portes and Zhou, 1993) It is difficult to determine levels of incorporation and integration from one generation to the next between European and non-European immigrants.

**Citizenship.** Although not the focus of this thesis, citizenship cannot be neglected in the discussion of immigration and integration policies. Citizenship is plagued by constant tension between universal inclusion and particularistic exclusion. The modern conceptualization of citizenship denotes the status of identity, but also the process of integration of those with membership into a collective. Furthermore, conceptualization of citizenship is supported by the notion of shared humanity and universal rights, as established from the European Enlightenment. Calls for greater focus on immigration integration, ethnic minorities, and upgrading the meaning of citizenship, have repositioned the question of unity and integration, along with that of citizenship to the center of the political arena.

The French integration crisis is seen merely as an echo of the overall developments throughout the European Union. (Bertossi, 2006) Traditional philosophy of liberal tolerance has given way to perceptions of Islam as a threat to Western values. One key element to serve as contradiction is the very nature of the relationship of France and the European Union. Integration has increasingly been seen through a supranational lens of the EU, whereas citizenship is still within the jurisdiction of state sovereignty. Citizenship in France is ambiguous in regards to ethno-cultural and religious identities. It is this ambiguousness that leads to a contradiction in citizenship policies, the gap between universal principles from which the French Constitution is established and equality of

rights of membership and treatment of formal citizens who are ultimately also members of minority groups. (Bertossi, 2006) The constitution acknowledges the individual as a citizen and as “French” only. The result of contradictions presented in philosophy and practice, has been the identification of a group which is nonexistent, objectively. “Muslims are perceived as not accepting of the “republican values;” supposedly having problematic transnational allegiances, and refusing integration into French society.” (Bertossi, 20)

The very concept of French citizenship is interwoven with the development of French civil, political, and social rights. In the French case, citizenship is both a status of and a process. Furthermore, it is also a matter of discrimination and privilege. The development of citizenship rights depends on the legal infrastructure and community capacities for participatory association. (Lefebvre, 2003) French conceptualization of citizenship intentionally neglects social and socioeconomic and cultural pluralistic dimensions for the conscious prevention of fragmentation and degradation of Republicanism. “In France, the precedence of citizenship over nationality begins with a semantic confusion, which united in a single term two separate realms, political and juridical, producing *citoyen* a word with a double semantic function arising from the sixteenth-century *droit ancien*, the *ancien régime* juridic conception of citizenship.” (Lefebvre, 16)

French integration policies which are based on the conceptualization of citizenship which is focused on universal male suffrage, at the same time disregarding economic and social circumstances which has excluded some individuals from the equality, resulting is a symbolic affirmation of unity. French citizenship neglects social

and socioeconomic dimension intentionally because of fear surrounding social fragmentation. At the heart of the matter is the contradiction between French Republicanism and the reality of policy implementation.

### **Issues of Assimilation**

Although France is a country of immigrants, it is a country of Frenchmen. Despite the cultural racial ethnic diversity, France is a mono-cultural society. Assimilation is ideologically fundamental to French Republicanism that coincides with notions of universalism, pluralism, along with secularism. Assimilation stems from the understanding that citizenship should be based upon high level of cultural cohesion, and that if immigrants wished to become French citizens they should adopt French culture and values rejecting others. In her conclusion, Jane Freedman claims that by banning headscarves, the French government has created legislation which supports exclusion of Muslim girls. Roughly put the law justifies the exclusionary practices of teachers. The religious identification of Islam serves as a visible rejection to the established secular French state.

The immigration policies of France have been shaped by a conflict between actions performed by the state and the republican principles which the laws were founded upon. (Maillard, 2005) Arguably, the case that French culture is universalistic even with the adoption of the assimilation model of integration as implemented by France is a contradiction of philosophy and governance. (Ibid)

Arguably, the accommodation of Islam is an increasingly important political issue across Western Europe. The headscarf debate is the most common and divisive of all attempts to reduce the influence of Islam throughout Western Europe. (Joppke, 2007)

French leadership has taken up a direct and explicit favorable position on the issue of banning the burqa and all resemblances of a full face veil. (Roy, 2007) France has implemented policies that bans the wearing of religious symbols within public institutions, state institutions, in the public arena such as Jewish skullcaps, “large” crucifixes, and most controversial the burqa (full face veil). (Minkenberg, 2004) The veil is most associated with Muslims, however many women of Christian faith wear scarves covering their hair and neck leaving visible the face.

The issue of Muslim integration is highlighted by the *affaire des foulards* (headscarf affair), which is an ongoing debate over rights of religious displays in secular schools. Freedman explores the principles of secularism and its applicability by analyzing the report by the Stasi Commission set up by former President Chirac. Ultimately Freedman argues that the utilization of secularism is evidence of movement back to assimilation as the objective public policy for immigration integration.

While widespread attention has been on legislation from the French government banning the wearing of the *foulard* along with other religious symbols in French schools, lack of attention has been paid to the broader implications thereof. “The legislation is a battle which encompasses wider issues concerning the place of secularism in modern French Republic and the integration of Muslim immigrants into French society.” (Freedman, 6) The reaction to the headscarf issue in schools in France illustrates the key role played by secularism in construction of identity as defined by French Republicanism. The headscarf debate highlights post-colonial relationship between France the colonial empire and North Africa as its periphery.

“The debate about whether Muslim girls should be allowed to wear their headscarves in the secular schools so dear to the heart of French Republicanism exposed one of the fundamental difficulties that the French conceptions of nationhood and citizenship pose for immigrants, namely the residual assimilationism which demands some kind of cultural uniformity as part of its project of integration.” (Freedman, 6) The dissection of secularism further provides the evidence by which Freedman assesses the position of Muslims in French society. Although secularism is a key component of French Republicanism it nevertheless has challenged the establishment of settled Muslim immigrants in France. (Freedman, 2004)

“Socially Islam is practiced by a group of people that is dominated, underprivileged and reduced to political silence.” (Freedman, 8) Despite the opportunities and access to the welfare system, Muslims are at a lesser advantage because of their socioeconomic status; illustrating a circular pattern of poverty and ethnicity. There are currently few political or social organizations that directly operate in France that are comprised solely of Muslim peoples. Although there are councils created to voice concerns of Muslims in France, many Muslims perceive these as government lead organizations which neither represent Muslims nor present issues plaguing the Muslim community. Islam “as the identity of a specific community demanding the recognition of its collective rights after the Anglo-Saxon multiculturalist came as a blow to the secular French Republic.” (Maillard, 77) Rather Islam is represented on behalf of Muslims through third-party affiliations such as the New Anti-Capitalist Party in France.

## **Resistance to Acculturation**

Despite socioeconomic deprivation, young North Africans in France utilize music to carve a cultural niche for themselves. The focus is on the production of values created in a mono-cultural society are rejected and new hybrid ethnicities are created and disseminated through music. “Of all the concepts used with reference to the adjustment process of immigrants, assimilation seems to have garnered the most attention, not so much for its conceptual and theoretical value, but rather for its ideological overtones.” (Echchaibi, 295) Assimilation as the process for integration or adjustment into French society, fails to account for the fluidity of cultural production and transmission in an unbounded territory lacking spatial separation. (Echchaibi, 2001) Immigrants acquire cultural characteristics of the receiving country while holding on to their cultural attributes reinforcing and maintaining unassimilated segregated populations. Arguably there is a failure of assimilation discourse to capture the potential variations of the immigrant experience which can be juxtaposed to the ongoing debate in globalization theory regarding homogenization and heterogenization. (Echchaibi, 2001)

I present music as a cultural expression of identity that bonds people of similar ideologies and lineages. Most scholars examine African Muslim immigration integration in France through understanding assimilation, which prevents reciprocal cultural translation. (Echchaibi, 2001) Media produced by and for immigrants and their communities serve to affirm or articulate their ancestral linkages. The examination of music illustrates that the traditional association of Islam and foreignness linked to the immigration of Muslim African, can no longer be equated to the conceptualization of citizenship and nationality or their cultural identity in France as an assault on Frenchness.

However, the marginalization of young North African peoples in French mainstream media, culminated in the utilization of video cassette recorders for the production and dissemination of culture specific films music and news from home countries. “Radio Soleil and Radio Beur (later called Beur FM) were among the first North African stations to go on the air.” (Echchaibi, 303) These two stations are of special importance demonstrating how young North Africans have been able to create and supplant their own cultures amid the mono-culture of French society. Although both radio stations included French language they promoted Arabic language and their cultural linkages with Africa (programming included Arabic religious lessons, news, and music). (Echchaibi, 2001) Although there was a language barrier, a cultural void was filled by these radio stations. Ultimately, young North Africans used music as both a form of integration and protest.

“Images of North Africans in French media are neocolonial in character, portraying them either as alien to the French community or as a burden on the French economy.” (Echchaibi, 307) Music is only one form of media that immigrants of North African sought to express themselves; however, it was not the only one. The utilization of television is more representative of their situation which is usually misrepresented. (Echchaibi, 2001) However, the video cassette recorder continues to be the best way to solidify linkages with cultures of origins, satellites have created greater ease of access. African Muslims themselves have found a way to maintain their identity as established previously in countries of origin. The creation of radio stations and reproduction of language and cultural symbols illustrates the willingness of the African Muslim diaspora communities to seek out and create a representative form of media for themselves.

## **Conclusion**

The French Revolution 1789 had a lasting effect on the development of French governance and society. The philosophical legacies of the French Revolution are present in contemporary French immigration policies of assimilation and integration. There are contradictions between the philosophies of universalism and assimilation; namely the forceful dissolution of cultural and social self-identification by immigrants. The key lasting elements of the French Revolution: Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité provide the cultural and philosophical underpinnings for contemporary immigration integration policies. The philosophical legacies of the French Revolution were vital in the development of the French Republican Model of assimilation for immigration integration. However, assimilation is as much about the construction of a French monoculture as it is the reduction of the influence of religion by institutionalizing secularism. The strategy of assimilation revolves around a one-way process by which immigrants are forced to trade-in or give up cultural or social traditions linked to country of origin. Two aspects of the assimilation model examined within the confines of this chapter: segmented and downward assimilation are vital in assessing the integration of African Muslim diaspora immigrants in French society. Although segmented assimilation is a relatively new term it remains vague, the mere ability for an alternative form of assimilation suggests that total assimilation of African Muslims into French society has not occurred. Consequently, downward assimilation serves to illustrate further the lack of assimilation by Muslim peoples of African descent. The concept of citizenship is necessary for the understanding of the lack of integration, but also why the government of France is in some way responsible for it. Analysis of immigration integration policies and the

subsequent examination of integration of immigrants is completed only when labeling practices are understood. Citizenship is much a part of a system of privilege and segregation as it is tool for identification.

The goal of this chapter was demonstrated the development of the assimilation model formed by the philosophies of the French Revolution. The historical development of the Republican Model enables even the untrained reader to understand how present-day immigration policies rely upon earlier revolutionary philosophical ideologies; not easily dismissed as culturally biased. Although cultural biases are present in the French case, the philosophies fundamental to integration policies are not. This contradiction is expressed in examining the issues of assimilation as explored in the French case.

This chapter thus has examined the historical legacies of the French Revolution of 1789, the development of the assimilation model, and the issues of assimilation. In order to demonstrate the contradictions and shortcomings of the French model of integration, especially with regards to ethnic and religious “others,” I examine housing policies of the French government and the most visible manifestation of failed integration of immigrants, namely segregation. Despite the ideological convictions established during the French Revolution and the abstention of racial and ethnic recognition and avoidance of group-specific policies, specific groups of nonwhite immigrants nevertheless ended up concentrations along societal periphery of such cities as Paris, Lyon, Lille, and elsewhere. The housing located within the peripheral have become “urban ghettos.” (Wacquant, 2008) The development of the periphery the subsequent “urban ghettos” cast doubt on the applicability of the French integration model.

### **CHAPTER III: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN MUSLIM DIASPORA**

In this chapter, I seek to demonstrate that the current presence of Muslims in France can only be correctly understood if analyzed in the context of French colonialism. To achieve this, I first provide a brief history of French colonialism, where I put special emphasis on the legal frameworks created under the colonial regime. Then, I demonstrate how this colonial framework impacted migratory trends after African colonial independence with the establishment of worker housing in France.

In this chapter I utilize the notion of historical legacy to explore colonialism in the development of African Muslim diaspora communities, la mission civilicatrice the foundational philosophy underpinning French governance towards colonial counterparts, and the development of state supported segregated communities. In this chapter I argue that the historical legacy of colonial structures and legal frameworks had unforeseeable consequences on migratory trends of African native peoples leading to the development of segregated Muslim diaspora communities in France.

A social consequence for France, namely colonialism, has brought about an unforeseeable dilemma of Muslim immigration from North Africa. While migration has broadened the ethnic and cultural demography of France, it has brought with it heightened social tensions and ethno-cultural conflicts playing out today. The presence of Muslim immigrants in France from former African colonies is clearly one of the most

important legacies of colonization and decolonization directly affecting the demographics of France. While various scholars across the social sciences have illustrated the history and politics of colonization, decolonization, and subsequent immigration, it is however, necessary for this thesis to highlight French colonialism in Africa.

The French government held both negative and positive attitudes towards Africa, and subsequently African inhabitants. Unfortunately, the Age of Enlightenment did nothing more than support European ignorance of Africa and prejudices against Africans. Although France setup a trading post in Senegal around the mid 1500s, active French colonization of Africa came later. France had already established the West Trading Company focusing on interests in the Americas and East Trading Company which focused on interests in South and Southeast Asia when colonization of Africa began. The French colonization of Africa began in the seventeenth century and did not end until the late 1970s. In creating the French colonial empire, the country thus conquered and occupied vast territories, including but not limited to Senegal, Tunisia, Niger, and Madagascar.

In 1885 major European powers, vying for more control of African territories, constructed an agreement dividing Africa amongst themselves known famously as the “Scramble for Africa.” France was able to cement control of Western Africa and large portion of Central Africa as well, securing Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Dahomey (now Republic of Benin), and Sudan. France had roughly 15% of Africa under its control, according to the signed agreement of 1885. The French colonial empire was second only to the British. French colonialism mirrored that of many European powers, focusing on commercial gains, not humanitarian efforts. France did not start the slave trade, but

certainly was active in the facilitation of human exportation from Africa to the Americas and Europe. From the creation of trading posts in Senegal, France was involved in the procurement of natural resources such as timber, minerals, and humans. France was clearly not the first European power to create a colonial empire, nor was it the first country to involve itself in the exploitation of Africa. While colonialism was the catalyst in the creation of African Muslim diaspora communities throughout Western Europe, there are further societal similarities in the era from whence colonization was spurred, namely “la mission civilisatrice”, which played a vital role in the creation of the colonies and the policies implemented therein. “La mission civilisatrice” allowed France and other European counterparts to rationalize colonialism under the guise of a civilizing mission, the results of which aimed at the total dissolution of native Africa cultural traditions. “La mission civilisatrice” was utilized to rationalize but also justify the exploitation of the continent of Africa and the various African inhabitants.

My focus is on the French utilization of “la mission civilisatrice” as the justification for the creation of colonies and how this subsequently and permanently promoted colonial attitudes towards immigrants, particularly those of African descent. “La mission civilisatrice” is fundamental in the creation of historical prejudices which are reinforced and justified in the maintenance of cultural biases throughout European society today. (Ndiaye, 2007) There is a common view among European colonial powers that Africans were primitive and were a raw material themselves so that the civilizing powers had a duty to mold at will Africans for their own projects. The mythical notion that Africa was completely savage and chaotic before the arrival of the Europeans is in fact erroneous, but was necessary to justify their actions. Africa and the people therein

were quickly and readily reduced to the economic profitability of a natural resource to serve merely as an input for labor; to be identified and traded as a commodity. (Memmi, 1981) The demotion of Africans from humans a mere marketable good has implications in the establishment of colonial governments and the bloody struggles for independence.

### **Colonial Legal Framework**

Colonialism as an exercise in domination transformed occupied territories changing social governmental and cultural structures. There were two separate tracks in French colonies: one for French citizens and another for French “subjects” which allowed the colonial administrator to maintain a form of government anchored in coercion. The French did not limit domination of African colonies to that of mere influence. In 1854, the *senatus-consult* was signed, establishing the legislative system for the new colonies. Colonies were controlled by the head of the French state. Article 18 of the *senatus-consult* specifically establishes the trajectory of authority in colonies by order of decree by the Emperor (President after the establishment of the Third Republic) until alternative instruction was authorized. Colonial policies were indeed inconsistent, but the transition from monarchy to democracy in the creation of the Third Republic did little by way of establishing democratic institutions in colonies. The system creating the right of citizenship turned the indigenous populations of the colonies “into French ‘subjects’ (not citizens), on whom the administrations could inflict... punishment by a simple ruling.” (Maillard, 2005)

By 1904 many of the previously acknowledge native rulers of colonies were rejected so that colonies were without sovereignty which was projected outward and given entirely in favor of the French state. The parliamentary system instituted by the

Third Republic relinquished legislative control of colonies to the minister or colonial authority, thus granting colonial ministers legislative and executive control. However, in the colonies a governor-general acted as the supreme head of the administration, answering only to the minister. The powers invested in the governor were directly controlled by the Republic. The function of colonial administrators was to be agents for exploitation and oppression of subjects in colonies. The overriding aim of colonial administration was to maintain order.

### **French Colonial Status Indicates Method of Rule**

The history of colonization and decolonization of many French African colonies as well as their native peoples created networks of migration, which occurs similarly across colonies but is different in significant ways. During the colonial period, France created administrative institutions and enacted a host of policies to facilitate French control beyond the borders of the country. It was through these overseas actions that France first gained experience in governing African Muslims. The forms of governance established in African colonies were associated with the different policies implemented by the French government based on the status of the colony: protectorate or departmental structure.

While colonial status varied so too did the method of domination or control. The status of a colony was an indicator for the method of rule utilized. Just as France had two different distinct designations for colonies themselves, France employed two methods of rule: direct and indirect. These policies varied over geographical separation and time. Indirect rule lead to the preservation of cultural and social differences among natives; whereas direct rule was designed to assimilate the colonized peoples through adoption of

the French language and culture. Colonies such as Morocco and Djibouti that were designated protectorate status were governed under indirect rule which is seemingly less invasive. Indirect rule meant that the traditional system of governance and in many cases the native ruler remained in place supplanting French rule through the system already in place. Indirect rule further meant utilizing the local population as a method for control, by providing them with jobs as French colonial administrators. Using the native populous proved to be a cheaper and more effective method of control, because it divided the population creating a system of privilege and ensured French domination. Although this proved to be more effective than direct rule, it would have devastating consequences for entire native populations post independence, as it created hostilities among native peoples within colonial protectorates. The willing acceptance of indigenous authority led to the emergence of “petite bourgeoisie” in protectorates, which upon independence represented privilege, occupation, and oppression of French rule; this system of foreign created privilege and exclusion would be met by violent reactionaries. Former native French civil servants were also among the first to migrate to France once African independence was achieved. (Maillard, 2005)

It is within colonies of protectorate status, that France gained experience with the religion of Islam. Islam in the North African colonies was rather ambiguous and as much a part of a classification system utilized to distinguish between various indigenous peoples. (Maussen, 2007) Like many other colonial powers, France utilized the religion of Islam as a mechanism of control in the African colonies. (Ibid) Indirect rule adopted by France not only tolerated Islam, but used leaders within the religion of Islam to coerce the native population, thus, greatly increasing the power and authority of Islam within the

colonies. It is necessary to point out the eagerness of the French to exploit religion to control and coerce the native African populations, as it is a counterpoint to the French Revolution where the shackles of servitude were linked to privilege and salvation.

Direct rule was the method of control for those colonies with the recognized status as a departmental structure. A departmental structure was closely associated with increased interest of the state requiring more involvement of state function. Direct rule meant the establishment of “rational bureaucratic hierarchy with all officials operating on a state payroll within a single judicial framework,” meaning a truly French system was created from which the colony would be governed. (Bleich, 174) The main and obvious difference between direct and indirect rule was the method of operation. Algeria is the most recognizable former French colony that was ruled directly, while Tunisia also a former French colony was ruled indirectly.

However, all those natives involved in colonial administrations, be it direct or indirect, were the first to migrate to metropolitan France after their countries achieved independence. As colonial administrators, they had “betted on the wrong horse” and faced risky situations in the newly independent countries, which were emerging after sometimes bloody battles for independence against France. (Maillard, 2005)

### **Le Code de l'indigénat: “Native Code”**

The "code l'indigénat" created by the French government initially in 1881 officially applied to all colonies starting with Algeria in 1887. In fact, the “Code l'indigénat,” consisted of a series of decrees that established to give colonial administrators greater power to impose fines and prison sentences without recourse to the courts or approval from superiors. Under the *Code Noir*, Africans were given the legal

status of a commodity or slave, furthermore the 1685 statute governing the treatment of slaves in French colonies, making them a “moveable property.” (Jacques, 198) This “moveable property” was often categorized or listed among merchandise identified by region from whence they came, or according to attributes. Natives were subjects of the French and fell under a system of codes. The “Code l’indigénat” or “*native code*” stripped native inhabitants of all civil rights, and of their very status as complete human beings as it reaffirmed the denial of citizenship status of Africans and affirming superior positions for Europeans. Originally natives were given the various distinctions based on regions, such as Algeria Arabs, but they would later come to be known as *natives* and then *Muslims*.

The *Native Code* system was borrowed from Algerian legislation from the 1870s, when the parliament of France enacted a series of laws outside of French common law for the maintenance of peace and order among Algerian natives. It restricted Africans further by not permitting free travel, within their own country, and subjected them to punishments without the right of appeal any against judicial decisions. Africans were further deprived of native identity, as French colonial authorities often closed down Arab speaking schools and newspapers producing increased illiterate native populations. These native codes served to reaffirm French presumption of the inferiority of Africans. Although there was no segregation as overt as apartheid present in French colonies, there were attempts to strictly regulate colonial life. The seemingly vague list of infractions above may appear to lack clear definition, however, it is necessary as it illustrates how arbitrary the infractions were and the amount of control placed in the hands of administrators.

The native codes regulated the lives in existence in the colonies, creating categories of natives. Those deemed to be assimilated, were eligible for administrative positions within the French empire, thus joining the colonizing state apparatus, becoming a puppet of the regime. After independence, the formerly assimilated natives were the first to migrate to the French mainland, because they had gained citizenship and were entitled to pensions by the state they defended and whose authority they upheld in the colonies. Some of the very native administrators of the French colonial state fought alongside the French Army in wars of independence, thus making it impossible for them to remain in newly independent countries. (Maillard, 2005) *Pieds-Noirs* . (black feet), a term identifying the thousands of French citizens of various European backgrounds who were born in the African colony of Algeria. The first *pieds-noirs* were children of French military administrating French rule in Algeria. The *pieds-noirs* were among the first people to flee once Algeria gained independence.

### **Historical Legacy of the French Colonial Empire in Africa**

Early European immigration in France was relatively open to those individuals who spoke French. With the establishment of the European Union, immigrants from member-states have had relatively free unlimited movement. (Bertossi, 2006) There have been growing pains with the admittance of former Soviet Republics as the perception was that these lesser economically unstable countries would drag the whole of the European Union down as well. (Bangstad, 2009) This has been put to rest as the lower wage employment has been beneficial for those on both sides. Many of France's immigrant population have come from Francophone countries which were part of the country's former colonial past. (Bertossi, 2006)

The major difficulty in writing about how African Muslims came to France is tied to the history of colonization. In order to understand how policies during and after colonization affected demographic shifts it is necessary to look backwards. Drawing upon historical linkages between France and the development of colonies in Africa shows a snap shot of a moment in time.

I agree with Erik Bleich (2005) who argues that colonial policies were inconsistent and have no link or bearing on current immigration and integration policies. The policies are varied over time and inconsistent from colony to colony, and were determined by the status of the individual colony established by importance to France. However, I am not exploring the linkages between colonial migration policies and today's immigration policies, but rather I examine how colonial practices facilitated the development of African Muslim minority in France. Colonial structures and their effects presented several consequences, the arrival of large number of ethnic minority immigrants generated specialized administrative agencies to deal with the problems.

### **La Mission Civilicatrice**

Regardless of delineation, France was motivated by the idea that peoples considered to be part of less favored "races" needed supervision by "advanced peoples" in order to proceed to higher level of civilization. (Bleich, 176) This idea was self-affirming their colonization of North Africa.

Arguably, the motivating force behind French colonization in Africa was the concept of *la mission civilicatrice* (the civilizing mission) Although this concept is no longer explicitly applied in current political discourse, the idea that French culture is inherently superior to those cultures identifiable by immigrants continues, further

segregating those that are French and those who represent a visible “other” within French society. Those who immigrate to France are expected to assimilate into French society by actively rejecting former identities, adopting French identity and culture. This belief is from the domination of republicanism in the French immigration integration model, as it excludes the possibility of hyphenating national identities. “The legacy of *mission civilicatrice* permeates through French political imagination, most recently evidenced by the 2005 law which obligates French history teachers to “recognize in particular the positive role of France’s presence overseas, notably in North Africa, and give due prominence to the history and sacrifices of French army fighters from these territories.” (Balz and Haddad, 26)

An examination of the literature analyzing the 2005 riots in Paris, is relevant to understanding how “*la mission civilicatrice*” would have a lasting impact on the development of segregated African Muslim diaspora communities. The historical development of immigration policies are aligned with social problems such as the legacy of imperial racisms, which has lead to the exclusion of immigrants from former French colonies in Africa and their children. “In October 2005, the predominately Arab-immigrant suburbs of Paris, Lyon, Lille and other French cities erupted in riots by socially alienated teenagers, many of them second- or third- generation immigrants.” (Balz and Haddad, 24) Government officials analyzed the riots of 2005 through a prism of securitization, denying even ignoring alternative causal mechanisms. Clearly many of the rioters were of African descent and Muslim faith, this is undeniable, however, they were disenfranchised youth that saw violence as the only reactionary course afforded to them.

## **The Special Case of Algeria**

Given the magnitude of literature on the long albeit often contentious relationship between French and Algeria, the growing presence of Algerians in contemporary France needs further investigation. Despite having a long history of Islamist-based violent conflict, Algerians are the largest Muslim diaspora minority in France. Thus I look closer at France's involvement with Algeria as a departmental structure, but also post independence.

“As early as 1845 a portion of Algerian territory was declared an integral part of France.” (Alba and Silberman, 2002:1173) Algeria is a well documented example for the development of government controls of a colony deemed a departmental structure. This designation directly affected the implementation of policies in the Algerian case; France was directly involved in governance and thus resulted in the formation of policies geared towards assimilation. In Algeria France oversaw education policies taking responsibility for the building and administration of schools. France encouraged the Europeanization of Algeria, to make Frenchmen of Algerians. Regardless of the start of migration, Algerians found much more success in immigrating to France. Its colonial status paved the way for smoother migration of nearly 2 million Algerian immigrants to France between 1914 and 1945. (Alba and Silberman, 2002)

The Interior Ministry played a key role in Algerian and in quelling the rebellion of the National Liberation Front (NLF) part of the solution was the development of bachelor housing for the migrant workers. France instituted policies of control including immigration monitoring policies between 1957 and 1958. (Maillard, 65) In 1958 the political leaders of France, Maurice Bouges-Maunory and General Charles de Gaulle voiced different perspectives on the assimilation of Algerians illustrating a divide among

those that were color-blind and those that had color-consciousness. While public discourse was diverse, immigration steadily increased as Algerian gained independence.

“In 1962 the Evian Accords stipulated the cease fire drawing Algeria’s war of independence to a close, but also guaranteed the *pieds-noir* (the million European settlers named after the color of their leather boots at the beginning of the colonization of Algeria) civil rights, religion, language, and property.” (Maillard, 66) In the 1970’s though France saw an economic downturn linked to the oil shortage, shifting the government from managing growth to controlling the recession.

Although the historical record highlights the racial biases in the establishment of French colonial rule in Algeria; it nevertheless demonstrates how connected France and Algeria had become. The relationship between colonizer and colonized was contentious, but linkages remained allowing for greater migration after independence. Unfortunately, cultural and racial biases expressed with the established of *le code de l’indigénat* had longer term implications with the development of housing policies and institutions segregating Algerians in France.

### **Causal Mechanisms for Segregation**

France actively sought low skilled workers establishing the National Office of Immigration (ONI). From 1950 until the mid 1970s the government of France recruited worker immigration from African colonies after World War II. (Alba and Silberman, 2007) The first colonies to provide workers were those designated departmental structures. While there are no migration statistics for colonial migration or for the number of African workers arriving in France during this period, there is however, a historical record showing the creation of housing policies and the development of worker housing

as a legacy to the recruitment. While there are no direct governmental policies coordinating and maintaining work immigration, the housing policies are presented to demonstrate a clear decision in promoting worker immigration.

On average, agencies and policies established to manage affairs in colonies were not to deal with immigration integration in France. Instead between 1950s and 1960s, France created integration organizations such as the Social Action Fund (FAS) and the SONACOTRA an organization created in 1956 and tasked with managing hostels for Algerian workers and all others beginning in 1963. That same year an Interministerial Group (GIP) was tasked to cleanup inner-city shanty towns. 1975 a “one percent for housing” tax was allocated for immigrant housing (although not specifically for the building of immigrant housing). Throughout the 1970s a series of laws were aimed at cleaning up shantytowns and creating transitional (temporary) housing rather than permanent housing for immigrant.

Literature providing detailed linkages between France and colonies in North Africa is limited and focuses on social consequences of racism in the oppression of indigenous peoples. Although a detailed description of laws and explicit policies are lacking, through literature, it is easily ascertained that some policies were created for the housing of low-skilled workers from the African colonies. African Muslims would utilize increasingly lax immigration policies for work, thereby taking advantage of the opportunity to work which was directly afforded to them by the French government.

The very creation of *cités* and *banlieues* can be traced back to colonial institutions, especially the Fonds d’action sociale (FAS). (Lyons, 2009). The new institution was to solve many problems.

“On an administrative level, the FAS coordinated disparate services and rationalized the duplication of services to end territorial disputes between various agencies. (Lyons, 70) Crucially, FAS created a board which organizations previously established would come together to work together rather than multiple parts working independently, which reduced redundancies. Arguably, the FAS is an umbrella agency that funded social welfare programs exclusively serving Algerians in the final years of colonial rule, and later expanded its services to all immigrants and their children. “FAS used the language of universalism while it simultaneously considered Algerians as a special case in need of particular attention.” (Lyons, 67)

Funds for FAS came largely from deductions of the salaries of Algerian works, but also donations received along with other funds from the state. Housing costs represents the highest expenditures for the FAS. Welfare programs took place within housing projects. While intended purpose of FAS and welfare programs was the integration of immigrants into French society, it nevertheless created and maintained segregated communities of disadvantaged peoples.

## **Conclusion**

There are seemingly two competing arguments presented here: on one hand segregation is a consequence of governmental policies, on the other hand segregation is a choice which immigrant concentrations actively engage in. The information presented throughout this chapter indicates that the first rather than the latter is true. Segregation is a societal outcome of governmental policies of integration.

The creation of *cités* and banlieues resulted from colonial attitudes and are maintained by the legacies of colonial attitudes towards African Muslims. It is a circular pattern of French governance which creates and maintains the segregation and alienation of African Muslims diaspora communities which are often the most socioeconomically deprived group of immigrants.

The brief history of colonization and decolonization in Africa is highlighted within this chapter in order to demonstrate the historical and ancestral linkages between African Muslims and France. This chapter is historical and therefore is straightforward in detailing the historical development of the African Muslim diaspora minority in France. The legal framework created by France to maintain control and order in colonies is presented to demonstrate the ancestral and historical relationship between France and African Muslims. A special case of Algeria is presented to highlight the surprising presence of Algerians in France, despite the contentiousness of the relationship between Algerians and France. Although housing policies began in 1956 they continue the development of African Muslim communities well after all African colonies gain independence. Furthermore, this chapter illustrates how racial biases and cultural assumptions of *la mission civilisatrice* allowed for the colonization of Africa. In this chapter I demonstrate how the government of France established segregated communities with worker housing and shifting perceptions of the immigrant neighborhood. By examining racism and labeling issues in contemporary France, I analyze the two sides of segregation: governance and alienation. While the two main arguments for the creation of African Muslim diaspora communities in France rely heavily either state creation or alienation, I believe that the two cannot be separated. It is my conclusion that the

functioning policies for the creation of worker housing subsequently becoming housing for the reunification of families spawns segregated communities. The very nature of labeling stigmatizes the very people already alienated maintaining the isolation of the population. The goal of this chapter was designed to demonstrate how African Muslim diaspora communities developed in France. Although clear linkages of ancestral and historical relationships between France and African through colonization, it was necessary to work through the patterns of governance for the later assessment of assimilation and integration of African Muslims in France.

## CHAPTER IV: THE REALITIES OF LIFE IN BANLIEUES

In this chapter I seek to illustrate the issues plaguing African Muslim diaspora communities residing in *cités* and *banlieues*. The occurrence of segregated African Muslim diaspora communities can only be understood by first examine the existence of racism within French society. Once I have analyzed racism in France, I move to demonstrate the occurrence of segregation of African Muslims. Afterwards, I examine the reactionary violence orchestrated by African Muslims against French authority.

### **Existence of the Non-Existent: Racism**

An examination of racial incorporation and immigrant integration is necessary and to achieve this end, I utilize the work of Robert C. Lieberman, who examines facets of the very issue seen in this study, but focuses on the American experience by highlighting the French case. Lieberman (2007), attempts to understand how the United States utilizes two ideologies in dealing with race: color conscious or color blind, which is applicable to policy formation in France. Color blindness of the United States embodies the egalitarian liberal traditions and is race conscious. This dilemma is not limited to the United States alone. Clearly, France, that is to say the French government, is struggling with the decision of color blindness or color consciousness. The rising racial tensions and violence in France stem from patterns of racial and ethnic inequality, exclusion, and discrimination. The European experience is both similar and dissimilar to

the American case although embedded in different political structures and systems of belief. Although the existence of racism is not readily acknowledged, it is all who experience it.

Despite historical political ideological achievements, France has experienced rising tension stemming from racially charged politics. This has occurred despite the historical avoidance of racial and ethnic recognition. The guiding principle of French race policy is republicanism. French Republicanism attempts to ignore racial and ethnic linkages by emphasizing the supremacy of French nationality as a political identity while eschews intervening attachments or group identities.

Highlighting the specificity of race in regions unaccustomed to facing racial and ethnic distinctions contribute to debates about societal cohesion in France. French monoculture, hinges on the connection between institutions and their ideological foundations devoid of racial recognition. Although France has historically engaged in developing a color-blind society, race and ethnic linkages emerge in the housing policies implemented by the government of France. The existence of race based discrimination is illustrated when members of French monocultural society interact with the physically visibly different “other,” African Muslims. This issue of color is interjected into the discussion seemingly because it is a physical manifestation of the “other” in France. Although French culture and society are founded on color-blind philosophies, nevertheless, the applicability of such notions is difficult to sustain.

I agree with Karima Laachir (2007), who claims that it is not enough to blame social and economic marginalization, however, I disagree with her argument that France’s colonial legacy has a far more important role in the framing of policies of

immigrant integration. “Whereas French Republicanism itself on the total equality of all citizens whatever their ‘race,’ class, gender or sexuality, reality on the ground demonstrates the high level of discrimination against French citizens of non-European origin.” (Laachir, 100) Although I agree that colonial legacy has historical significance in the development of the African Muslim diaspora, and attitudes of French society, however, it does not directly shape immigration integration policies on the whole.

While the government of France does not recognize racial and ethnic identities; that does not mean French society is devoid of labeling. “Ghetto”, “ethnic neighborhood”, “integration area”, or “central immigrant areas” are but a few of the many labels designated unofficially to immigrant concentrations, however; this labeling does not lead to segregation of immigrant communities. Regardless of the name ascribed to immigrant concentrations, clearly segregation occurs. While I do not believe that labeling itself is the causal mechanism to the segregation of African Muslim diaspora communities, labeling does stigmatize and further maintain the alienation of African Muslims.

In analyzing the impact of residential policies on immigrants, Patrick Simon (1998) examines labeling by studying the term ghetto, which is an emotionally charged word to expressing prejudices towards the concentration of immigrants in one area. This represents the breakdown of the welfare states’ social safety system embodying the processes of ethnic fragmentation. “When the most stigmatized ethnic groups moved to conventional housing and especially to the deteriorated social housing projects, immigrants all of a sudden became much more noticeable.” (Simon, 51) Arguably, heightened perceptions of ethnic segregation occur simultaneously as ethnic

concentrations engage in social movements either actively or reactively. There is increased as visibility of concentrations of immigrants living in the periphery. Riots of 2005 broke out due to the breakdown of relationships between immigrant concentrations and prevailing French culture. “Although the situation of immigrants has been identified as a significant factor in the urban crisis, surprisingly enough this fact is not taken into consideration in major public policy orientations.” (Simon, 55)

Arguably, national public policies are founded on interpretations of how ethnic concentrations constitute themselves. “Ethnic grouping strategies create a protective enclave image, which is often associated with a closed community.” (Simon, 56) The development of immigrant neighborhoods demonstrates the resilience of segregationist system and illustrates how little freedom immigrants are given in residential choices.

Although French policies do not officially recognize ethnic or religious differences between peoples, groups, or associations, French housing policies nevertheless designed social housing projects specifically for ethnic and religious minorities arriving from former colonies, thus producing, neighborhoods with strong concentrations of Muslims and nonwhites from former colonies. While French policies were aimed at preventing the establishment of groups within the nation, housing policies did the exact opposite, producing segregated groups of similar origins and religious traditions.

### **Segregation**

Recent increases in immigration from African countries have led to a substantial increase in the overall population of African born peoples residing in France. According to survey data from the 2004 to 2005 annual census indicates that approximately 1.5

million North Africans and roughly 570,000 sub-Saharan Africans immigrated to France. The population of African Muslims residing in France is rather complex with three identifiable groups, those individuals who fled after colonial independence, those that sought labor opportunities, and the second- generation. Despite the newer immigration, French nationals remain the largest population to inhabit *cités and banlieues*. *Banlieues* represent continuity of past racism and colonial exclusion in contemporary France. Situated on the periphery the disadvantaged living within the housing projects are a constant reminder of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Although the *banlieues and cités* were constructed to be housing for the working migrant populations, they have become dysfunctional and stagnant. The low-income housing fulfilled its purpose of containing France's foreign-born within the suburban areas. Unfortunately, housing in *cités and banlieues* is often dilapidated and overcrowded.

Despite the rhetoric surrounding assimilation and of the republican model it is obvious to the untrained observer that immigrants inhabit the periphery of French society. In such cities as Paris, Lyon, or Marseille immigrant communities live predominately in suburban housing projects named *cités*. The legacy of *cités* dates back to the late nineteenth century and saw three phases of establishment when the French government constructed subsidized housing in order to accommodate workers during booming industrial expansion. Later these *cités* were accommodating Algerian Jews, *pieds noirs*, and *harkis* (Algerians who fought for the French in the Algerian war). (Balz and Haddad, 2007) The last recognized phase of subsidized housing was built to house African workers that France actively sought to fuel economic growth.

Although *cités* saw different people living within them, they nevertheless serve as acute illustrations of explicit exclusion. While peoples of various origins reside in *cités* French nationals continue to represent the majority of the population up to 80 percent. (Wacquant, 20) On average, 20 percent of foreigners residing in *cités* are of African descent. (Wacquant, 21) Those residing in *cités* face socioeconomic deprivation and social marginality and are further alienated further by ethno-racial ideologies which enforce isolation. Residents of *cités* are negatively associated with foreignness and immigration insecurities, poverty, crime, and moral degradation. (Wacquant, 1993) The establishment of *cités* has consequently served to spatially segregate and socially confine their inhabitants. The spatial separation only adds to the social separation of ethnic and racial distinctions between immigrant communities. The establishment of immigrant worker housing along the periphery by the government and neglect of the subsequent growth of communities that reside there increases disenchantment and the growth of disenfranchised generations. It is this cycle of segregation and isolation that Balz and Haddad (2007), claim leads to a youthful generation marked by high unemployment levels, lower education credentials; which leads to violence. The *cités* and *banlieues* created cleavages or pockets of immigrants of similar origins or traditions within the broader context of creating a homogeneous French society.

Arguably, *cités* and *banlieues* are considered “*quartiers en difficulté* (difficult areas) or *zones sensibles* (trouble spots).” (Balz and Haddad, 2007) Basically, the socioeconomic conditions and poor education credentials stigmatize the *cités* and *banlieues*, which by the accounts of many scholars like Laachir led to the riots of 2005. Marginalization and alienation in social and political spheres, socioeconomic deprivation,

and discrimination are issues plaguing *cités* and *banlieues*. The French government has by many accounts not addressed issues plaguing peoples in the periphery, further segregating the *cités* and *banlieues*. The riots of 2005 and 2006 were seen as a direct display of a religious “other” acting against, even rejecting Frenchness, which highlighted the differences between Muslims and non-Muslims. Unfortunately, the government of France and many scholars see the riots of 2005 and 2006 through the lens of securitization and associate the riots with Islam due to the perceived connection of Islam rather than discontentment over marginalization and socioeconomic situations of the Muslims in *cités* and *banlieues*.

### **Violence in the Banlieues**

Far from being an irrational expression of incivility, the riots of 2005, orchestrated by Muslim youths in *cités* throughout France, constitute a response to the economic and sociopolitical deprivation of African Muslim youths. The social, political, and cultural impoverishment has polarized the class structure which is maintained and further reinforced by racial and ethnic segregation, the outcomes of government housing. (Mehta, 2010) Residents in *cités* and *banlieues* continue to be plagued by mass unemployment which is chronic and persistent bringing about material deprivation while heightening the awareness of deficiencies of residents. The regulatory process decays with the reduction of resource allocation which in turn increases and intensifies the competition between households and communities vying for the same scarce goods. (Mehta, 2010) The habitation of socially and politically stigmatized *cités* and *banlieues* increases the perceived linkages between poverty and crime. The linkages of the deprived living in poverty and violence are only heightened with the failures of economic success.

The gulf between those who have and the impoverished is widened when economic success does not improve the lives of those living in *cités* and *banlieues*. (Mehta, 2010)

“In France, income inequality grew for the first time in the post-war era in spite of social transfer measures targeted on deprived categories implemented by successive Socialist governments.” (Wacquant, 2008:26)

Violent altercations have occurred over the past few decades. The hostilities have erupted between Muslim youth and government authority. The police are increasingly recognized as an undesirable presence whose sole purpose is to intimidate and harass residents of *banlieues*, particularly felt among the youths. Nearly all recent collective unrest was ignited by incidents involving agents of law enforcement and disenfranchised youths of *banlieues*.

## **Conclusion**

Issues in housing are prevalent in contemporary France. The historical legacy of colonialism namely, the racist stereotype established in previous chapters is further demonstrated with the stigmatism attached to the residents of *cités* and *banlieues*. The information provided in this chapter is highly qualitative; however it illustrates the point that racism has occurred even when philosophical underpinnings avoid or reject racial and ethnic identification. The goal of this chapter is to illustrate the current conditions in housing developments. I do not make distinctions between French nationals and foreigners directly, however it is clear to see that French citizens comprise a majority of the population in *cités* and *banlieues*. The higher levels of unemployment serve as a constant reminder of the deprivation suffered by residents of *cités* and *banlieues*, but are hardest felt against those who perceive themselves to be further discriminated against due

to visible differences. While the governmental policies' created and maintains *cités* and *banlieues* the long term psychological effects on French society degrade the status of the individuals who reside there. This degradation is detrimental to the overall wellbeing of its inhabitants. The deprivation and lack of education retards growth and prosperity, which reflects poorly on the individuals themselves, even more so is the perception that the poverty experienced in the *cités* and *banlieues* breeds crime and violence. The experience of African Muslims as illustrated demonstrates that the attachment of violence to poverty stricken *cités* and *banlieues* is the justification for further securitization, rather than a reaction by African Muslims against their marginalization and alienation. The violence which has occurred in France between African Muslims and authority, often times stemming from singular incidents igniting an already contentious situation. Ultimately the issues in *cités* and *banlieues* are consistent and challenging at best. Unfortunately, African Muslims are the clear and present "other" that is highly visible in the French monocultural society. Furthermore, the visibility of such an "other" serves to highlight discrepancies and deficiencies of the class structure in French society.

## **CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION OF THESIS**

France has been impacted by immigration of a labor force and the subsequent family reunification. The population of France has increasingly become culturally diversified. France cannot be characterized as a homogeneous society; however, the government of France strives to preserve cultural homogeneity. France may be in denial of being identified as a multicultural society, but for now it will remain pluralistic but culturally French. The reliance of the French government on the assimilation model of integration is an official attempt to maintain French monoculture.

The cultural divisions and religious disparities between the state and African Muslim population have created an environment where socioeconomic marginalization has occurred. This deprivation has caused the disenfranchisement of African Muslims. Furthermore, the discontentment of African Muslim youth is increasingly expressed through violence. The isolation and alienation of African Muslims has contributed to an alternative construction of identity. The persistent of alienation and segregation forms a framework of social and economic rejection which strengthens insular structures within already established African Muslim communities.

The segregation and stigmatization of African Muslim population pushes them to seek acceptance and self-recognition elsewhere with those with whom they can equally identify. There is an apparent refusal by many younger generations to accept French

identity alone, opting to construct and maintain their own ancestral cultural identities. Islam is more than a religion; it provides guidance for Muslims for daily life, it represents a cultural and religious identity, as such an increasing number of Muslims seek to be recognized through Islam.

The issues highlighted in this thesis, reveal the difficulties experienced by France in the acceptance and integration of African Muslims who do not fit neatly into their national paradigm. Unfortunately, African Muslims themselves seem inflexible. The socioeconomic marginalization and segregation affects their willingness to integrate. Fortunately, African Muslims are increasingly articulating their demands among which is recognition of their religion. It is necessary for France to realize that Afro-Islamic self-identification is associated with the consciousness of socioeconomic and cultural impoverishment.

Segregation of African Muslim diaspora communities has occurred as an unintended consequence of French governance. Islam is the second largest religion in France, and is practiced by a group of people that is dominated by poverty and social stigmatization. Despite rampant socioeconomic deprivation and segregation, immigration integration policies have allowed for inroads through the political process. African Muslims although not clearly represented in census data, are increasingly represented in politics. Multimedia sources have allowed the creation and dissemination of Afro-Islamic ancestral identity, but also created an outlet of expression. The French case is not a shining success; however, there are apparent successes despite unintended consequences. The utilization of assimilation as a strategy of integration remains a viable alternative to failed multiculturalism of Europe.

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