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THESIS

**INTEGRATING FRENCH MUSLIMS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS
OF MULTICULTURALISM AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE
REPUBLICAN MODEL OF ASSIMILATION**

by

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MODEL OF ASSIMILATION**

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ABSTRACT

The series of terrorist attacks in France since the early 2000s, many committed by French-born Muslims, caused renewed concern about the integration of France's large Muslim minority. While integration challenges are arguably not the root cause of radicalization among French Muslims, they are likely a contributing factor. This thesis considers the potential benefits and feasibility of adopting a multicultural policy framework as an alternative to the traditional French Republican model of integration in order to improve the integration of French Muslims and to potentially curb radicalization. Many French Muslims are concentrated in isolated suburban areas characterized by poor education opportunities, unemployment, and crime. French Muslims have also been disproportionately affected by France's commitment to a strict *laïque* secularism that has made it exceedingly difficult for them to establish an improved religious infrastructure. Furthermore, French Muslims often suffer from exclusion, discrimination, and even hate crimes. This thesis contends that multicultural policies could have some positive effects on integration in the area of religious rights accommodation, but such policies are unlikely to significantly improve the overall integration of French Muslims because their primary concerns are social acceptance and obtaining full access to their individual rights as French citizens and not differential group rights.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CFCM	Council of the Muslim Religion
CORIF	Council of Reflection on Islam in France
FAS	Fund for Social Action
FN	Front National
FNMF	National Federation of Muslims in France
GMP	Grande Mosquée de Paris
HLM	habitations à loyer modéré
ICRI	Indicators of Citizenship Rights for Immigrants
INED	French Institute for Demographic Studies
INSEE	National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies
MPI	Multiculturalism Policy Index
UOIF	Union of Islamic Organizations in France

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I. INTRODUCTION

France has been called a “multicultural society without multiculturalism” and criticized for employing what is considered by many to be a largely assimilationist model of integration.¹ But would multiculturalism be a desirable option for France? Would it be an effective framework to address the concerns of France’s estranged Muslim population? Specifically, this thesis will examine how France has pursued the integration of Muslim minority populations into society and to what extent its official commitment to secularism has affected this process. What challenges and benefits does multiculturalism present within the current French system? Could multiculturalism help resolve France’s purported integration problems? Finally, could multiculturalist policies help reduce social tensions and curb radicalization and increasing homegrown terrorist attacks in France to contribute to a more stable, secure society?

In order to investigate these questions and others, this thesis will take up the following issues: the unique challenges presented by France’s Republican state model and the attitude toward religion expressed in France’s official policy of secularist *laïcité*, implications of the French government’s immigration policies, socio-economic divisions established and reflected in housing arrangements affecting French Muslims, and the representation of Muslims in French media and society. Finally, an analysis of rights claims and grievances will suggest multiculturalism’s potential to improve the integration of Muslims in France and even prevent radicalization and homegrown terrorism.

A. SIGNIFICANCE

Immigration has reemerged one of the most divisive political issues of the 21st century, not only in France, but throughout Europe and beyond. The increase in globalization and the open borders of the European Union’s Schengen Zone have opened the door to increased economic immigration to Europe in pursuit of employment. In addition, political conflicts in Northern Africa and the Middle East have spurred what has

¹ Raymond Taras, ed., *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 15.

come to be known as the European migrant “crisis” as hundreds of thousands have fled their homelands in search of safety and better living conditions in Europe. The recent influx of immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons has prompted many European countries to reassess their policies for integration. In light of the recent increase in terrorist acts by Muslim extremists, the large number of immigrants from Muslim societies has generated concern in many Western societies, leading them to question their ability and willingness to integrate growing Muslim minorities.

France has a long history of immigration, much of which took place after becoming a nation-state in the late 18th century. Therefore, immigration and integration together have played an important role in its development as a nation and a society. France also maintained a vast colonial empire until the aftermath of the Second World War, which uprooted the preexisting international order and brought about its gradual decolonization. This was accompanied by a steady flow of immigrants into France, many of whom hailed from Northern and Western Africa and practiced Islam. As of 2016, Muslims made up 4.9% of Europe’s population, with an estimated 5.72 million living in France.²

Over the years, the French government has faced many challenges in addressing its growing Muslim population and the nation has experienced surges in terrorist acts perpetrated by Muslims, many of whom were born and raised in France.³ A predominant narrative is that Muslim integration into French society has failed under its traditional Republican structure and some advocate a different approach or model such as multiculturalism.

In order to appreciate the current status of French Muslim minorities and associated immigration concerns, it is important to understand the local context and integration policies employed in France over time. The aim would be to determine with greater confidence whether France’s approach has in fact facilitated or hindered integration and to

² “Muslim Population Growth in Europe,” Pew Research Center, November 29, 2017, <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/>.

³ Michael S. Neiberg, “‘No More Elsewhere’: France Faces the New Wave of Terrorism,” *The Washington Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 24–25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2017.1302736>.

what extent a multicultural model of integration could be more effective. As Favell explains “a feasible multi-ethnic diversity makes everyone better off. Failure to achieve the right framework for integration, however, will lead to an increase in intolerance and xenophobia among majority populations, and a loss of ‘moral social order.’”⁴ If it is accepted that failed integration is a likely factor leading to the radicalization of individual Muslims who potentially resort to terrorism in response, identifying an effective integration framework is of vital importance to modern states. These findings may enable France and other European countries to better tailor their policies to promote effective integration of their Muslim populations.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis will benefit from a number of books that address France specifically, including the following: *Challenging Multiculturalism*; *Multiculturalism, Muslims, and Citizenship*; *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*; *Philosophies of Integration*; and *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany*.⁵ This literature review will, however, concentrate on the core concepts at issue in this investigation, namely multiculturalism and radicalization. The primary research question relates to a number of complex concepts with entire fields of literature dedicated to each in its own right. While it is impractical to provide exhaustive analysis of each relevant field, certain major themes and arguments are necessarily related to the overarching study. This review will first consider what multiculturalism means, how it relates and contributes to integration, and how it can be studied. It will then consider research findings concerning factors that contribute to radicalization, including under what conditions radicalization leads to acts of terrorism. An overview of the multiculturalism literature will provide a framework with

⁴ Adrian Favell, *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain*, 2nd ed, Migration, Minorities, and Citizenship (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 4.

⁵ Florent Villard and Pascal-Yan Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” in *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*, ed. Raymond Taras (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 236–54; Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero, eds., *Multiculturalism, Muslims, and Citizenship: A European Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Jonathan Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims: The State’s Role in Minority Integration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012); Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*; Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

which to analyze policies and approaches to integration within France and determine its potential to address shortcomings of France's Republican model.

1. Multiculturalism

According to David Miller, multiculturalism is “an ideology that attaches positive value to cultural diversity, calls for the equal recognition of different cultural groups, and calls upon the state to support such groups in various ways.”⁶ The relevance of multiculturalism in today's context, however, goes beyond simple rhetoric or attitudes in favor of a multicultural society. In practice, multicultural policies refer to “specific government policies designed to positively recognize diversity and help minorities maintain cultural and religious practices while integrating them into public life.”⁷ In other words, multicultural policies seek to integrate minorities into the local society without them having to sacrifice the customs and characteristics that make them unique. It is important to note that multicultural policies focus on the collective rights of particular groups as opposed to individual rights. While the term “multicultural” seems to have fallen out of fashion, with some political leaders moving away from using the term at all, many Western nations still uphold various multicultural policies.⁸ Some commentators misuse the term to describe different policies concerning citizenship and anti-discrimination which are more concerned with ensuring the application of universal rights to individuals than with upholding collective group-differentiated rights.⁹ Examples of multicultural policies can include separate schools or special curricula, affirmative action programs, mandatory representation in institutions, or exemption from various codes and obligations.¹⁰

⁶ David Miller, “Multiculturalism and the Welfare State: Theoretical Reflections,” in *Multiculturalism and the Welfare State: Recognition and Redistribution in Contemporary Democracies*, ed. Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka (Oxford University Press, 2006), 326–27.

⁷ Matthew Wright and Irene Bloemraad, “Is There a Trade-off between Multiculturalism and Socio-Political Integration? Policy Regimes and Immigrant Incorporation in Comparative Perspective,” *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 1 (2012): 78, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592711004919>.

⁸ Ruud Koopmans, “Multiculturalism and Immigration: A Contested Field in Cross-National Comparison,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 39, no. 1 (2013): 152, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071312-145630>.

⁹ Koopmans, 151.

¹⁰ Koopmans, 151–52.

With respect to the multiculturalism debate, European countries are often compared to what are considered to be the classical immigration countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, because of their high percentages of foreign-born populations.¹¹ In conducting cross-national comparisons of multiculturalism, Koopmans emphasizes the importance of the degree and form of diversity within countries' populations, as these factors can have important policy implications.¹² To illustrate, he compares foreign born and Muslim population percentages in the four classical immigration countries and ten European immigration countries. For example, he shows that Australia had 23.9% and the United States had 12.9% of their populations that were foreign born in 2010, compared to 11.3% in Britain and 11.1% in France.¹³ However, the percentages of Muslims in Britain and France were 4.6% and 7.5% respectively, whereas in Australia they made up only 1.9%, and only 0.8% in the United States.¹⁴ His results reveal that European countries, while lower in overall numbers of immigrants, have significantly higher percentages of Muslims, both immigrant and native-born.

Bevelander and Taras note that “both beneficiaries and critics agree that multiculturalism is a way to make claims on the state—justifiable ones for the first group, opportunistic ones for the second.”¹⁵ Multicultural policies can extend into multiple realms of society and include social, political, economic, cultural and religious rights. Koopmans and his co-authors found that in the 1990s, “60–80% of immigrant claims for cultural rights in France, Britain, and the Netherlands were made by non-Christian religious groups” and that a disproportionately vast majority of claims for religious rights were made by Muslims compared to other religious groups.¹⁶ This is significant because, as Koopmans explains,

¹¹ Koopmans, 147.

¹² Koopmans, 149.

¹³ Koopmans, 150.

¹⁴ Koopmans, 150.

¹⁵ Raymond Taras and Pieter Bevelander, “The Twilight of Multiculturalism? Findings from across Europe,” in *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 14.

¹⁶ Ruud Koopmans et al., *Contested Citizenship: Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Europe*, vol. 25 (University of Minnesota Press, 2005), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctttsd0w>.

“religious rights claims tend to be more difficult to accommodate than ethnic claims because they are not just about customs but are often seen as sacred duties that cannot be compromised.”¹⁷ The proportionally high number of Muslims and their record for appealing to multiculturalism to obtain or uphold their rights helps to explain why the debate is fundamentally different in Europe, in contrast with the classical immigration countries.¹⁸

Multiculturalism as a public policy is intended to help promote the integration of minorities, but some have questioned its effectiveness and legitimacy. Mackey argues that there is a degree of tolerance inherent to multiculturalism, which she describes as “an integral part of the project of building and maintaining dominant power, and reinforcing Western hegemony.”¹⁹ In her view, multiculturalism reinforces the difference between majority and minority and thus perpetuates a hierarchy. Similarly, Žižek asserts that “after righteously rejecting direct populist racism as ‘unreasonable’ and unacceptable for our democratic standards, they [governments] endorse ‘reasonably’ racist protective measures.”²⁰ In his view, “today’s tolerant liberal multiculturalism is an experience of the Other deprived of its Otherness—the decaffeinated Other,” in which otherness is “quarantined” to become less threatening.²¹ In 2011, both David Cameron, then the British Prime Minister, and Nicolas Sarkozy, then the French President, expressed their discouragement concerning integration via multiculturalism, essentially calling it a failure.²² This has tarnished multiculturalism’s positive image as a desirable and effective tool for integration. Echoing these comments, a common sentiment in Europe today is that multiculturalism has failed to advance integration and that it has in fact promoted segregation and increased social tensions.

¹⁷ Koopmans, “Multiculturalism and Immigration,” 150.

¹⁸ Koopmans, 151.

¹⁹ Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 163.

²⁰ Slavoj Žižek, “Barbarism With A Human Face,” *In These Times* 34, no. 12 (2010): 15, <https://doi.org/ProQuest>.

²¹ Žižek, 15.

²² Koopmans, “Multiculturalism and Immigration,” 148.

The liberal argument against multiculturalism stems from the understanding that the concept of the nation-state emerged in the seventeenth century as a means to transcend ethnic, cultural, and religious differences and supersede them with national unity, solidarity, and equality.²³ With multiculturalism, the very institution that was intended to moderate differences is being used to encourage them. Joppke describes Barry's and Sartori's views that the cultural recognition prescribed by multiculturalism becomes problematic in that it is not possible to recognize all cultures equally because the comprehensive embracing of all cultures unavoidably devalues them.²⁴ In other words, if every culture is special, none is special. As a result, some scholars have argued that there has been a general retreat from multiculturalism due to lack of public support, policy failures, and a "new assertiveness of the liberal state to impose liberal principles."²⁵ This retreat has been associated with a "return of assimilation" in response to the differentialist nature of multiculturalism.²⁶ Concerning integration, Taras and Bevelander maintain, "citizenship, not multiculturalism, is becoming the barometer of successful state management of diversity as well as of immigrant integration attainment."²⁷

Without completely denouncing multiculturalism, Bikhu Parekh contends that humanity is too complex to be adequately addressed by one policy or ideology.²⁸ But other observers find that there is still value in multicultural policies, particularly when paired with measures for civic integration such as host-country language courses, instruction in national politics, history, and culture, and citizenship rites.²⁹ In contrast to arguments that

²³ Christian Joppke, "The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State: Theory and Policy 1," *British Journal of Sociology* 55, no. 2 (2004): 237–57, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2004.00017.x>.

²⁴ Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 270; Giovanni Sartori, *Pluralismo, multiculturalismo e estranei: saggio sulla società multietnica* (Milan: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 2002), 69; cited in Joppke, 242.

²⁵ Joppke, 237.

²⁶ Rogers Brubaker, "The Return of Assimilation? Changing Perspectives on Immigration and Its Sequels in France, Germany, and the United States," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24, no. 4 (2001): 531–48, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870120049770>.

²⁷ Taras and Bevelander, "The Twilight of Multiculturalism? Findings from across Europe," 11.

²⁸ Bhikhu C. Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, 2. ed (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 338.

²⁹ Koopmans, "Multiculturalism and Immigration," 156.

civic integration is replacing multicultural policies, some experts argue against a zero-sum relationship between the two.³⁰ Mathieu argues that the adoption of civic integration policies can complement multicultural policies and be consistent with a “multiculturalist advance.”³¹ Wright and Bloemraad consider how “how multicultural and citizenship policies influence immigrants’ socio-political engagement with their adoptive nation” in areas of social inclusion, political inclusion, and political engagement.³² They conclude that multiculturalism “in no case hinders engagement with society and government, and in many cases seems to foster it.”³³ In their view, the “repeal of such policies is likely to have the perverse effect of further marginalizing and alienating immigrant populations.”³⁴ This judgement would support the argument that the negative light cast on multiculturalism could be merely a “crisis of perception.”³⁵ According to Wright and Bloemraad, those who defend multiculturalism, including Kymlicka, Parekh, and Taylor, generally claim that by supporting and recognizing minorities, these communities will develop stronger connections to their states and societies.³⁶

While there is still much debate surrounding justifications for multiculturalism, an important challenge lies in measuring its outcomes. Koopmans reviews a number of studies that seek to evaluate the outcome of multicultural policies with respect to immigrant

³⁰ Wright and Bloemraad, “Is There a Trade-off between Multiculturalism and Socio-Political Integration?”; Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka, “Is There Really a Backlash Against Multiculturalism Policies” (working paper, Stockholm Center for Linnaeus for Integration Studies, October 4, 2012), <http://su.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:821657/FULLTEXT01.pdf>; Félix Mathieu, “The Failure of State Multiculturalism in the UK? An Analysis of the UK’s Multicultural Policy for 2000–2015,” *Ethnicities* 18, no. 1 (2018): 43–69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796817713040>.

³¹ Mathieu, “The Failure of State Multiculturalism in the UK?,” 43.

³² Wright and Bloemraad, “Is There a Trade-off between Multiculturalism and Socio-Political Integration?,” 77.

³³ Wright and Bloemraad, 77.

³⁴ Wright and Bloemraad, 77.

³⁵ Steven Vertovec and Susanne Wessendorf, eds., *Multiculturalism Backlash: European Discourses, Policies and Practices* (London: Routledge, 2010), 21, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203867549>.

³⁶ Wright and Bloemraad, “Is There a Trade-off between Multiculturalism and Socio-Political Integration?”; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford Political Theory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*; Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and “The Politics of Recognition”*: An Essay, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

integration in several domains.³⁷ He concludes that multicultural policies have had “little effect on socioeconomic integration, some positive impact on political integration, and negative effects on sociocultural integration,” but that policies concerning individual citizenship tended to explain more than multiculturalism.³⁸ The most conclusive correlation found was that host-country language proficiency and usage tended to be lower and residential segregation higher in countries with stronger multicultural policies.³⁹ He notes that segregation is one of multiculturalism’s biggest criticisms and that the lack of language acquisition hinders other policies intended to promote civic integration to either supplement or substitute for multiculturalism.

Koopmans suggests that one of multiculturalism’s shortcomings is that religion has not been given enough consideration as an important and distinct factor in integration.⁴⁰ To this point, Joppke highlights Zolberg and Long’s observation that “language differs from religion in that one can...master more than one language, whereas the mark of religious affiliation is to be exclusive.”⁴¹ In other words, religion is a singular characteristic that is not as easily accommodated as language by multiculturalism, which by definition also implies state support. As Koopmans observes, multiculturalism does “not tell us where reasonable religious claims that merit accommodation end and where those that conflict too much with the values and institutional traditions of a particular society begin.”⁴² The interplay between multiculturalism and secularism has become problematic since, as noted previously, religion is its most controversial aspect in the European context. The challenge stems from a dynamic in which “religious claims must be accommodated within preexisting normative understandings and institutional arrangements of state-church relations that have crystallized in nationally specific ways from centuries of demarcation

³⁷ Koopmans, “Multiculturalism and Immigration,” 165.

³⁸ Koopmans, 147.

³⁹ Koopmans, 164.

⁴⁰ Koopmans, 151.

⁴¹ Aristide Zolberg and Long Litt Woon, “Why Islam is like Spanish: Cultural Incorporation in Europe and the United States,” *Politics and Society* 27, no. 1 (1999): 21; cited in Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State,” 241.

⁴² Koopmans, “Multiculturalism and Immigration,” 165.

struggles between states and Christian churches.”⁴³ The way countries sought to resolve church-state relations concerning Christianity has often become the model for their interactions with Islam.

2. Radicalization and Terrorism

Another common narrative among European political leaders is that multiculturalism contributes to the radicalization of their Muslim populations, with some going a step further to relate it directly to homegrown terrorism.⁴⁴ King and Taylor explain that there has been a major conceptual shift away from viewing terrorists as foreigners trained abroad to attack Western countries to focusing on “second- and third-generation immigrants, born in Western countries. who become radicalized.”⁴⁵ If the object of multicultural policies is to support integration, a lack of integration may serve as a contributing factor to Muslim radicalization and terrorism, in at least some cases.

The fact that there is not a commonly accepted definition of radicalization in the scholarly literature suggests its complexity and highly controversial nature.⁴⁶ Most scholars tend to offer their own definition, which creates ambiguity concerning whether radicalization refers to an ideology, a type of behavior, or both.⁴⁷ Bartlett and Miller offer a somewhat generic definition of the term as “the process by which individuals are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs towards extreme views.”⁴⁸ This definition is

⁴³ Koopmans, 165.

⁴⁴ Francesco Ragazzi, “Suspect Community or Suspect Category? The Impact of Counter-Terrorism as ‘Policed Multiculturalism,’” *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies* 42, no. 5 (April 15, 2016): 724–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1121807>.

⁴⁵ Michael King and Donald M. Taylor, “The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists: A Review of Theoretical Models and Social Psychological Evidence,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23, no. 4 (2011): 604, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2011.587064>.

⁴⁶ Daniela Pisoiu, “Coming to Believe ‘Truths’ About Islamist Radicalization in Europe,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 246, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2012.659361>.

⁴⁷ Pisoiu, “Coming to Believe ‘Truths’ About Islamist Radicalization in Europe.”

⁴⁸ Jamie Bartlett and Carl Miller, “The Edge of Violence: Towards Telling the Difference Between Violent and Non-Violent Radicalization,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 1 (2012): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2011.594923>.

ideological and describes individuals who “reject the status quo.”⁴⁹ Another definition describes radicalization as “the psychological transformations that occur among Western Muslims as they increasingly accept the legitimacy of terrorism in support of violent jihad against Western countries.”⁵⁰ This definition is more representative of how the phenomenon is viewed in Europe.

Most scholars tend to agree that no specific profile exists for violent extremists.⁵¹ As a result, experts have developed numerous theories and models in an attempt to capture how individuals become radicalized. Bartlett and Miller group a number of theories into three categories.⁵² The first is based on the idea that, under certain circumstances, terrorism becomes a rational course of action to achieve a desired objective.⁵³ The second group of theories involves processes with distinct phases along the path to violence.⁵⁴ The third group relies on social movement theory, which asserts that “people are drawn into movements for reasons other than those directly related to the aims of the group itself” and instead become mobilized through socialization and network building.⁵⁵ The authors conducted a comparison of Muslim terrorists, non-violent Muslim radicals, and mainstream Muslims to identify shared attributes and ideologies. They found that each group shared experiences of alienation from the state, anger towards Western foreign policy, discrimination, and identity conflicts.⁵⁶ Moreover, individuals within each group had varying degrees of religious knowledge.⁵⁷ From the differences, Bartlett and Miller identify several elements to explain “how radicalization that leads to violence sometimes

⁴⁹ Bartlett and Miller, 2.

⁵⁰ King and Taylor, “The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists,” 603.

⁵¹ King and Taylor, 614.

⁵² Bartlett and Miller, “The Edge of Violence,” 12–13.

⁵³ Bartlett and Miller, 12.

⁵⁴ Bartlett and Miller, 13.

⁵⁵ Bartlett and Miller, 13.

⁵⁶ Bartlett and Miller, 6–8.

⁵⁷ Bartlett and Miller, 9.

differs from radicalization that does not: emotional ‘pull’ to act in the face of injustice; thrill, excitement, and coolness; status and internal code of honour; and peer pressure.”⁵⁸

King and Taylor evaluated five prominent models for homegrown jihadi radicalization and identified three common psychological factors.⁵⁹ The first factor consisted of experiences of subjective group-relative deprivation when the group’s material conditions were compared to that of other groups.⁶⁰ In other words, they perceived their group’s disadvantage as an injustice. The second factor involved identity-related issues or personal crises stemming from discrimination, lack of integration, and managing dual-identities—that is, balancing between their Western and their inherited ethnic and religious identities.⁶¹ Finally, individual personality characteristics complement the situational factors.⁶²

From a different perspective, Taylor and Horgan present a conceptual framework for a “psychology of terrorism” as a process that is driven by rational choice theory. They argue that “involvement in terrorism, at least in psychological terms, [is] a process rather than a state.”⁶³ During this process the focus turns to an individual’s changing context rather than his or her psychological or moral qualities. They identify setting events or “past contextual influence,” personal factors, and the overall social, political, and organizational context as three factors relating to the influences affecting an individual’s choice to engage in terrorism.⁶⁴

While the previous models analyze factors and processes contributing to radicalization and leading to terrorism, Pisiu takes a different stance by challenging the

⁵⁸ Bartlett and Miller, 13.

⁵⁹ King and Taylor, “The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists.”

⁶⁰ King and Taylor, 609.

⁶¹ King and Taylor, 611.

⁶² King and Taylor, 614–15.

⁶³ Max Taylor and John Horgan, “A Conceptual Framework for Addressing Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18, no. 4 (December 1, 2006): 586, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550600897413>.

⁶⁴ Taylor and Horgan, 592.

assumption that there even is a meaningful connection between Islamist radicalization and terrorism in Europe.⁶⁵ She argues against the deterministic approach of identifying causal factors and processes because they do not account for the countless individuals who experience the same things, but either (a) do not radicalize or (b) radicalize and do not resort to terrorism. She argues that “individual radicalization [is] an intentional process” and that “stopping terrorism might have in fact little to do with stopping radicalization.”⁶⁶

Pisoiu argues that the link between ideology and behavior remains unclear and King and Taylor similarly assert that “psychologists’ understanding of the radicalization process is very limited.”⁶⁷ It may be true that too much importance is given to trying to establish a causal explanation for radicalization and terrorism, but Shore convincingly argues that “no one is born a terrorist; terrorists are bred... Though all are born neutral, they turn to terror in search of something larger than themselves.”⁶⁸ While there remains much debate on the issue, many scholars accept that “radicalization is a transformation based on social-psychological processes” but that there is not one universal route to terrorism.⁶⁹ In this sense, each individual’s experience, each path to radicalization and terrorism, is unique. King and Taylor concluded that “the most plausible model for radicalization would be one that considers an interaction between personality traits and situational factors.”⁷⁰

C. SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Since much of the literature and data pertaining to France are published in the French language, this study draws on many secondary sources. While this thesis is intended to address issues pertinent to France at the national level, some sections focus more heavily on urban areas and on the greater Paris metropolitan area specifically. However, this

⁶⁵ Pisoiu, “Coming to Believe ‘Truths’ About Islamist Radicalization in Europe.”

⁶⁶ Pisoiu, 248.

⁶⁷ Pisoiu, “Coming to Believe ‘Truths’ About Islamist Radicalization in Europe”; King and Taylor, “The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists,” 616.

⁶⁸ Zachary Shore, *Breeding Bin Ladens: America, Islam, and the Future of Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 2.

⁶⁹ Taylor and Horgan, “A Conceptual Framework for Addressing Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist”; King and Taylor, “The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists,” 609.

⁷⁰ King and Taylor, “The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists,” 615.

concentration should not detract from the relevance of the thesis for several reasons. Not least, France itself is highly centralized around Paris as its center of social, economic, and political affairs. In addition, some 43% of all immigrants and 32% of their descendants live in the Ile-de-France region surrounding the city.⁷¹ Finally, some of France's deadliest terrorist attacks committed by Muslim extremists took place in and in the vicinity of Paris.

Article 6 of French law 78-17 of January 6, 1978 prohibits the government's collection of certain elements of personal data including racial and ethnic origins and religion.⁷² Under certain conditions, some exceptions are made for public institutions such as the French Institute for Demographic Studies (INED) or the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) whose purpose is to identify trends through the collection of demographic information. Information concerning religion and ethnicity can still be gathered through polls and surveys, but naturally such surveys are limited to the sample represented. As a result, accurate figures and studies relating specifically to all French Muslims can be difficult to find.

As emphasized by Favell, "immigration, and the citizenship question it invites, is a political issue that can...rapidly throw into doubt much broader assumptions about the bases of social and political integration in a nation."⁷³ Since immigration policy plays an important role in the French Muslim experience, this thesis considers changes in French immigration policy as it was influenced by various sociopolitical factors in France's history and reflected or impacted integration policy. Koopmans employs two frameworks to assess multicultural policies, which are helpful in exploring the subject in question: the Multiculturalism Policy Index (MPI) and the Indicators of Citizenship Rights for

⁷¹ Stephane Kovacs, "France: 12 Millions d'immigrés et d'enfants d'immigrés," *Le Figaro*, October 10, 2012, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2012/10/10/01016-20121010ARTFIG00262-immigration-les-chiffres-de-l-insee.php>.

⁷² "Loi N° 78-17 Du 6 Janvier 1978 Relative à l'informatique, Aux Fichiers et Aux Libertés," République Française, accessed March 19, 2018, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000886460/>.

⁷³ Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 22.

Immigrants (ICRI), which includes equal and differential rights.⁷⁴ These indices assign an overall score but also identify important elements of multicultural policies and rights regimes to further evaluate within France. In addition to these models, an analysis of various societal and socioeconomic conditions will provide more nuance to the context for consideration of multiculturalism.

This chapter discusses the significance of the research question and provides an explanation of relevant concepts as well as a literature review of major theories and arguments in order to establish an analytic framework. Chapter II presents the French Republican model of integration by highlighting several core concepts, values, and institutions that are intrinsic to France's state structure, including citizenship, secular *laïcité*, and the role of the public education system. Chapter III introduces the Muslim population in France with an overview of their immigration history and considers several elements of integration including housing policies, education, employment, and challenges pertaining to religious practice and expression. With the political context established and a focused account of the Muslim experience in France provided, Chapter IV revisits multiculturalism as an integration policy and considers its suitability to address the grievances and rights claims put forth by French Muslims. This chapter also evaluates prospects for integration and for preventing the alienation and potential radicalization of homegrown terrorists. Chapter V concludes with a summary of research findings and recommendations for areas warranting further study.

⁷⁴ Koopmans, "Multiculturalism and Immigration"; "Multiculturalism Policy Index," Queen's University, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/home>; "Indicators of Citizenship Rights for Immigrants," WZB Berlin Social Science Center, accessed September 13, 2018, <https://www.wzb.eu/en/research/migration-and-diversity/migration-integration-transnationalization/projects/indicators-of-citizenship-rights-for-immigrants-icri>.

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II. THE FRENCH REPUBLICAN MODEL

A. INTRODUCTION

In order to consider the status of multiculturalism in France, it is important to have an understanding of France's Republican state model. France is arguably the birthplace of the modern nation-state, and French politics and certain cultural values are deeply rooted in a steadfast commitment to Republicanism. As Howarth and Varouxakis explain, France, more than other Western countries, has a "profoundly historicist political culture" that focuses on the past to provide the vocabulary and perspective used to frame modern challenges.⁷⁵ Consequently, French public figures and politicians have a marked tendency to draw on historical themes and examples from France's storied past to reinforce their rhetoric and to underscore contemporary arguments.

The debate surrounding multiculturalism is no exception. It is sometimes "presented as the counter-example" to the French Republican model that emerged from the challenges of the French Revolution.⁷⁶ This section first considers the origins of French Republicanism and explains the importance placed on certain values, including citizenship and secularism. It then discusses how matters of immigration and integration have been addressed within the French Republican framework. Finally, multiculturalism is located within the Republican model and considered as an alternative to assimilation and integration.

B. SIGNIFICANCE

The origin of Republicanism is one of the most important, yet complicated, elements of the French historical narrative. Many of France's contemporary policies can be traced directly to its revolutionary origins and the struggle to establish a Republic. Emerging from the French Revolution, Republicanism has been challenged, shaped, and

⁷⁵ David Howarth and Georgios Varouxakis, "Continuity and Change: The Ever-Lasting Past," in *Contemporary France: An Introduction to French Politics and Society* (London: Routledge, 2003), 2, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ebook-nps/detail.action?docID=564655>.

⁷⁶ Villard and Sayegh, "Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France," 238.

informed over time by various reactions to it.⁷⁷ It was not always widely accepted, however, and was associated with a number of atrocities and abuses of power throughout its early years. Beginning as the political ideology of one group, Republicanism has since progressed over the centuries to boast near universal acceptance as the rightful political structure of France. Embraced fully by both the right and the left, the French Republican model spans the entire political spectrum, thus making it very difficult to challenge.

C. ORIGINS OF REPUBLICANISM

During the French Revolution, a new state model emerged in France in response to the absolute monarchs that had ruled throughout the Middle Ages and until the late eighteenth century.⁷⁸ Within this new model, “a nation of equal citizens [replaced] the king as the source of political power and legitimacy.”⁷⁹ Inspired by compelling philosophies of the Enlightenment period, the basic tenets of this new model were outlined in the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen and approved by the newly formed National Assembly of France.⁸⁰ The Declaration granted French citizens such basic rights as equality under the law, representative government, and freedom of speech and religion.⁸¹ Initially, the monarchy remained in place with King Louis XVI as the head of state, but with his authority significantly limited by measures within France’s first Constitution of 1791.⁸² This arrangement proved difficult to implement, however, so the First Republic was put in place in 1792, shortly before the execution of the king and his wife in 1793.⁸³

⁷⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Continuity and Change: The Ever-Lasting Past,” 4.

⁷⁸ Daniel Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” *Society* 40, no. 5 (July 2003): 66–71, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03008261>.

⁷⁹ Béland, 66.

⁸⁰ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 238.

⁸¹ “Declaration of Human and Civic Rights of 26 August 1789,” Conseil Constitutionnel, accessed March 16, 2018, <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/en/declaration-of-human-and-civic-rights-of-26-august-1789>.

⁸² Howarth and Varouxakis, “Continuity and Change: The Ever-Lasting Past,” 7.

⁸³ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Continuity and Change: The Ever-Lasting Past,” 7.

The early French Republic did not have an easy start and the First Republic (1792-1804) was very bloody. This stage was associated with unforgiving Jacobin leadership and a period called The Terror, during which those who failed to demonstrate support for the revolutionary cause were swiftly “eliminated.”⁸⁴ This created a very negative image of the Republican idea throughout most of the nineteenth century; however, it is still widely regarded today as the major turning point for positive change within French national history.⁸⁵

The First Republic and later the Second (1848-1852) were each subverted, by Napoléon Bonaparte and Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte respectively, who quickly abolished the Republican institutions they had promised to serve and represent, making themselves emperors of France.⁸⁶ The Third Republic (1870-1940) dissolved following Germany’s successful invasion and occupation of France during World War II and the establishment of the Vichy government, under which the French Republic was deliberately renamed “l’État Français” or the French State. Following these traumatic experiences, the Third and Fourth Republics sought to limit executive power with parliamentary regimes.⁸⁷ As a result, the Algerian crisis overwhelmed the weak Fourth Republic (1946-1958), and this resulted in General Charles de Gaulle being called out of retirement to reunite the nation and write a new constitution for France’s Fifth Republic (1958-present).⁸⁸

It was not until about ten years into the Third Republic that Republicanism was able to “consolidate” support and achieve relative stability in France after nearly a century of struggle and dispute between supporters and opponents.⁸⁹ From the 1870s onward, several groups who formerly opposed the Republic began to rally to its cause. These “ralliés” included monarchists, members of the conservative bourgeoisie, and Catholic

⁸⁴ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Continuity and Change: The Ever-Lasting Past,” 7.

⁸⁵ Howarth and Varouxakis, 8.

⁸⁶ Howarth and Varouxakis, 10.

⁸⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, 10.

⁸⁸ Howarth and Varouxakis, 17.

⁸⁹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 7.

conservatives.⁹⁰ Over time, these groups came to find elements of Republicanism more palatable than in the past for various reasons and determined that it would be more beneficial to embrace the Republic than to continue resisting it. By the end of the nineteenth century, most of the population considered themselves Republican.

Since France's official name is la République Française, anything relating to the state is "republican" by definition and all French people are essentially "republicans."⁹¹ Republicanism has taken on a deeper significance over time, however, and it has become more complex and politicized. French public figures often redundantly emphasize the word when discussing policies or legislation because "calling them 'republican' is assumed to give them the power attached to the idea of citizenship," another concept born out of the Republic's revolutionary heritage.⁹² Thus, although Republicanism rather painfully succeeded in achieving universal acceptance in France, there remains a wide spectrum of interpretations of its true meaning; and debates surrounding whether various policies are consistent with "Republican principles" are common within French politics.⁹³ This tendency can be observed within the debate surrounding multiculturalism in France.

D. FRENCH REPUBLICANISM TODAY

At a minimum, "republican" implies that a state is not a monarchy, nor a dictatorship, and that democratic power is held by the citizens.⁹⁴ In Britain and the United States, this has gone more or less hand in hand with embracing basic liberal values, including fundamental human rights, separation of powers, checks and balances, and respect for individual freedoms.⁹⁵ In these contexts, diversity in ethnic and cultural

⁹⁰ Howarth and Varouxakis, 11.

⁹¹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 5.

⁹² Howarth and Varouxakis, 5.

⁹³ Howarth and Varouxakis, 13.

⁹⁴ Howarth and Varouxakis, 5.

⁹⁵ Howarth and Varouxakis, 19.

heritage is generally understood as an inherently positive feature that contributes to the richness of the overall body.⁹⁶

In France, however, the Republic has evolved in a manner that many describe as giving it a distinctly “illiberal” political culture.⁹⁷ France’s particular take on liberalism is in many ways a product of the pre-revolutionary monarchical structure in which the kings of France had created a highly centralized state with a society composed of disconnected individuals.⁹⁸ After the revolution, the French people wanted the nation’s sovereignty to remain undivided, and believed that this could be achieved as long as democratic power rested in the hands of individuals who were the true representatives of the people.⁹⁹

For this reason, the French Republic does not recognize groups among its citizens. It instead “relates to each citizen as an individual” only, and not as a representative of a group identity.¹⁰⁰

Unlike the liberal state, it [the Republic] is amenable to one collective project—it is itself a collective project which is not reducible to the protection of the rights of individuals or to the maximization of the choices open to individuals. The Republic seeks to enhance the lives of its members by making them part of a way of living that individuals could not create for themselves: its aim is to make the individuals members of a civic community.¹⁰¹

In other words, while the French state concerns itself exclusively with the individual citizen, it does not aim to maximize individual liberties as an end in itself, but instead seeks to enhance the individual’s experience as being part of the greater national group. In Jennings’ words, “for the French citizen, belonging is political but it also contains a

⁹⁶ Howarth and Varouxakis, 19.

⁹⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, 20.

⁹⁸ Howarth and Varouxakis, 20.

⁹⁹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 20.

¹⁰⁰ Tariq Modood and Nasar Meer, “Contemporary Citizenship and Diversity in Europe: The Place of Multiculturalism,” in *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*, ed. Raymond Taras (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 35.

¹⁰¹ Modood and Meer, 35.

vocation towards universalism” that focuses on the common good.¹⁰² The Republican tradition stresses civil equality and places great importance on what it means to be a French citizen.¹⁰³ The Jacobin regime espoused a view of the nation in which belonging was both “civic and contractual, representing universal values and progress.”¹⁰⁴ In this sense, being a citizen of the French nation implies having not only rights but also responsibilities.

This distinctive political universalism is accompanied by a preoccupation with egalitarianism, as generations of feudal legacy left a great distaste for hierarchy and political privilege in France.¹⁰⁵ The revolution, and ultimately the Republic, embraced an “individualistic and homogenous vision of the nation, which is conceived as an egalitarian ‘community of citizens.’”¹⁰⁶ Within this construct, “intermediary bodies” or sub-groups defined by particular attributes are unequivocally rejected.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the notion of groups smaller than the nation having a unique set of rights is seen as completely contrary to the Republican institution because it would undermine common law.¹⁰⁸ This places multiculturalism squarely in opposition to the fundamental Republican principle of *égalité*, in which citizens are “equal in rights and in treatment.”¹⁰⁹

1. Laïcité

An important Republican particularism is manifested in France’s distinct approach to secularism or *laïcité*. While secularism is generally understood as the separation of church and state, it takes an uncommon form in France, where religious practice and religious expression are restricted entirely to the private domain. As is the case with many

¹⁰² Jeremy Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” *British Journal of Political Science* 30, no. 4 (2000): 577.

¹⁰³ Jennings, 577.

¹⁰⁴ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 238.

¹⁰⁵ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 66.

¹⁰⁶ Béland, 66.

¹⁰⁷ Béland, 66.

¹⁰⁸ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 238.

¹⁰⁹ Villard and Sayegh, 238.

Republican principles, secularism emerged from Enlightenment ideals and the French Revolution. It was intended to curb the power of the monarchy along with the widespread influence of the Catholic Church, which was the state religion at the time.

Before the revolution, the church and the monarchy enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship. Royalty promoted the church's influence because it reinforced the belief that the king was divinely ordained in his position. With the support of the monarchy, the Catholic Church accumulated extensive property and exercised significant influence that permeated much of French society. This dynamic frustrated many French people who wanted to be free of not only the king's rule, but of what they perceived as the Church's outsized influence in everyday life. As a result, freedom of religion was legitimized as an individual right during the Revolution in Article 10 of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, which states that "no one may be disturbed on account of his opinions, even religious ones, as long as the manifestation of such opinions does not interfere with the established Law and Order."¹¹⁰ Furthermore, Catholicism lost its position as the state religion and the new government seized control of all church property. In 1790, the new Assembly passed legislation called the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, requiring French priests to be governed by local leadership instead of the Pope.¹¹¹ Widespread refusal to swear an oath recognizing the law resulted in the brutal massacre of hundreds of clergy throughout France.¹¹²

Not long after, Napoleon Bonaparte sought to make amends with the Catholic Church. He recognized that the vast majority of French people were, in fact, Catholic; and he appreciated the church's potential to foster social control through morality.¹¹³ For this

¹¹⁰ "The Text of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, Written in 1789, Translated into English.," Digital Public Library of America, accessed March 15, 2018, <https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/declaration-of-the-rights-of-man-and-of-the-citizen/sources/889>.

¹¹¹ Warren H. Carroll, *The Guillotine & The Cross*, 1st edition (Manassas, VA: Christendom Press, 1991), 29.

¹¹² William Roberts, "Napoleon, the Concordat of 1801, and Its Consequences," in *Controversial Concordats: The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler*, ed. Frank J. Coppa (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 34, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ebook-nps/detail.action?docID=3135131>.

¹¹³ Roberts, 36.

reason, he advocated for the reestablishment of the Catholic Church in France, but under the specific conditions outlined in the Concordat of 1801. The document, signed by Napoleon and Pope Pius VII, ensured the Church's protection by the new French government but also strictly regulated it. For example, bishops could continue to be ordained by the Pope but had to be nominated by and paid by the government.¹¹⁴ Thus, the Church was allowed to survive but under significant control of the French state. For individual Catholics, Article I of the Concordat upheld the right of freedom to worship so long as it did not disrupt public order.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, and other Reformed Churches, and Judaism received official recognition and state support throughout the next century.¹¹⁶

In December 1905, however, legislation *concernant la séparation des Églises et de l'État* was passed to officially separate the church and state in France.¹¹⁷ This law prohibited the French Republic from recognizing or providing financial support to any particular religion or religious institution, to include schools. Additionally, processions and any other public religious manifestation henceforth required approval from the mayor.¹¹⁸ Today, *laïcité* remains enshrined in France's current constitution of the Fifth Republic, adopted in 1958.¹¹⁹

Laïcité in France is distinct in its modern approach to secularism because of what it was originally designed to address. Many French people opposed the moral authority claimed by the monarchy and enabled by the church because they perceived it as an abuse of power by both entities. As such, French secularism arose as the "political solution" to the state's and society's antagonistic relationship with the Catholic Church during the

¹¹⁴ Roberts, 47.

¹¹⁵ Roberts, 47.

¹¹⁶ "100th Anniversary of Secularism in France," Pew Research Center, December 9, 2005, <http://www.pewforum.org/2005/12/09/100th-anniversary-of-secularism-in-france/>.

¹¹⁷ "Loi Du 9 Décembre 1905 Concernant La Séparation Des Églises et de l'Etat," République Française, n.d., accessed March 16, 2018.

¹¹⁸ "What Separation of Church and State in France Really Means," *New York Times*, March 19, 1905.

¹¹⁹ "Constitution de La République Française," Assemblée Nationale, accessed March 17, 2018, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/connaissance/constitution.asp>.

French Revolution.¹²⁰ Because of this, laïcité has come to embody more of a freedom *from* religion than simply the freedom *of* religion in the French Republic.¹²¹ As Decherf explains, “religious freedom is regarded in France as a human right, but never in isolation from other universal human rights.”¹²² As a result, there is not a strong foundation or framework to make religious claims on the French state.

Over time, Republicanism and laïcité have become nearly synonymous.¹²³ But France’s strict adherence to religious secularism is just one element of a deeper commitment to the “separation between the private and the public spheres” across all aspects of society.¹²⁴ The French Republic does not embrace or even recognize differences among its citizens, and instead maintains that the “citizens who make up the nation have, in theory, neither ‘race,’ religion, ethnicity, class, nor culture.”¹²⁵ Villard and Sayegh label this French perspective as a “politics of indifference.”¹²⁶ In this sense, the French Republic views the nation as ideally being composed of undifferentiated, individual, civic beings.¹²⁷

2. Secular Education

One of the most fundamental illustrations of the principle of laïcité can be found in the French school system. The public school has become a symbol of Republican ideals by enforcing and instilling laïcité as a strong value of French society. According to Carle, “the secular state and the institutional structure of public, secular education” constitute one of

¹²⁰ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 240.

¹²¹ Robert Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” *Society* 41, no. 6 (September 2004): 66, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02688234>.

¹²² Dominique Decherf, “French Views of Religious Freedom,” Brookings, April 1, 2001, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/french-views-of-religious-freedom/>.

¹²³ David Howarth and Georgios Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” in *Contemporary France: An Introduction to French Politics and Society* (London: Routledge, 2003), 117, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ebook-nps/detail.action?docID=564655>.

¹²⁴ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 66.

¹²⁵ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 239–40.

¹²⁶ Villard and Sayegh, 240.

¹²⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, 20.

the most important legacies of the Revolution.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, the application of laïcité in education has continued to evolve over time.

The Second French Empire ended in disaster in 1870–1871 with the particular embarrassment of military defeat and Germany’s annexation of Alsace Lorraine.¹²⁹ To prevent similar episodes in the future, France’s new leadership identified a need to promote patriotism and to educate generations of individuals who would be willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice to defend their homeland.¹³⁰ To achieve this, they adopted a heavily nationalistic curriculum emphasizing citizenship as a core value. As Béland describes, public schools become an essential tool for transforming youth from diverse backgrounds into “loyal French citizens” by promoting equal opportunity, collective identity, and common values and language in order to facilitate social and political integration.¹³¹ Along with military conscription, this nationalistic education became instrumental in “turning peasants into Frenchmen,” in Eugen Weber’s words.¹³²

From this point on, the overall focus of education shifted from “‘moral and religious instruction’ to that of ‘moral and civic instruction,’” emphasizing the qualities necessary to become strong and loyal citizens of the Republic.¹³³ Simultaneously, the French education system was secularized in 1881–1882 with the Jules Ferry Laws. These laws ensured free public education; made school attendance mandatory for children under fifteen; removed religious clergy as educators; and removed all religious education from the curriculum.¹³⁴ One day a week was to be set aside for religious practice and education outside of school. To this end, anything suggesting “religious affiliation or identity politics

¹²⁸ Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” 66.

¹²⁹ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 106.

¹³⁰ Howarth and Varouxakis, 106.

¹³¹ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 66–67.

¹³² Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914*, 1st edition (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).

¹³³ Jean-Pierre Chanut, *École Republicain et les petites patries*, (Paris: Aubier, 1996); quoted in Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 578.

¹³⁴ Blandine Chelini-Pont, “Is Laïcité the Civil Religion of France?,” *George Washington International Law Review* 41, no. 4 (January 1, 2010): 765–816.

is excluded” from the public school curriculum.¹³⁵ Instead, French education centers on “universally apprehensible ideas and movements.”¹³⁶ As Jennings observes, *laïcité* “postulates the existence of a secular ethic, grounded in science and philosophy, that would act not only as a civil religion and social bond but also as the means of educating the free and tolerant citizens.”¹³⁷

Consequently, public schools have a special relationship to *laïcité* and are considered to be neutral territory in France. To this end, another piece of legislation was passed in 2004 prohibiting “the wearing of signs or clothing manifesting a religious affiliation in public schools.”¹³⁸ This would come to include items such as Christian crosses, Jewish yarmulkes, and Muslim headscarves or hijabs, which will be discussed later in greater detail. As Carle explains, “unlike the American model, the French public school is governed not by a principle of equal accommodation of the private within the public life of the school, but through a principle of equal exclusion of the private from the public.”¹³⁹ As schools are public institutions, students are correspondingly treated as “public beings” while on their grounds.¹⁴⁰ Since religion is considered to be a private affair, students are universally barred from religious expression at French public schools. Carle further explains that “by redefining people in terms of their public selves, the French model shifts the focus of democratic education from teaching toleration of private others to instilling mutual respect for public equals. In this system, civic virtue does not require toleration of difference, because people’s differences do not enter the public square.”¹⁴¹ In short, a multicultural model which promotes and supports cultural differences has no place in secular French schools.

¹³⁵ Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” 66.

¹³⁶ Carle, 66.

¹³⁷ Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 578.

¹³⁸ Nicky Jones, “Beneath the Veil: Muslim Girls and Islamic Headscarves in Secular France,” *Macquarie Law Journal* 9 (2009): 66.

¹³⁹ Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” 66.

¹⁴⁰ Carle, 66.

¹⁴¹ Carle, 67.

3. Nationalism

Over time, Republicanism has also become associated with a strong sense of nationalism. In the Republic's early stages, however, national unity was not inherent and therefore had to be constructed. During this process, local and regional cultures were considered "backward and reactionary," and therefore "their destiny had to be subsumed into the universal and modern Republican nation."¹⁴² To achieve this, the nascent government actively pursued the eradication of many forms of differences, including cultural distinctions and regional dialects, which ultimately contributed to monolingualism becoming a norm of modern European nation-states.¹⁴³ This approach resulted in a long-standing, general dislike for minorities within the French Republic, as they were, and often still are, perceived as a threat to national unity.

Like Republicanism itself, the meaning of nationalism in the French context can have multiple interpretations and has taken different forms. One understanding of nationalism is associated with the early aspiration to create a nation-state, as was the case for many people under the rule of vast multi-ethnic empires that dominated most of Europe until the First World War.¹⁴⁴ Another understanding suggests the primacy of the sovereign state and the subordination of all other interests to it.¹⁴⁵ Drawing a parallel to Michel Wincock's distinction between open and closed French nationalism, Howarth and Varouxakis assert that France has been influenced by both types.¹⁴⁶

Traditional Republican nationalism, often embraced by the Left, grew out of the French Revolution and was characterized by the "desire to expel foreign armies" and affirm the liberty and equality of newly sovereign people who were citizens by choice.¹⁴⁷ During this time, the Republic developed "universalist pretensions" holding that its model was

¹⁴² Villard and Sayegh, "Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France," 239.

¹⁴³ Villard and Sayegh, 239.

¹⁴⁴ Howarth and Varouxakis, "Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity," 103.

¹⁴⁵ Howarth and Varouxakis, 103.

¹⁴⁶ Howarth and Varouxakis, 103.

¹⁴⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, 104.

superior to that of other nations and that France, in fact, had a moral obligation to spread democracy, revolution, progress, and civilization to the rest of the world.¹⁴⁸ This sense of moral superiority gave way to a “missionary conception” of French nationalism throughout the nineteenth century, whereby French patriots justified conquering other peoples in order to “liberate” them.¹⁴⁹ The French *mission civilisatrice* or “civilizing mission” is representative of open nationalism, which was intended to be altruistic and benevolent, albeit elitist and sometimes militaristic.¹⁵⁰ On the other hand, more conservative, early right-wing forms of French nationalism focused on internal order and the need for powerful, centralized leadership.¹⁵¹ This attitude aligns with closed nationalism, which is often inward-looking, exclusive, and defensive. Closed nationalism has arisen in France during times of crisis and has sought to “eliminate intruders” such as Jews, immigrants, or revolutionaries.¹⁵²

France’s nationalist tendencies have fluctuated and often have corresponded to overarching political trends. Much of the twentieth century was characterized by open nationalism as President Charles de Gaulle oversaw France’s decolonization process after the Second World War and the Algerian Crisis, and sought to make France a champion of other national liberation movements.¹⁵³ However, the 1980s brought about a resurgence of closed nationalism as oil crises in the 1970s caused economic hardship.¹⁵⁴ In addition, German reunification, increased European integration, and a general distrust and dislike of growing U.S. dominance caused further unease.¹⁵⁵ In this context, the Front National (FN) emerged as a strong political force opposing globalization and outside influence.¹⁵⁶ While

¹⁴⁸ Howarth and Varouxakis, 105.

¹⁴⁹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 105.

¹⁵⁰ Howarth and Varouxakis, 112.

¹⁵¹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 108.

¹⁵² Howarth and Varouxakis, 113.

¹⁵³ Howarth and Varouxakis, 112–14.

¹⁵⁴ Howarth and Varouxakis, 114.

¹⁵⁵ Howarth and Varouxakis, 114.

¹⁵⁶ Howarth and Varouxakis, 114.

France has experienced periods of open and closed nationalism throughout its history as a Republic, elements of both types are perennially at play and influence the ways in which the French view outsiders and minorities.

4. Immigration

In this context, immigration has played a unique and varying role throughout France's turbulent journey as a nation-state. Its immigration policies and views on citizenship have often been a reflection of the contemporary political climate and ongoing challenges. At times, immigrants were welcomed as a means to strengthen the Republic, while at other times they were met with great resistance. Nevertheless, "France has the longest history of immigration in Europe and was the only country to have experienced significant inward migration prior to the Second World War."¹⁵⁷ As indicated in the previous sections, the French Republic places great value on citizenship and national unity. As a result, the Republican model has created a unique environment for both immigrants and minorities in France, affecting their integration into society.

During the Revolution, the emerging French nation largely embraced a policy of *droit du sol*, also known as birthright citizenship, and welcomed willing foreigners in order to gain support for the revolutionary cause.¹⁵⁸ *Droit du sol* was renewed later in the nineteenth century mainly to force the children of immigrants, who were mostly Belgian and Italian at the time, to assume military obligations during France's conflicts and conquests.¹⁵⁹ During the Third Republic, it was formally stipulated that children of immigrant parents born in France would be granted French citizenship as soon as they came of age.¹⁶⁰ Additionally, the grandchildren of immigrants were to be automatically granted French nationality at birth.¹⁶¹ It is important to note that French citizenship under these conditions was not necessarily voluntary.

¹⁵⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, 118.

¹⁵⁸ Howarth and Varouxakis, 119.

¹⁵⁹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 119.

¹⁶⁰ Howarth and Varouxakis, 119.

¹⁶¹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 119.

After the First World War, demographic considerations were a primary concern in France. The population had thinned so significantly due to the heavy loss of life that citizenship requirements were considerably reduced.¹⁶² Beginning in 1927, foreigners were only required to reside in France for three years before becoming eligible for naturalization.¹⁶³ In this way, the Republic sought to replace Frenchmen with naturalized immigrants, primarily from Italy, Poland, and Spain.¹⁶⁴ France again adopted a relatively liberal policy framework following the Second World War and was the only country in Europe to encourage permanent immigration during this period.¹⁶⁵ To support rebuilding the economy, France passed legislation in 1945 that encouraged the immigration of foreign workers along with their families.¹⁶⁶

Despite these relatively progressive policies, the official immigration regime was still preferential towards certain groups and encouraged recruitment from European countries over North Africa or Turkey.¹⁶⁷ France did, however, consider ethnically oriented policies both before and after World War II based on a perceived level of “assimilability” of different groups as the criterion for granting residency permits.¹⁶⁸ Although these policies were rejected on both occasions, the tide began to turn in 1974 when France experienced a severe economic downturn resulting in high levels of unemployment. In an attempt to curb joblessness, President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing tried to implement a policy to repatriate legal African immigrants by refusing to renew their residency permits.¹⁶⁹ This proposal was also rejected by the Conseil d’État (Council of

¹⁶² Howarth and Varouxakis, 119.

¹⁶³ Howarth and Varouxakis, 119.

¹⁶⁴ Howarth and Varouxakis, 119.

¹⁶⁵ Virginie Guiraudon, “Immigration Policy in France,” Brookings, 01 2001, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/immigration-policy-in-france/>.

¹⁶⁶ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 120.

¹⁶⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, 120.

¹⁶⁸ Howarth and Varouxakis, 120.

¹⁶⁹ Guiraudon, “Immigration Policy in France.”

State) due to its incompatibility with Republican values.¹⁷⁰ However, a negative sentiment towards certain immigrants was becoming clearer.

Throughout the 1980s, resentment toward immigrants continued to grow as unemployment steadily rose in France at the same time that immigrant communities became more concentrated and visible.¹⁷¹ As a result, immigration and integration became two of the most prominent issues in French politics from the mid-1980s to the 1993 elections, particularly with the emergence of the Front National political party.¹⁷²

E. FRENCH REPUBLICAN INTEGRATION

France's liberal attitudes toward immigration ended with the 1970s oil crises.¹⁷³ Since 1973, its immigration policies have instead sought primarily to prevent migration.¹⁷⁴ This period of reduced immigration shifted the government's focus toward addressing the large presence of immigrants already legally in France. With their increasing presence and visibility, the incorporation of immigrant populations into French society became a salient and unavoidable issue.¹⁷⁵ Not surprisingly, French policymakers fell back on traditional Republican perspectives and values to guide and structure their efforts to address this challenge.

France's approach has often been characterized as assimilationist in nature, implying that minority cultures must "blend into the majority" and give up their own customs.¹⁷⁶ This approach stemmed from the French Republic's mission to unite people around a common identity during the years after the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon. Later, assimilation was also associated with France's exigent policies to prevent

¹⁷⁰ Howarth and Varouxakis, "Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity," 120.

¹⁷¹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 121.

¹⁷² Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 40.

¹⁷³ Guiraudon, "Immigration Policy in France."

¹⁷⁴ Guiraudon.

¹⁷⁵ Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 40.

¹⁷⁶ Taras, *Challenging Multiculturalism*, 241.

sedition and emancipatory movements within its colonies during the Third Republic.¹⁷⁷ As Howarth and Varouxakis note, assimilation implied “the idea of a unilateral adaptation of immigrants to the laws and customs of France and of the French and the need for the elimination of the immigrants’ own identity and culture.”¹⁷⁸ The term “assimilation” fell out of fashion between 1974 and 1984 as it was considered elitist and implied French superiority.¹⁷⁹ Since then, France has moved toward a concept of integration, which suggests “a more subtle, interactive and subjective process for the immigrant in his or her identification with the values and norms of society,” and which does not necessarily require the complete acculturation of individuals.¹⁸⁰

The emergence of integration as a policy can initially be traced back to Charles de Gaulle’s experience with sub-Saharan Africa in 1944, when he attempted to redefine France’s difficult relationship with its colonies.¹⁸¹ In this context, integration was presented as a “‘realistic’ compromise between assimilation and secession” and was intended to ease local tensions.¹⁸² Integration’s next period of relevance was the Algerian crisis (1954-1962). During this period, the Governor General, Jacques Soustelle, openly rejected the old politics of assimilation as both improbable and undesirable and instead advocated integration as a preferable model to afford Muslims more equality and cultural respect.¹⁸³ As a result, integration soon became a central topic of public policy debate in France.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁷ Geisser, 498.

¹⁷⁸ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 122.

¹⁷⁹ Howarth and Varouxakis, 122.

¹⁸⁰ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 242.

¹⁸¹ Vincent Geisser, “Republican Integration: Reflections on a Postcolonial Issue (1961-2006),” in *Colonial Culture in France Since the Revolution*, ed. Pascal Blanchard et al., trans. Alexis Pernsteiner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 499, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt16gh82z>.

¹⁸² Geisser, 499.

¹⁸³ Geisser, 500.

¹⁸⁴ Geisser, 500.

Vincent Geisser asserts that integration has become a “rhetoric of crisis” in France, called upon in response to various challenges in its recent history.¹⁸⁵ As discussed, integration was first proposed as a solution to address dissatisfied colonial populations outside France. In the mid-1980s, however, integration rhetoric was refocused domestically to “renationalize French identity” in order to address disconnected, postcolonial immigrants and their descendants, who were considered to be the Republic’s new “dangerous class.”¹⁸⁶ As a result, the new rhetoric of integration played to prior colonial anxieties surrounding the rise of Muslim communitarianism; “Balkanization” of the social body; and sedition, by drawing parallels to new challenges regarding immigration, security in urban suburbs, and fears of Islamization.¹⁸⁷ In short, the resurgence and reshaping of integration in the modern context were heavily influenced by colonial challenges, which contributed to shaping its development as a policy.

Even still, the concept of integration remained rather ambiguous and undefined until the mid-1980s.¹⁸⁸ Since the absence of a clear and robust policy left integration vulnerable to political manipulation by various groups and agendas, it was finally determined in the late 1980s that “a thorough reflection on the nature of French political unity under the new social, cultural, and demographic conditions” was needed to inform integration policy developments.¹⁸⁹ This process was largely carried out by two main bodies.

La Commission de la Nationalité (1987-88) was a committee made up primarily of Parisian intellectuals and academic elites in the fields of history, law, and political science, whose purpose was to clarify the law and devise proposals for reform.¹⁹⁰ The commission conducted a publicly broadcasted, democratic forum during which nearly one hundred prominent leaders within the public sphere were interviewed about immigration and

¹⁸⁵ Geisser, 498.

¹⁸⁶ Geisser, 502.

¹⁸⁷ Geisser, 503–4.

¹⁸⁸ Geisser, 504.

¹⁸⁹ Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 42.

¹⁹⁰ Favell, 42.

integration issues and the meaning of being French.¹⁹¹ Ultimately, their findings were consolidated into a lengthy report, “*être français aujourd’hui et demain*” that included recommendations for reform and laid the foundations for French integration policy.¹⁹² As Jennings explains, the objective of integration, as described in the report, was that of “bringing ‘naturalized’ citizens and their children into the national community as full members, ‘even if in private they preserved their religious and cultural loyalties.’”¹⁹³ The Commission’s 1988 report identified the following challenges as explanations for why integration was becoming more difficult:

the links between mainland France and its former colonies [were] less strong; the influence of France in the world [was] less assured; high levels of unemployment [touched] the unskilled and therefore the immigrant [population] disproportionately; segregation in housing [made] establishing ‘neighbouring relations with the French population’ less easy; the traditional institutions of integration – by which is meant not only the schools and the army but also the trade unions and the Church – [were] less efficient;” and that “the foreign population of France [had] changed.”¹⁹⁴

Several years later, the French government established the Haut Conseil à l’intégration (1990-93) to build upon the framework laid out in the first report and to advise specifically on *how* to best integrate immigrants into society.¹⁹⁵ Made up of politicians, local mayors, civil servants, judges, and an academic advisor, the council initiated a research program to “build knowledge and data about the actual progress of integration, and to confront a series of concrete institutional dilemmas with normative propositions for legal and political reform.”¹⁹⁶ It produced six reports, which Favell describes as demonstrating “an extraordinary consensus in French public affairs, on the vocabulary, themes, and theoretical frame they provided.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁹¹ Favell, 42.

¹⁹² Favell, 42.

¹⁹³ Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 582.

¹⁹⁴ Marceau Long, *Être Français aujourd’hui et demain: Rapport de la Commission de la nationalité*, (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1998), I, 28: cited in Jennings, 582.

¹⁹⁵ Jennings, 583.

¹⁹⁶ Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 43.

¹⁹⁷ Favell, 43.

Together, these two commissions developed a “self-coherent public philosophy of integration” to explain how immigration and integration policies should function.¹⁹⁸ This theoretical framework and terminology still dominate the French debate on integration today. To summarize the French republican philosophy of integration, Jennings identifies four essential policy principles:

(1) the integration of immigrants must be in accord with the secularism of the state: the latter respects religions, philosophies and beliefs but gives them no special support; (2) it is individuals rather than groups that integrate and at no time can or ought the action of integration contribute towards the constitution of structured communities; (3) integration presupposes rights and duties: an immigrant must respect French law as it is: in return, the law naturally respects their culture and traditions; (4) immigrants and the French must be treated equally, without developing the sentiment that immigrants are better treated than French people who are their neighbours.¹⁹⁹

Each of these pillars is rooted in traditional Republican values of “secularism and universalistic civic identity, as well as a strict separation between the private and the public spheres.”²⁰⁰ With this foundation, the objective of France’s integration model is to transform immigrants into “full French *citoyens*.”²⁰¹

The Republican integration model enjoyed popular support throughout most of the twentieth century. Since the 1980s, however, its effectiveness has been challenged by various social and political trends, namely difficulties in integrating diverse groups in French suburbs.²⁰² These groups have typically struggled with long term unemployment leading to their social and political exclusion and their inability to fully participate in Republican life.²⁰³ This concern over social fragmentation has raised the question whether a more multicultural approach might be a better model to address France’s prevailing integration issues.

¹⁹⁸ Favell, 43.

¹⁹⁹ Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 583.

²⁰⁰ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 66.

²⁰¹ Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 4.

²⁰² Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 67.

²⁰³ Béland, 67.

F. FRENCH REPUBLICAN VIEW OF MULTICULTURALISM

Article 1 of the Constitution of the Fifth French Republic reads, “France is a Republic, indivisible, secular, democratic and social.”²⁰⁴ Due to the French nation’s deep-seated commitment to these Republican values, multiculturalism has been met with great resistance in France, particularly among the political elite.²⁰⁵ Multiculturalism may be defined as “the theory and practice of recognizing the existence of different cultural, religious or ethnic groups within a country and granting them specific group rights designed to accommodate their specific needs and sensitivities.”²⁰⁶ As such, the concept of multiculturalism conflicts with both the indivisible and the secular nature of the Republic, and it is often seen as a threat to national unity.

According to Béland, “social and political fragmentation has been a major source of concern in France since the 1980s.”²⁰⁷ While France’s integrationist approach has not resolved this persistent issue, multiculturalism is perceived as a greater threat that could lead to communitarianism and “cultural ghettos.”²⁰⁸ Jennings explains that rhetoric in the 1995 annual report of the Haut Conseil à l’intégration accepts the notion of “community” only in the form of “‘a common sense of belonging...without judicial or institutional consequences’ but by no means in the form of ‘an organised and institutionalised grouping of part of the population according to ethnic or religious criteria, recognised by the public authorities.’”²⁰⁹ In other words, the state cannot formally recognize any ethnic or religious sub-groups, let alone provide them any targeted support.

As a result, France’s Republican integration policy is not designed to favor immigrants or minorities over other French citizens, as a multicultural approach would prescribe. In short, multiculturalism is fundamentally in conflict with traditional

²⁰⁴ “Constitution de La République Française.”

²⁰⁵ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 237.

²⁰⁶ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 115.

²⁰⁷ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 66.

²⁰⁸ Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” 66.

²⁰⁹ Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 583.

Republican values. First, the concept of multiculturalism threatens the indivisibility of French society, whose unity is “not negotiable at any level.”²¹⁰ Cemented during its early years, the Republican model does not recognize groups or “intermediary bodies” between individuals and the state.²¹¹ According to the 1997 report of the Haut Conseil à l’intégration, “it is to each man and each woman that it has granted full rights in order to allow him or her individually to take a place in French society.”²¹² In this context, a minority group has no political status.

Second, favoring particular groups would violate the Republic’s focus on the universal, equal treatment of all citizens. Multiculturalism focuses on group rights vice individual rights, but within France’s Republican model, even individual rights are subordinated to universal collective rights. Within this framework, there is no platform to articulate cultural, ethnic, or religious group rights. According to a French intellectual, Pierre Rosanvallon, in France “it is the capacity of the generality to absorb all particulars which is the true condition of liberty.”²¹³ As such, the Republic was structured so that no groups could claim collective rights or privileges of any kind.²¹⁴ In keeping with this spirit, France’s integration policy prioritizes collective cohesion and what is best for the common good of French society over a multicultural concern for the autonomy or status of any sub-groups.

Finally, multiculturalism’s purpose—to single out groups based on particular characteristics—is incompatible with the French Republic’s secular view of its own society. In view of the French nation’s strict separation of public and private life, Rosanvallon describes France as having a “monist vision of the social and the political.”²¹⁵ In this

²¹⁰ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 116.

²¹¹ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 66.

²¹² Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 583.

²¹³ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 116.

²¹⁴ Howarth and Varouxakis, 116.

²¹⁵ Howarth and Varouxakis, 116.

context, French society is envisioned as a single unit in which “expressions of specific ethnic or religious identities in the public sphere are not perceived as legitimate.”²¹⁶

An added challenge to the acceptance of multiculturalism in France is the fact that religiously defined groups are often those seeking to make claims for special rights and recognition.²¹⁷ Again, France’s resistance to group rights is directly tied to its experience in establishing boundaries with the Catholic Church. As Howarth and Varouxakis explain, “after having fought many battles against giving any special rights...to the Catholic Church, French republicans find it difficult to accept that the republic could cede special rights to a religious community...without fatally impairing its very nature.”²¹⁸ As a result, the religious consideration of multiculturalism makes it that much more unpalatable in the French context, where a strong precedent has already been set.

France’s strong sentiments against multiculturalism are a reflection of its attitude toward cultural diversity in general. Table 1 compares the Republican state’s response to cultural diversity to other state models.²¹⁹ As expected, promotion of equal opportunity and recognition of difference are low and emphasis on national identity is high. This is indicative of France’s insistence on the “indivisible character of the public realm” and general “reluctance to accept diversity in the public domain.”²²⁰ This perspective can be observed with regard to other forms of intra-national diversity such as the discouragement of regional language dialects. As described by Feldblum, in this sense, “the ethnic citizen does not, and ought not, exist.”²²¹ This creates an environment in which certain groups are “marginalized if their specific differences are externalized.”²²²

²¹⁶ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 66.

²¹⁷ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 116–17.

²¹⁸ Howarth and Varouxakis, 117.

²¹⁹ Modood and Meer, “Contemporary Citizenship and Diversity in Europe: The Place of Multiculturalism,” 34.

²²⁰ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 115.

²²¹ Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” 66.

²²² Carle, 66.

Table 1. The state and citizens' responses to cultural diversity: Five ideal types.²²³

Type of state →	Decentred state	Liberal state	Republic	Federation of communities	Plural state
1. Promotion of equality of opportunity	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	High
2. Emphasis on national identity	Low	Low	High (but prescribed)	Low	High (but remade)
3. Recognition of difference	Medium	Low	Low	High	High
4. Seeking neutrality	Not possible	Yes	No	No	No
5. Bearer of rights	Individual	Individual	Individual	Group	Individual and group
6. Relationship to the state	Vertical	Vertical	Vertical	Horizontal	Horizontal and vertical

G. THE INTEGRATION DEBATE

The French Republican model was based on the ambition and assumption that its people would be essentially homogenous and their interests “undifferentiated.”²²⁴ While this assumption will be discussed in greater detail in the subsequent chapters, this is certainly no longer the reality in modern France, whose society continues to become increasingly more diverse. In terms of cultural and ethnic diversity, more than one in six people in France were either immigrants themselves or had at least one immigrant parent or grandparent as of 2001.²²⁵ Even still, as Jennings describes the nation, France is “a society of immigrants which nonetheless is not and does not see itself as a pluralist society,” or even multicultural.²²⁶ In general, the French tend to avoid using the term “multicultural” in political discourse, even in the purely descriptive sense, and prefer to use the phrase “cultural diversity” instead.²²⁷ But according to Béland, while there is still general opposition to multiculturalism in France, “the fact that it has entered the French vocabulary

²²³ Source: Modood and Meer, “Contemporary Citizenship and Diversity in Europe: The Place of Multiculturalism,” 34.

²²⁴ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Continuity and Change: The Ever-Lasting Past,” 20.

²²⁵ Howarth and Varouxakis, “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity,” 118.

²²⁶ Jennings, “Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 575.

²²⁷ Villard and Sayegh, “Redefining a (Mono)Cultural Nation: Political Discourse against Multiculturalism in Contemporary France,” 236.

is a sign of the increasing interrogation of the Republican model itself, which is at odds with the political celebration of cultural diversity at the center of multiculturalism.”²²⁸

While the Republican integration model asserts the ability to absorb and unify all individuals as French citizens, this end state has not been realized for all groups. Despite Republicanism’s aversion to groups and communitarianism, some argue that the model itself contributes to the formation of sub-groups by its very nature. These sub-groups are effectively out-groups that are not readily embraced by society. As Geisser explains, “the paradox of the new integrationist rhetoric of the 1980s and 1990s was the same as the one at the heart of the notion of colonial integration and the project of assimilation: by establishing a clear distinction between ‘Them’ and ‘Us,’ and by pointing to ‘potentially seditious communities,’ it legitimized the existence of distinctive identities.”²²⁹ In other words, the Republican model not only recognizes but contributes to the formation of sub-groups by identifying those that need to integrate. Geisser adds, “the ‘new’ doctrine of Republican integration, through its reactivation of a *Republican aporia* characteristic of the Third Republic’s assimilationist discourse—thinking [of] the Other as ‘inferior’ in order to justify the implementation of a separate pedagogical method—has led to a *theory of the times* that today is used to indirectly legitimize particularistic treatment.”²³⁰

In fact, some argue that the Republican integration model represents little more than a name change for France’s traditional assimilationist approach. Favell describes France’s unwavering attachment to its integration model as “The Myth of Republican Citizenship,” asserting that “actual policy changes and the novelty of some of the questions posed by recent post-war immigration have been elided from the picture, lost in the reaffirmation of a particular national myth which claims that questions of immigration and integration would always and self-evidently be dealt with in this way.”²³¹ Furthermore, Favell

²²⁸ Béland, “Identity Politics and French Republicanism,” 67.

²²⁹ Geisser, “Republican Integration: Reflections on a Postcolonial Issue (1961-2006),” 504–5.

²³⁰ Geisser, 505.

²³¹ Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 43.

identifies the following weaknesses of the French Republican model with respect to integration:

a tendency to over-encourage symbolic and philosophical rhetoric rather than factual or empirically-rooted debate; a tendency to over-idealism, and inflexibility over linguistic terms, which renders difficult the application of philosophical ideals; a tendency to mistake rights and principles for the true substance of politics; an excessive focus on political life and the power of the state in an age when politics and traditional political power [are] in decline; a lack of focus on the social dimensions of integration, particularly the critical effect of poverty in frustrating it; a denigration and problematisation of culture and religion as valid political components of individual motivation, and hence a tendency to create political conflicts in these areas.²³²

These deficiencies suggest that France's commitment to its Republican vision for constructing a unified nation complicates its efforts to address the flaws or inadequacies of its policies to address contemporary immigration and integration challenges.

H. CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented an analysis of the French Republican state as a distinct context for considering multiculturalism. The legacy of the French Revolution and its nation-building experience were fundamental to shaping France's societal norms and values and continue to color its outlook on virtually every issue. The subject of integration policy did not become a salient issue in French politics until the 1980s. When it did, debates were "explicitly couched in terms referring to the theoretical foundations of French political unity and cohesiveness: around grand themes of republican values, citizenship and the 'traditional' universal and cosmopolitan nature of French nationhood."²³³ Adhering to these Republican values gave policy-makers a familiar framework with which to confront new challenges with the added benefit of having near universal acceptance across society and the political spectrum.

²³² Favell, 191–92.

²³³ Favell, 40.

Despite waves of changing demographics and social conditions, however, France continuously and instinctively gravitates toward confronting contemporary integration challenges through the lens of its nation-building and colonial past. As a result, France's "color-blind" approach to integration and refusal to recognize difference have limited its ability to address the difficulties of particular groups, notably within its large Muslim population.²³⁴ Predominantly of North and West African origin, Muslim immigrants and their generations of descendants, many of whom are French citizens, represent a sub-group that has not been smoothly integrated into French society. Despite integration's aversion to communitarianism, French Muslims are often concentrated in suburban peripheries burdened by poverty, crime, unemployment, and social exclusion. French Muslims are also often blamed for the recent increase in terrorist attacks throughout France, which contributes to Islamophobic sentiments in society.

The intersection of French Muslims' cultural, ethnic, and religious attributes, often combined with economic disadvantage, has challenged the efficacy of the French Republican model's ability to integrate them into society. Addressing this issue is imperative because, as Favell argues, "feasible multi-ethnic diversity makes everyone better off. Failure to achieve the right framework for integration, however, will lead to an increase in intolerance and xenophobia among majority populations, and a loss of 'moral social order,'" which could have national security implications for France.²³⁵ The next chapter provides an analysis of the experience of Muslims in France in order to determine whether multicultural policies could improve their integration into French society.

²³⁴ Béland, "Identity Politics and French Republicanism," 66.

²³⁵ Favell, *Philosophies of Integration*, 4.

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III. MUSLIMS IN FRANCE

A. INTRODUCTION

Following Chapter II's overview of the French Republican model and its approach to integration, this chapter focuses on the integration of France's Muslim minorities within this context. At its peak in the 1930s, the French colonial empire included a number of countries in Northern and Sub-Saharan Africa that were predominantly Muslim. In response to the enormous loss of life experienced throughout the First World War, the French government looked to its colonies both to augment its military forces abroad as well as to relieve labor shortages at home. It is estimated that close to half a million soldiers were deployed from colonies, including French West Africa, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, in support of the French flag.²³⁶ Thousands more were recruited to work in French factories and mines. Although many of these men were repatriated following the First World War, 70,000 to 90,000 North Africans resided in the greater Paris region by the early 1930s.²³⁷ French decolonization after the Second World War brought another wave of immigration to France. The three decades following 1945 led millions of immigrants from former colonies to France in search of work.²³⁸ While most originally intended to be temporary workers in France, many eventually became permanent residents, earned citizenship and either brought families or started families in France.

These enormous waves of immigration have had significant impacts on the French population, particularly with the advent of a large and growing group of French citizens who adhere to the Muslim faith. More often than not, Muslims are portrayed as a group that has not integrated well into French society; and they are often criticized for not embracing French culture and values more readily. Many Muslims find themselves in the

²³⁶ Michael Goebel, "Surveying the Crossroads of the World: Paris at the Intersection of Global Migrations," in *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 23.

²³⁷ Goebel, "Paris at the Intersection of Global Migrations," 21.

²³⁸ Erik Bleich, "Race Policy in France," Brookings, May 1, 2001, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/race-policy-in-france/>.

margins of society, both physically and socially, and significant responsibility rests with the French government. To better understand the dynamic, this chapter surveys the Muslim population in France. As the vast majority of French Muslims have immigrant origins, it begins with an overview of their immigration patterns and the evolution of France's policies from initially encouraging to later discouraging immigration from predominantly Muslim countries. It then considers French Muslims' disproportionate representation in the often socioeconomically disadvantaged suburban areas around France's major cities, focusing specifically on the evolution and exclusive nature of the boundaries surrounding Paris. Finally it addresses Muslims' ability to exercise and practice their faith in everyday life in France's strict Republican, secular environment. In each area, France's policies have shaped its Muslim population's experience and integration.

B. IMMIGRATION TRENDS

Because French law prohibits the government's collection of personal information including ethnicity and religious affiliation, precise numbers representing those who identify as Muslim in France are not available. That said, scholars and French government officials estimate that approximately five million Muslims live in France.²³⁹ It is important to note that for statistical purposes many scholars also employ a cultural definition of "Muslim," which includes not only practicing Muslims but also those of Muslim origin who may not necessarily be strict religious observers.²⁴⁰ Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the Muslim population in France in 1998 by origin. Due to France's colonial past, most Muslims living in France today trace their origins to former French territories.²⁴¹ As a result, early Muslims' experience in France was initially shaped by immigration patterns

²³⁹ Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2006), 18.

²⁴⁰ Jørgen S. Nielsen and Jonas Otterbeck, "France," in *Muslims in Western Europe*, vol. Fourth edition, The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 11, <http://proxy.lib.wayne.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=1140069&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

²⁴¹ John R. Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?: Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secularist State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 16.

and policies, which varied in terms of volume, timeframes, economic circumstances, and the independence status of the country of origin.

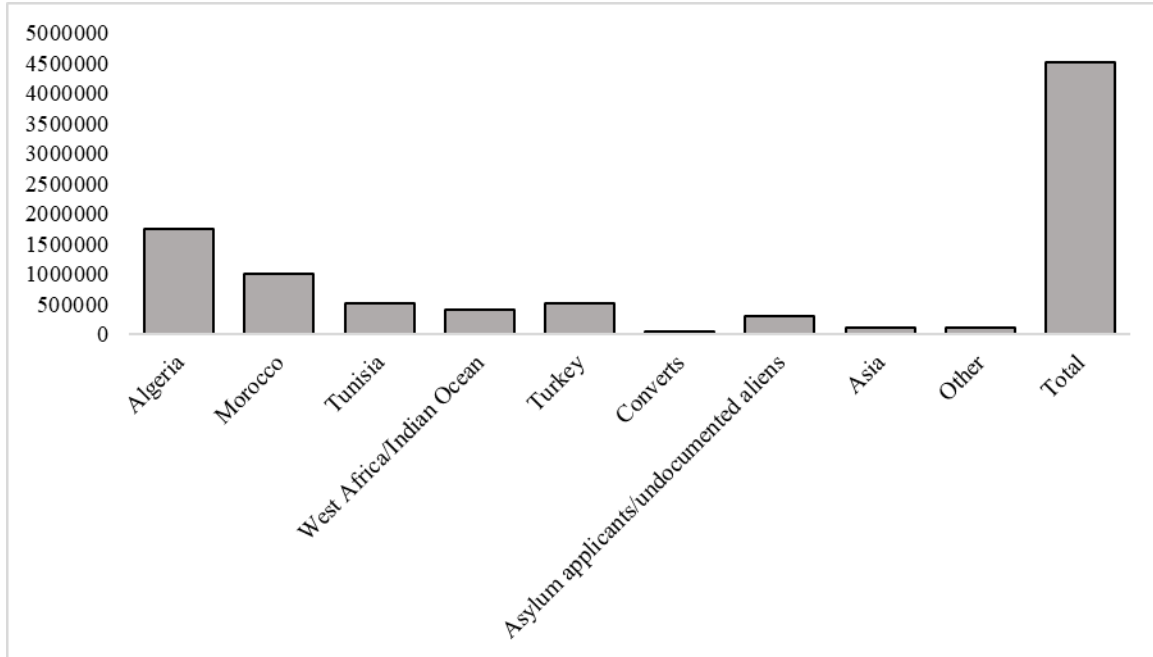


Figure 1. Muslim population in France, by origin²⁴²

France began its conquest of Algeria in 1830, eventually seizing control of large parts of north and west Africa.²⁴³ By the 1870s, Algeria was part of France. A first wave of immigration to mainland France occurred during the First World War, during which several hundred thousand “*Meghrébins*,” still colonial subjects at the time, migrated to France.²⁴⁴ Most either served in the Army fighting for France or worked in fields and factories in the absence of fighting French citizens. This wave was primarily composed of individual men seeking work. Throughout the early 1900s, “both the French government and private companies recruited Algerian men to metropolitan France as a source of

²⁴² Adapted from Alain Boyer, *L'Islam en France*, (Paris: PUF, 1998); cited in Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 21.

²⁴³ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 15.

²⁴⁴ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 63.

unskilled labor.”²⁴⁵ A larger and more sustained wave of immigration began following World War II due to severe labor shortages in France. During this period, migrant workers from North African colonies and Turkey were recruited, with their residence status regularized by French employers.²⁴⁶

North African immigration to France had been primarily from Algeria until the early 1960s.²⁴⁷ As a result, “Algerian immigrants are three times as likely as other Muslim immigrants to have arrived [in France] very young and therefore to speak fluent French.”²⁴⁸ They also generally have stronger ties to France as many Algerian adults were “born in Algeria when it was [still] part of France.”²⁴⁹ By the mid-twentieth century, however, many French colonies had achieved independence, and immigration began to flow from other newly independent countries under various economic agreements.²⁵⁰ Immigrants from Morocco and Tunisia began arriving in France after these nations won independence in 1956. “By 1974, 260,000 Moroccans and 140,000 Tunisians lived in France.”²⁵¹ North African immigrants were most likely to work in heavy industry or construction.²⁵² Bowen notes that they spoke various Berber languages and Arabic dialects but generally used Arabic for religious practice and had shared religious traditions rooted in Sunni Islam.²⁵³ Collectively, many North Africans began referring to themselves as “*Beurs*,” a slang transformation of the word “*Arabes*” in French.²⁵⁴

By the late 1960s, large numbers of Muslim immigrants were also beginning to arrive in France from sub-Saharan and West Africa, primarily from Senegal, Mali, and

²⁴⁵ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 16.

²⁴⁶ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 16.

²⁴⁷ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 8.

²⁴⁸ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 18.

²⁴⁹ Bowen, 18.

²⁵⁰ Bowen, 15.

²⁵¹ Philippe Dewitte, *Immigrations et integration, L'état des saviors*, (Paris: La Découverte, 1999); cited in Bowen, 17.

²⁵² Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 63.

²⁵³ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 17.

²⁵⁴ Bowen, 21.

Mauritania.²⁵⁵ These immigrants arrived after their countries received independence in 1960 and signed formal labor agreements with France.²⁵⁶ As a result, they are more likely than North Africans to have come to France as adults and are “less likely than North Africans to be legal residents or to have permanent employment.”²⁵⁷ Many are adherents of Sufi Islam and tend to maintain close ties with their religious leaders abroad.²⁵⁸ They are also more likely to live with polygamous families and to live in crowded quarters.²⁵⁹ According to Bowen, it is French Muslims of West African descent that are “targeted by the larger society as insufficiently adapted to France, and whose problems and actions are most often framed in racial terms.”²⁶⁰

The only significant group of Muslim immigrants without colonial ties to France came from Turkey. France and Turkey signed a labor accord in 1966 ushering many workers into the forestry, mining, and building trades.²⁶¹ By 1983, there were close to 150,000 Turks living in France, most of whom settled around Paris and in eastern France.²⁶² By the 1990s, the number of Turks and Kurds in France had grown to roughly 350,000, few of whom could speak French.²⁶³ Smaller numbers of Muslims also came from France’s overseas territories, including Mayotte and La Réunion, or came as asylum seekers from Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and Pakistan.²⁶⁴ Due to the variation across immigration timeframes and circumstances, some groups’ ties to France and to each other are deeper than others. For example, North African Muslims immigrated to France earlier

²⁵⁵ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 9.

²⁵⁶ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 17.

²⁵⁷ Bowen, 17–18.

²⁵⁸ Bowen, 17.

²⁵⁹ Bowen, 17.

²⁶⁰ Bowen, 17.

²⁶¹ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 63.

²⁶² Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 9.

²⁶³ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 18.

²⁶⁴ Bowen, 18.

and share a common religious tradition, making it somewhat easier for them to overcome cultural differences among each other and to form associations.²⁶⁵

Initially, the French government anticipated that these Muslim workers' presence in France would be temporary and that they would ultimately return to their home countries. As such, France's foreign labor and immigration policies were somewhat inconsistent and uncoordinated throughout the early twentieth century, as noted by Nielsen and Otterbeck.²⁶⁶ Deteriorating political and economic conditions in Algeria combined with an improving welfare system and increased availability of public housing in France, however, encouraged some Algerian men to begin gradually bringing their families to France in the 1950s.²⁶⁷ As the flow of immigration increased throughout the late 1960s, 60% of male immigrants were arriving in France with their wives and children.²⁶⁸ In response to this marked increase, the French government tried to implement policies to tighten its control and limit immigration to France. The French government signed an accord with Algeria in 1964 that set a cap for the number of immigrants allowed to come to France each year.²⁶⁹ The cap was lowered several times in subsequent years, but the policies proved nearly impossible to enforce.

In 1974, France experienced an oil crisis which caused an economic recession and a spike in unemployment. In response, the French government ceased the recruitment of foreign workers and implemented a series of measures intended to curb the growing presence of Muslim immigrants in France.²⁷⁰ By this time, there were nearly 900,000 Algerians alone already living in the country.²⁷¹ Rather than returning to their home country, however, many instead elected to remain in France and sent for their families to join them. Immigration continued to be reduced, and requirements for becoming a French

²⁶⁵ Bowen, 19.

²⁶⁶ Nielsen and Otterbeck, "France," 8.

²⁶⁷ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 9.

²⁶⁸ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 9.

²⁶⁹ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 8.

²⁷⁰ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 17.

²⁷¹ Bowen, 17.

citizen were made more restrictive. From 1977 to 1981, the French Immigration Minister, Lionel Stoléru, tried to reduce the number of North African immigrants in France first by financially incentivizing them to leave voluntarily with an offer of 10,000 francs.²⁷² He later attempted to deport thousands of Muslim workers and their families and President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (in office from 1974 to 1981) tried to ban family reunification for immigrants.²⁷³ Neither of these policies received legislative support, and measures to reduce immigration achieved only marginal success.

Throughout the 1970s, more and more Muslim immigrants remained in the country and began bringing their families and starting families in France. By 1975, “over one million...Muslim immigrants were living in metropolitan France.”²⁷⁴ This marked an important turning point when French leaders began to recognize a need to incorporate and integrate this growing Muslim population. It also marked a shift from policies intended to simply manage immigration flows to those designed to facilitate the integration of Muslim immigrants into French society.²⁷⁵ Gradually, large groups of Muslims in France transitioned from working in France temporarily to becoming permanent residents or French citizens. By the end of the 1990s, roughly one-third of Muslim immigrants held French citizenship either by birth or by naturalization.²⁷⁶ But despite France’s long history of immigration and public confidence in the Republican model of integration, Fetzer and Soper assert that “North African and Sub-Saharan Muslims do not, on the whole, appear to have been welcomed as warmly as most European immigrants have been.”²⁷⁷ As a result, many Muslims in France, both recent immigrants and descendants of earlier immigrants, are often caught in a cycle of socioeconomic disadvantage. The subsequent sections of this chapter discuss various elements of this challenge.

²⁷² Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 65.

²⁷³ Fetzer and Soper, 65.

²⁷⁴ Fetzer and Soper, 63.

²⁷⁵ Fetzer and Soper, 67.

²⁷⁶ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 11.

²⁷⁷ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 67.

C. SPATIAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Differing immigration patterns and policies have contributed to variations in settlement patterns among France's Muslim immigrants. For example, while male Algerian immigrants were initially fairly spread out throughout the French industrial scene, "family-based" Algerians became more concentrated in urban centers.²⁷⁸ Moroccan and Tunisian immigrants, having arrived in France later than most Algerians, tended to be more widely spread correlating with the fluctuating labor market.²⁷⁹ Turkish immigrants mostly settled in the greater Paris region but were also in Lille and Alsace-Lorraine.²⁸⁰ Nielsen and Otterbeck note that there was a distinct preference among families for settlement in Paris and that "black Africans" were also mainly concentrated there.²⁸¹ By 1982, the majority of French Muslims from all the Muslim-majority countries of origin were concentrated in urban city centers or in peripheral ring cities around Paris, Lyon, Lille, and Marseilles.²⁸²

Bowen asserts that "where Muslims have settled...has shaped how they interact and think about identity and interests."²⁸³ Today, large concentrations of Muslim minorities live in suburban city outskirts commonly referred to as *banlieues*, which can contribute to a sense of exclusion from mainstream French society. Due to the high concentration of Muslims that settled in the Paris region, this section specifically analyzes the origins and perpetuation of the city's exclusive nature and the parallel development of its suburban banlieues. The isolation of the banlieues stems from the evolution of Paris' city limits and a series of corresponding policies that resulted in structural divisions within the contiguous French societies. The fluctuating nature of Paris' boundaries for defensive and economic reasons has continuously displaced and excluded different groups over time, often those of the working class. Consequently, both tangible and intangible barriers have contributed to physically and socially disconnected communities in the banlieues.

²⁷⁸ Nielsen and Otterbeck, "France," 11–12.

²⁷⁹ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 12.

²⁸⁰ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 12.

²⁸¹ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 12.

²⁸² Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 18.

²⁸³ Bowen, 19.

A useful concept for this discussion is teichopolitics, which Rosière and Reece describe as “the politics of building barriers,” often to control movement or immigration.²⁸⁴ This is achieved by a process of border hardening, which entails the development of closure systems to either direct movement through various checkpoints or to deny it entirely. Hardening measures such as frontlines, fences, and walls “demonstrate that all mobilities and flows are not valued” and thus establish a hierarchy of flows.²⁸⁵ Border hardening creates asymmetry because “the power to decide upon the separation...is monopolized by the most powerful party, while the other becomes de facto separated.”²⁸⁶ Consequently, teichopolitics is often associated with the protection of privilege. In the case of Paris, teichopolitics has been a perennial issue contributing to spatial disparity and social inequality for centuries. While this process began long before Muslims arrived in France in great numbers, its enduring effects impact them disproportionately and thus warrants deeper understanding.

Teichopolitics stems from “the ancient Greek word...*teichos*, meaning ‘city wall.’”²⁸⁷ Like many other European cities, Paris was surrounded by defensive walls throughout the Middle Ages.²⁸⁸ Successive walls enclosing the city were built to accommodate its steady expansion (see Figure 2). Just before the French Revolution, the Wall of the Farmers General was built. Also known as *le Mur d’Octroi*, the wall enclosed the city and functioned as a customs boundary with various points of entry where all outsiders were required to pay an *octroi* tax on commercial goods.²⁸⁹ *La Compagnie des Fermiers Généraux* operated the wall with proceeds supporting the royal treasury. In this

²⁸⁴ Stéphane Rosière and Reece Jones, “Teichopolitics: Re-Considering Globalisation Through the Role of Walls and Fences,” *Geopolitics* 17, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 217, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2011.574653>.

²⁸⁵ Rosière and Jones, 228.

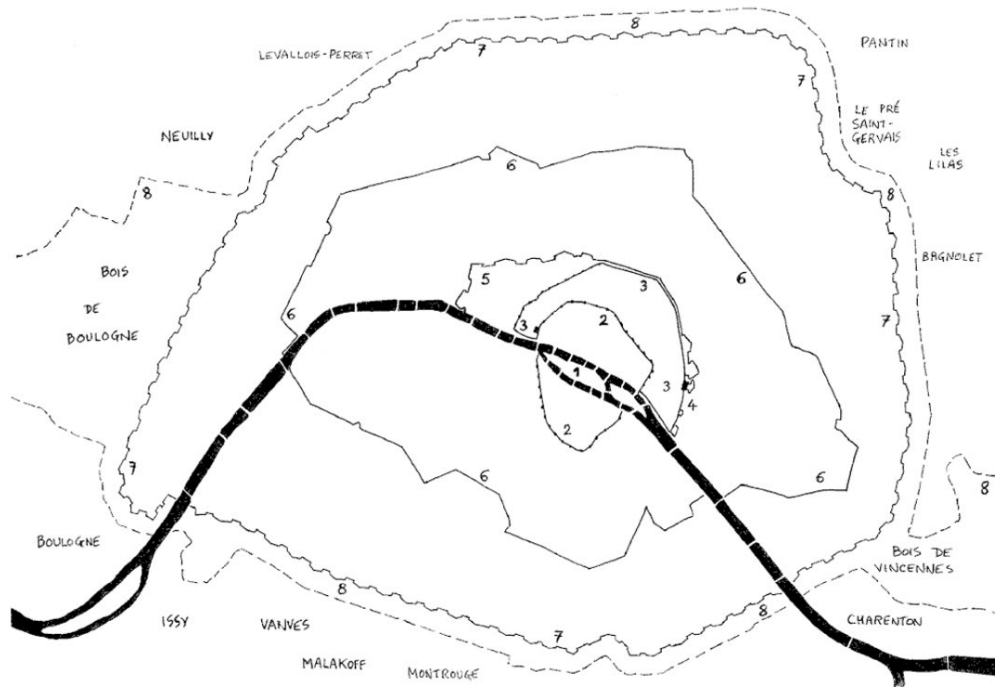
²⁸⁶ Rosière and Jones, 218.

²⁸⁷ Rosière and Jones, 219.

²⁸⁸ Ernesto Castaneda, “Places of Stigma: Ghettos, Barrios, and Banlieues,” in *The Ghetto: Contemporary Global Issues and Controversies*, ed. Ray Hutchinson and Bruce D. Haynes (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012), 165.

²⁸⁹ Castaneda, 165.

sense, the walls created “spatial and legal barriers to free trade and mobility for tax purposes, but they also created a real social boundary.”²⁹⁰



Map of the successive fortifications of Paris. 1. Gallic and Roman period 3rd century A.D. 2. Enceinte Philippe-Auguste 13th century. 3. Enceinte Charles V 14th century. 4. Bastions Henri II 16th century. 5. Fossés Jaunes end 16th century. 6. Enceinte Fermiers Généraux 18th century. 7. Enceinte Thiers 19th century. 8. Present-day administrative limits of Paris.

Figure 2. Map of the successive fortifications of Paris²⁹¹

Due to growing instability throughout Europe, it was determined that Paris needed better protective measures. In 1841, a French politician, Adolphe Thiers, began the construction of a defensive wall, known as the *Enceinte Thiers* or *les fortifications*, and forbade any new construction in the zone directly outside it.²⁹² The new bastioned enclosure doubled the size of the city from 8,125 acres to 17,515, engulfing the large area

²⁹⁰ Castaneda, 165.

²⁹¹ Source: Jean-Denis G. G. Lepage, *The Fortifications of Paris: An Illustrated History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006), 6.

²⁹² Castaneda, “Places of Stigma,” 165.

between the octroi walls which came to be known as the “*Petite Banlieue*.”²⁹³ In 1860, a decree was proclaimed annexing the suburban communities, redistributing the land into twenty arrondissements, and officially extending the city limits to *les fortifications*.²⁹⁴ Those who had been living within the free-zone between the two walls were promptly required to pay the octroi tax.²⁹⁵ Many workers and industries could not afford to do so and were thus forced to relocate outside the city.²⁹⁶ This drastic change was implemented by the government with little concern for the 1.6 million residents affected by it.²⁹⁷

Following this annexation, Baron Georges-Eugene Haussmann, Prefect of the Seine, was hired by Emperor Napoleon III to modernize the city. This enormous project included significant improvements to Paris’ transportation infrastructure, sanitation systems, and overall design, but involved razing entire medieval quarters of the city, demolishing over 19,000 historic buildings and building 34,000 new ones.²⁹⁸ As a result, many working class residents were either physically displaced by the renovations or priced out and again forced to relocate outside the city.

As renovations in Paris continued throughout the early twentieth century, its population density steadily grew. From the early 1920s onward, the French government utilized its suburbs to build cheap housing for its laborer and growing immigrant populations, initially coming from Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Eastern Europe, and to prevent the development of shantytowns or “*bidonvilles*.”²⁹⁹ Decolonization of the former French Empire and Algerian independence eventually brought the large waves of

²⁹³ Lepage, *The Fortifications of Paris*, 179.

²⁹⁴ Allan Popelard, “Urbanisme; Des Faubourgs Aux Banlieues,” *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 1, 2013, ProQuest.

²⁹⁵ Castaneda, “Places of Stigma,” 166.

²⁹⁶ Castaneda, 166.

²⁹⁷ Irene Delage, “Napoleon III Hands Baron Haussmann the Decree Annexing the Parisian Suburban Communes,” Fondation Napoleon, February 8, 2013, <https://www.napoleon.org/en/history-of-the-two-empires/paintings/napoleon-iii-hands-baron-haussmann-the-decree-annexing-the-parisian-suburban-communes/>.

²⁹⁸ Jonathan Glancey, “The Man Who Created Paris,” BBC, January 26, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20160126-how-a-modern-city-was-born>.

²⁹⁹ Castaneda, “Places of Stigma,” 167.

immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries in Northern and Western Africa. In the 1950s, “the state built hostels and low-rent apartments for single workers near factories and away from city centers” in order to ensure that immigration was closely correlated with specific labor needs.³⁰⁰

Following World War II, large housing projects were constructed in the vacant areas outside the former Thiers fortifications. A famous architect, Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, often referred to as Le Corbusier, is credited with influencing these *cités* or projects throughout the banlieues, designed to be “utopian residential complexes.”³⁰¹ Throughout *les Trente Glorieuses*, or “The Glorious Thirty,” (1945-1975) France was eager to rebuild its economy and harness the influx of immigration. Although during this period the French government sought to encourage migrant workers to stay by improving their housing conditions, it deliberately opted to house new immigrants in these projects in banlieues of Paris, Marseille, and Lyon, mainly to hide them from public view.³⁰²

Similarly, the French government constructed subsidized public housing units called *habitations à loyer modéré* (HLMs) or “moderate income residences,” which Castaneda attributes to “the rise of the French welfare state and the increasing cost of living in Paris.”³⁰³ These were often large disconnected buildings, each containing about 500 apartments but which often held thousands of residents.³⁰⁴ Originally, these residences were primarily occupied by French working class families. Eventually, however, many factories closed and most families with positive economic prospects moved away. As a result, the resident populations of the HLMs evolved to consist primarily of immigrant workers from former French colonies.³⁰⁵ This left the banlieues of Paris full of dead-end housing complexes with little opportunity for employment or economic improvement for their inhabitants. As of 1999, “50 percent of all North African immigrants, 37 percent of

³⁰⁰ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 19.

³⁰¹ Castaneda, “Places of Stigma,” 167.

³⁰² Castaneda, “Places of Stigma,” 167.

³⁰³ Castaneda, 168.

³⁰⁴ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 19.

³⁰⁵ Castaneda, “Places of Stigma,” 168.

other African immigrants, and 36 percent of Turkish immigrants” lived in these housing complexes.³⁰⁶

Today, France is organized into 13 administrative regions, with each divided into departments and then into municipalities or “communes.” The Paris metropolitan area is located within the administrative region Ile-de-France, which contains eight departments and is the most densely populated in France with 11,786,234 inhabitants in 2010.³⁰⁷ Of the nearly 12 million Ile-de-France residents, only 2.2 million live within the city of Paris.³⁰⁸ The suburbs on the western side of the city are the most wealthy while those to the north and southeast tend to be more disadvantaged, with many residents of immigrant origins. The term “*banlieusards*” is usually used to describe residents of the lower income suburbs, who do not enjoy the same access to quality education, transportation, and employment opportunities and hold that they are often treated like second-class citizens.³⁰⁹

Their spatial disconnect is manifested in the 35km périphérique ring road that encircles Paris in place of the old Thiers fortifications, physically separating the city from its banlieues. Lambert conducted an analysis of pedestrian access to Paris and found that at the northern and eastern edges of the city, crossing the périphérique into the city required either passing under the highway by way of long, dark tunnels, or passing over it on some form of a suspended bridge, whereas at many points along the western and wealthier side of the city, the highway itself was moved underground so that residents could simply cross the threshold unhindered.³¹⁰ In this way, the périphérique, sometimes referred to as a “social frontier,” acts

³⁰⁶ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 36.

³⁰⁷ Miguel-Ángel García-López, Camille Hémet, and Elisabet Viladecans-Marsal, “Next Train to the Polycentric City: The Effect of Railroads on Subcenter Formation,” *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 67 (2017): 51, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2017.07.004>.

³⁰⁸ Feargus O’Sullivan, “Why the Expansion of Paris Is a Pretty Big Deal,” CityLab, July 29, 2013, <http://www.theatlanticcities.com/politics/2013/07/why-expansion-paris-pretty-big-deal/6345/>.

³⁰⁹ Jess McHugh, “The French Plan to Fix Inequality—by Ignoring It,” *The New Republic*, September 12, 2018, <https://newrepublic.com/article/151172/french-plan-fix-inequalityby-ignoring>.

³¹⁰ Léopold Lambert, “The Unequal Access to Fortress Paris: Different Gate Typologies for Poor and Wealthy Municipalities,” *The Funambulist Magazine*, September 16, 2015, <https://thefunambulist.net/architectural-projects/the-unequal-access-to-fortress-paris-different-gate-typologies-for-poor-and-wealthy-municipalities>.

as a border that selectively prevents access for some more than others and contributes to a sense of alterity between those within and those outside the city proper.³¹¹

Transportation is another important area in which spatial disadvantages exacerbate other disparities between Paris and its banlieues. While the city is very well connected within its inner limits, it becomes much more disconnected outside the périphérique. Paris' primary commuter rail lines, the Metro and the RER, extend out into the banlieues with routes becoming more distant from each other the farther away from the city (see Figure 3).

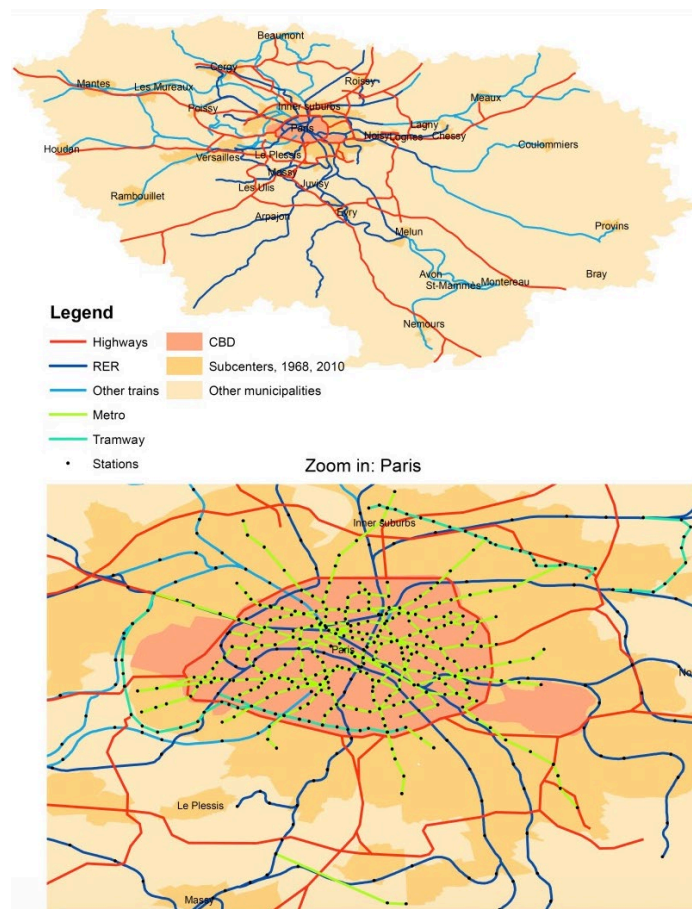


Figure 3. Transportation infrastructure in metropolitan Paris, 2010.³¹²

³¹¹ George Packer, "The Other France," *The New Yorker*, August 31, 2015, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/08/31/the-other-france>.

³¹² Source: García-López, Hémet, and Viladecans-Marsal, "Next Train to the Polycentric City," 54.

With few options to travel between the banlieues, residents of these housing developments must inefficiently travel to Paris and back out again in order to visit neighboring banlieues. Gaining access to employment opportunities also makes having access to a train station exceedingly important, but roughly half of the major *cités* are located outside the radius of a fifteen minute walking distance and therefore require using an intermediate form of transportation to reach the train.³¹³ Garcia-Lopez et al. note that “transportation plays a crucial role in the spatial distribution of residences and firms within cities” finding that proximity to a train station increases the likelihood of a suburban municipality becoming part of an employment subcenter in Paris by 5% to 10%.³¹⁴ Thus, the absence of a train station prevents both the development of employment opportunities in one’s own vicinity and travel to employment elsewhere.

In the case of Paris, “a number of policies have been instrumental in re-establishing and perpetuating the high social status of the city, and in encouraging selective outward migration.”³¹⁵ Teichopolitics has played an important role in contributing to the hardening of physical and social barriers around the city that make it significantly more difficult for the Muslim minority and immigrant populations within them to access it. As Rosière and Jones explain, “as barriers are put up, both symbolically and literally, they institutionalize and expand inequality”³¹⁶

Spatial disconnect amplifies other forms of disadvantage for French Muslims. Minimal economic growth, marginal transportation infrastructure, and poor education opportunities have contributed to disproportionately high levels of unemployment for residents of the banlieues, where the rate can be three times the national average.³¹⁷

³¹³ Léopold Lambert, “15-Minute Walking Distance from a Train Station: Spatial Inequality in Paris Banlieues,” *The Funambulist Magazine*, August 6, 2015, <https://thefunambulist.net/editorials/15-minute-walking-distance-from-a-train-station-spatial-inequality-in-paris-banlieues>.

³¹⁴ García-López, Hémet, and Viladecans-Marsal, “Next Train to the Polycentric City,” 51.

³¹⁵ Juliet Carpenter, Yvan Chauviré, and Paul White, “Marginalization, Polarization and Planning in Paris,” *Built Environment* 20, no. 3 (January 1, 1994): 225.

³¹⁶ Rosière and Jones, “Teichopolitics,” 220.

³¹⁷ Sylvia Zappi, “Portrait noir de la crise économique en banlieue,” *Le Monde*, May 2, 2016, https://www.lemonde.fr/banlieues/article/2016/05/03/dans-les-quartiers-prioritaires-le-chomage-affecte-de-plus-en-plus-fortement-diplomes-et-non-immigres_4912791_1653530.html.

According to Nielson and Otterbeck, “the large majority of people of Muslim background in France are employed in unskilled and semiskilled occupations in industry.”³¹⁸ Because of this, “the children of especially North African immigrants have continuously been vulnerable to the effects of economic slowdown” and “young Arabs” were disproportionately affected by unemployment throughout the 1990s.³¹⁹ Immigrant and Muslim minorities have accordingly struggled to gain economic stability in France, let alone upward social mobility.

Laurence and Vaïsse note the destabilizing effect on families of unemployment, which discourages children’s expectations for their own prospects for the future and often contributes to lower motivation in school.³²⁰ This has coincided with a high rate of criminal behavior and minor delinquency in the banlieues. As a result, French Muslims are overrepresented in prisons, a situation which these authors attribute to a general sense of alienation and socioeconomic desperation.³²¹ This has contributed to a negative perception of French Muslims in the banlieues.

Bowen cites a 2005 French study on employment that examined the impact of ethnicity on employment rates. The report found that “having a North African background makes you two and a half times more likely to be unemployed than if you are (or, more importantly, if you look and sound) ‘native French’”³²² But while racism is a significant intersecting issue for French Muslims, Rhein found that social status in economic terms has actually been more significant regarding patterns of residential segregation than has national origins.³²³ Numerous studies over the years have revealed discrimination in hiring processes as a result of applicants’ foreign-sounding names or mailing addresses in the banlieues. Perception of “linguistic prestige” is another element closely tied to cities’

³¹⁸ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 12.

³¹⁹ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 12.

³²⁰ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 38.

³²¹ Laurence and Vaïsse, 40–41.

³²² Dominique Meurs, Ariane Pailhé, and Patrick Simon, *Mobilité intergénérationnelle et persistance des inégalités*, (Paris: INED, Documents de Travail), 130; cited in Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 20.

³²³ Catherine Rhein, “The Working Class, Minorities and Housing in Paris, the Rise of Fragmentations,” *GeoJournal* 46, no. 1 (1998): 51–62, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006933000432>.

reputations and stereotypes that uniquely disadvantage those in the banlieues.³²⁴ Additionally, a 2015 OECD survey revealed that of “72 countries, France was the country where a student’s social, economic, and cultural background had the greatest effect on school performance.”³²⁵ Ultimately, French Muslims’ inability to achieve full socioeconomic integration has perpetuated a cycle of poverty and social alienation.

D. RELIGIOUS PRACTICE AND ACCOMMODATION

As discussed in the previous chapter, religion occupies a unique space in the French context. While France remains a largely Christian country, Republican *laïcité* ensures that Catholicism does not influence politics or public life. This has coincided with a general decrease in Christian religious practice within the population, with weekly church attendance down to 7% and only 59% who claim to ever attend church.³²⁶ For Islam, however, the trend has been somewhat the opposite. While early Muslim migrant workers and immigrants may have settled for reduced support or opportunities for religious practice, younger generations have demonstrated a marked tendency to practice Islam more strictly and to demand greater accommodation from the state. This section discusses how the state has addressed the growth of Islam within its borders and within the structure of Republican *laïcité*.

1. Mosques

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, both the French government and most first-generation Muslim immigrants, themselves, expected their work in France to be temporary.³²⁷ As a result, many Muslim workers, who were mostly single males at the

³²⁴ Christopher Michael Stewart, “Mapping Language Ideologies in Multi-Ethnic Urban Europe: The Case of Parisian French,” *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 33, no. 2 (March 1, 2012): 187, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2011.617821>.

³²⁵ Khatya Chhor, “French Students Most Affected by Social Inequality, OECD Finds,” France 24, December 7, 2016, <https://www.france24.com/en/20161207-french-students-most-affected-socioeconomic-disadvantages-oecd-pisa-study>.

³²⁶ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 78.

³²⁷ Fetzer and Soper, 64.

time, were content to practice their faith “with little fanfare.”³²⁸ As there was not a strong demand on the state to provide religious accommodations for non-citizens and temporary workers, religious practice and makeshift facilities remained quite modest. Kepel describes this phenomenon as “cellar Islam,” which was prevalent until the early 1970s.³²⁹ In the mid-1970s, workers living in hostels around Paris went on strike to protest increasing rents and poor treatment by hostel employees.³³⁰ In addition to these complaints, workers at the Billancourt Renault factory outside Paris also demanded a prayer space on the factory grounds.³³¹ The factory owners granted the request, mainly because they saw the prayer space as an inexpensive way to appease workers, but similar events began to highlight a growing need for Muslims in France to have places to worship.

Article 2 of the December 1905 law concerning the separation of church and state does not “grant recognition to, pay the salaries of, or provide subsidies for any religion.”³³² However, the law included a provision for state support for the conservation of churches that existed before 1905.³³³ As adherents of a newer religion in France, however, Muslims did not inherit any property from this arrangement and thus generally do not enjoy state support for clergy or places of worship.³³⁴ An important exception to this rule is the *Grande Mosquée de Paris* or the Paris Mosque, which was built in 1926 specifically to recognize the contributions of North and West Africans who fought for France during the First World War.³³⁵ Aside from this, Muslims have struggled to construct mosques and other prayer spaces in France.

³²⁸ Fetzer and Soper, 64.

³²⁹ Gilles Kepel, *Les banlieues de l’Islam: Naissance d’une religion en France*, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1991) 125–132; cited in Fetzer and Soper, 64.

³³⁰ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 29.

³³¹ Bowen, 30.

³³² Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 13.

³³³ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 13.

³³⁴ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 13.

³³⁵ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 13.

In the late 1960s, “publicly identifiable” Muslim places of worship became more prevalent as fewer Muslim immigrants returned to their home countries and as their families arrived in France and grew.³³⁶ The demand for appropriate Muslim prayer spaces has accordingly increased substantially since the 1970s with the growing presence of the largely North African immigrant population in France.³³⁷ The number of prayer rooms in France increased from around 100 to 500 between 1970 and 1985, often resulting from strikes similar to the one at the Renault factory.³³⁸ By that time, 80% of workers’ hostels had Muslim prayer rooms.³³⁹ Throughout the early 1990s, France experienced further growth in the number of Muslim places of worship, which were primarily “small locations in apartment blocks on housing estates, known as *foyers*.”³⁴⁰ Bowen notes that “it was (and is) not unusual to find two prayer spaces in one housing complex, with one used by the North African [Muslims] and the other by West African [Muslims].”³⁴¹ For a number of reasons, including language preference, ethnic solidarity, or religious tradition, mosques in France tend to draw adherents from the same country of origin.

Of note, France does not have guidelines or administrative requirements established in order to classify Muslim places of worship.³⁴² Until the 1960s, the *Mosquée de Paris* was the only building to be officially titled a mosque in France.³⁴³ Other places of worship were often instead called *salles de prière* or “prayer rooms.”³⁴⁴ Until the early 1980s, “most of the larger structures used for congregational prayers, and thus called mosques, were located in large warehouses, houses, or apartment buildings,” according to Bowen.³⁴⁵

³³⁶ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 15.

³³⁷ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 87.

³³⁸ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 30.

³³⁹ Bowen, 30.

³⁴⁰ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 15.

³⁴¹ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 30.

³⁴² Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 15.

³⁴³ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 15.

³⁴⁴ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 15.

³⁴⁵ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 31.

In the early 2000s, the Ministry of the Interior documented 1,600 Muslim prayer houses.³⁴⁶ In 2006, “a specialist on Islam in France counted 2,150 places of worship of which [only] twenty could host more than 1,000 people.”³⁴⁷

While the number of Muslim places of worship has grown significantly over the last several decades, Fetzer and Soper estimate that as of 2000, France had only “one mosque or prayer room for every 3,333 Muslims.”³⁴⁸ With the shortage of mosques, many French Muslims continue to resort to converting other structures into prayer spaces or using the common rooms or basements of housing complexes. Collectively, fewer than 10% of mosques in France were “purpose-built” and most do not hold more than fifty people.³⁴⁹ This sometimes results in people overflowing into the streets and adjacent areas. Additionally, many prayer spaces are materially inadequate. For example, of Marseille’s seventy-three prayer spaces, half are estimated to be lacking hot water or functional plumbing.³⁵⁰

Muslims still struggle today to establish mosques and prayer spaces in France. As Bowen explains, many in France see “large mosques as incompatible with the French built landscape” but are similarly “offended by the sight of Muslims praying in the street on feast days, when the available buildings did not suffice.”³⁵¹ The challenge often stems from local political opposition, as city mayors traditionally have the final say on granting permission to construct a new mosque or to convert an existing structure.³⁵² The topic can be highly politicized and the success of a particular campaign is usually dependent on the city’s political climate and the size of its Muslim electorate.³⁵³

³⁴⁶ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 15.

³⁴⁷ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 16.

³⁴⁸ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 87.

³⁴⁹ Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*, 142.

³⁵⁰ Laurence, 143.

³⁵¹ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 22.

³⁵² Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 87.

³⁵³ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 16.

It is not uncommon for non-Muslim groups to launch petitions or stage demonstrations protesting the construction of mosques. Even for those who are initially supportive of Muslims' endeavors, these events can be highly discouraging for local leaders who must concern themselves with reelection. Other leaders, however, can be completely unsupportive and more aggressive in their efforts to block Muslim prayer spaces. For example, in 1983 a mayor in Charvieu, near Lyon, launched an urban renewal project that would evict a community of Muslims from a converted cafeteria that they were using as a makeshift prayer space.³⁵⁴ In response, the local imam offered to leave the cafeteria in exchange for a new prayer space elsewhere. The city declined this offer, so the Muslim community worked to purchase a small property. When the Muslims applied for a building permit to construct a mosque, the mayor refused to sign it. Left with no other option, the Muslims continued to pray in the cafeteria. In August 1989, the mayor ordered the building to be bulldozed with people still praying inside, injuring three individuals and causing outrage from the Muslim community. In response, the mayor from a neighboring city, Grenoble, arranged for the delivery of a temporary, prefabricated structure for the Muslims to use as a mosque.³⁵⁵ Two years later, the same mayor of Charvieu directed them to leave this temporary facility and proceeded to cut off its water supply when they refused.³⁵⁶

While this may represent one of the more extreme examples, it is representative of the struggle Muslims have faced when seeking to establish legitimate prayer spaces in France. While the Republican state does not bar the establishment of mosques, it certainly does not promote them or provide much legal protection to support them at the local level. Moreover, the mosques and prayer spaces that are established can be subject to severe harassment and vandalism from their local communities. In 1982, a mosque in another town near Lyon was blown up using plastic explosives, and the perpetrators were never held accountable.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁴ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 88.

³⁵⁵ Fetzer and Soper, 89.

³⁵⁶ Fetzer and Soper, 89.

³⁵⁷ Fetzer and Soper, 90.

2. Embassy Islam

One solution for Muslims struggling to establish mosques in France has been for foreign states to sponsor them. According to Bowen, “large mosques in France have depended on foreign states, associations, or private donors for at least part of their funding” and “some may have received their initial funding from a single state.”³⁵⁸ This dynamic has stemmed partly from the practice of “Embassy Islam,” which Laurence defines as “the international advocacy, summitry, and intervention on behalf of the Islamic minority in Europe.”³⁵⁹ In this way, the governments of majority-Muslim sending states have maintained significant influence over the organization and practice of Islam for their diasporas in Europe. This approach can be observed in France’s early dealings with its Muslim communities and has impacted their integration into French society.

Laurence asserts that foreign Islamic governments enjoyed a privileged status in Europe from about 1960 to 1990 mainly due to European governments’ desire to maintain good trade relations, avoid the politicization of migrant populations, and ensure that migrant workers were poised to return to their home countries.³⁶⁰ Sending nations also had reasons for wanting to remain involved with their diasporas abroad, namely that remittances sent home by migrant workers contributed to their economic growth and development. Sending countries also feared that “dissidents abroad might seek to gather forces to effect policy changes, or change of regime, at home.”³⁶¹ In this sense, European governments’ interests largely aligned with those of the sending nations. They therefore embraced primarily “return-oriented” policies and viewed their Muslim populations as an “object of diplomatic geostrategy.”³⁶²

By the mid-1970s, European governments began to recognize the need for interlocutors to assist with attending to the “basic religious needs” of their Muslim

³⁵⁸ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 61.

³⁵⁹ Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*, 30.

³⁶⁰ Laurence, 31.

³⁶¹ Laurence, 33.

³⁶² Laurence, 32.

populations.³⁶³ To address this concern, many encouraged the establishment of embassies and welcomed “representatives of the official Islams of the Muslim world.”³⁶⁴ To this end, European governments began “importing imams and allowing foreign governments to sponsor mosques construction.”³⁶⁵ On the whole, European governments “were content to ‘outsource’ the day-to-day management of Islamic religious observance” to representatives from the embassies and consulates of Muslim immigrants’ sending states.³⁶⁶ France even signed a “mini shari’a accord,” which included a number of bilateral conventions with Algeria to address matters of “inheritance, repatriation of the deceased, polygamy, and divorce” for foreign Muslim workers.³⁶⁷ In 1981, France also signed a convention with Morocco that “obligated judges to apply Moroccan Islamic law in family law matters...for first-generation Moroccans living in France.”³⁶⁸ As Laurence simply describes the policy rationale, “not seeing the guestworkers and their offspring as destined for citizenship, and believing Islam, as the religion of foreigners, ‘an exogenous reality,’ the host societies tried their best to avoid the hard questions of Islam’s status in European societies.”³⁶⁹

During this time, most linguistic, cultural, and religious programs for Muslims in France were carried out by representatives from their sending nations and were oriented to encourage identification with their home countries and to anticipate an eventual homecoming. These representatives were known to favor the use of non-European languages, especially for religious education, and “the imams they exported were also unlikely to have command of the language of the host society.”³⁷⁰ They encouraged Muslims in Europe to participate in the elections of their home countries and “continued a

³⁶³ Laurence, 34.

³⁶⁴ Laurence, 34.

³⁶⁵ Laurence, 34.

³⁶⁶ Laurence, 30.

³⁶⁷ Laurence, 32.

³⁶⁸ Laurence, 32.

³⁶⁹ Laurence, 32.

³⁷⁰ Laurence, 69.

pretense of political representation for migrant-origin Muslims who are rapidly becoming a majority of European citizenship-holders.”³⁷¹

Throughout the 1980s, as many Muslims were gaining European citizenship, the motives of some sending countries evolved somewhat as they sought to maintain a “guardian status” over diaspora groups in Europe in order to preserve political and religious influence abroad.³⁷² Many sought to temper the influence of Islam from rival sending countries and thus began advancing their own variety of Islam more deliberately. To this end, the primary sending countries to France – Algeria, Morocco, and Turkey – each developed “a robust practice of exporting their official Islam to the diaspora.”³⁷³ This contributed to the hardening of lines between not only Muslims and their European hosts, but also between Muslims hailing from different sending countries.

Due to the practice of Embassy Islam and French Muslims’ difficulties establishing religious infrastructure in France, a structured process or institution for training local imams never fully materialized. As a result, both the quality and quantity of legitimate imams remain a struggle as qualifications to become an imam are not standardized. It is also challenging to find imams that are willing to work for the “relatively low wages that [their] congregations can afford to pay.”³⁷⁴ According to Laurence, two thirds of imams in France are on welfare.³⁷⁵ Because of this, the majority of imams in France were “born, raised, and trained outside of Europe—if they were trained at all.”³⁷⁶ Only one out of every five imams has French citizenship, most of whom were only recently naturalized.³⁷⁷ As a result, many imams lack adequate religious training and may have a poor understanding of their respective communities’ local societies.³⁷⁸

³⁷¹ Laurence, 69.

³⁷² Laurence, 42.

³⁷³ Laurence, 55.

³⁷⁴ Laurence, 229.

³⁷⁵ Laurence, 144.

³⁷⁶ Laurence, 144.

³⁷⁷ Laurence, 144.

³⁷⁸ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 24.

By the 1990s, European governments began to recognize the shortfalls of the Embassy Islam arrangement, notably the lack of encouragement for Muslims to integrate into their societies. As Laurence summarizes, “both the European governments and Muslim states purposely worked against integration for decades by promoting native language retention and the maintenance of distinct cultural and religious identities that did not mingle with the majority society – the very traits that would later be cited as evidence of failure to integrate.”³⁷⁹

3. Associations

Another important factor that has shaped the experience of Muslims in France and their relationship with the state is the development of associations. Seemingly contrary to the French Republic’s typical aversion to sub-groups, France passed a law in July 1901 granting the right to form associations, so long as they are registered with the state.³⁸⁰ Chapter IV of France’s 1905 law concerning the separation of church and state extended this authorization to the formation of religious associations.³⁸¹ The law on associations initially applied to foreigners and immigrants but was suspended in 1939 due to the growth of fascist organizations linked to Germany and Italy.³⁸² Authorization for foreigners and immigrants to form associations was restored in 1981. With that came a significant growth in the number of associations formed by Muslim residents, many of which had already existed informally.³⁸³ This significant change, however, meant that groups could then formally register with the state and receive subsidies from France’s Fund for Social Action (FAS).³⁸⁴

Bowen explains that in the French context, these associations were not intended to contribute to the formation of cultural, ethnic, or religious communities, which the

³⁷⁹ Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*, 38.

³⁸⁰ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 13.

³⁸¹ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 13.

³⁸² Nielsen and Otterbeck, 13.

³⁸³ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 14.

³⁸⁴ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 85.

Republican state strongly opposes, but instead to address the shared interests of various groups.³⁸⁵ In reality, however, associations have proven to be a “major vehicle for the development of cultural and religious identities in France.”³⁸⁶ To this end, he notes that cultural associations may offer social services and promote cultural heritage and religious associations may promote religious identity by combining extra-curricular activities such as sports or academic tutoring with religious education.³⁸⁷ Many religious associations also sponsor prayer spaces and were largely responsible for their significant increase in number from roughly 500 in 1985 to 1,279 in 1992 and to about 1,600 by 2003.³⁸⁸ Mosques and prayer spaces are not only significant for their spiritual functions but represent an important part of society for French Muslims. They are known to provide general instruction, tutoring, and social services, and have come to be an important element of political representation.³⁸⁹ In this way, “associations involving Muslims, only some of them religious, have come to provide a major set of pathways to integration.”³⁹⁰

Many Muslim associations also affiliated themselves with transnational networks led by foreign governments or international non-government organizations.³⁹¹ Similar to the dynamic affecting mosques, most Muslim associations in France have a particular national orientation.³⁹² Roughly 60% of Muslim associations fall under three main umbrella organizations or “federations:” the Moroccan-dominated National Federation of Muslims in France (FNMF); the Union of Islamic Organizations in France (UOIF), which is associated with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and the Grande Mosquée de Paris (GMP), which is heavily Algerian-oriented.³⁹³ These federations are thought to represent

³⁸⁵ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 180.

³⁸⁶ Bowen, 180.

³⁸⁷ Bowen, 180–81.

³⁸⁸ Bowen, 31.

³⁸⁹ Bowen, 37.

³⁹⁰ Bowen, 181.

³⁹¹ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 99.

³⁹² Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 16.

³⁹³ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 99.

only 10 to 15% of Muslims in France, however.³⁹⁴ Due to its unique origins, the GMP has had the closest ties to the state. According to Bowen, it has maintained a reputation as “the most moderate Islamic institution in France” and thus has been the government’s preferred partner in its efforts to “domesticate Islam...to form a national Islamic body around the mosque.”³⁹⁵ Even with the state’s support for the GMP to become the general representative of Islam in France, it failed to gain recognition from Muslims of other North African, West African, and Turkish origins.³⁹⁶

By the late 1980s, the French government began to recognize that the GMP’s espousal of Algerian Islam was not adequately representative of all French Muslims. France also hoped to continue reducing the influence of foreign nations’ agendas on internal French affairs. To address this, the government sought to “domesticate,” as described by Laurence, or institutionalize Islam in France by further structuring and formalizing relations with the state.³⁹⁷ The French Minister of the Interior, Pierre Joxe, launched a Council of Reflection on Islam in France (CORIF) in 1989.³⁹⁸ Composed of a broad group of Muslim leaders, the council was not intended to be a representative council but instead to advise on religious needs. In 1999, however, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, then the Minister of the Interior, initiated dialogue about an unprecedented “grand forum” of Muslim federations to consult upon the religious needs of Muslims in France that was formally recognized by the French state.³⁹⁹ After several years of deliberation among committees and working groups to agree on its structure and election processes, the French Council of the Muslim Religion (CFCM) was established under Nicolas Sarkozy, then the Minister of the Interior, in 2003. Leadership positions on the council were granted to the

³⁹⁴ Laurence and Vaïsse, 99.

³⁹⁵ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 87–88.

³⁹⁶ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 13.

³⁹⁷ Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*, 24–25.

³⁹⁸ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 146.

³⁹⁹ Laurence and Vaïsse, 148.

primary Muslim federations and a representative electorate was established with over 4,000 delegates based on the square-footage of their respective prayer spaces.⁴⁰⁰

Composed of twenty-five regional councils and a general assembly, French Muslims “achieved one of the highest levels of formal, national unity in Europe” with the establishment of the CFCM.⁴⁰¹ The CFCM was a culmination of the state’s attempt to form an official representative Muslim body to address matters of religion. In view of arrangements that already existed for Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religions, the state hoped to have a single national interlocutor that could function as a “denominational representative” as envisioned in Chapter IV of the 1905 law separating church and state.⁴⁰² Nevertheless, the council has proven to have some important limitations. First, the CFCM only addresses matters pertaining to the practice of Islam and is not intended to represent Muslims themselves.⁴⁰³ It is therefore geared towards practicing Muslims and does not address Muslim cultural issues. Second, the council’s election process has exposed the internal divisions and power struggles that persist between French Muslims.⁴⁰⁴ Moreover, President Sarkozy also made the controversial decision that the council’s first president would be the rector of the Grande Mosquée de Paris, Dalil Boubakeur, the state favorite traditionally associated with Algerian Islam.⁴⁰⁵ For these reasons, the council still struggles to adequately represent Muslim issues and to maintain legitimacy across the diverse groups of Muslims within France.

4. Schools and Religious Education

As discussed in the previous chapter, public schools play a central role within the French Republican context and are seen as important tools for integration and national unity. They are also envisaged as the quintessential secular Republican institution.

⁴⁰⁰ Laurence and Vaïsse, 148.

⁴⁰¹ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 92.

⁴⁰² Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 20; Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 154.

⁴⁰³ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 153.

⁴⁰⁴ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 20.

⁴⁰⁵ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 26.

Nevertheless, religious communities are permitted to establish their own schools and to receive some public funding “as part of the agreement between church and state reached at the beginning of the twentieth century.”⁴⁰⁶ As long as schools agreed to teach the national curriculum and would admit pupils of any denomination, the state agreed to finance their teachers.⁴⁰⁷ Under the Debré law, passed in December 1959, private schools may apply for state funding once they meet certain requirements: “1) that their school has already been functioning for five years; 2) that their teachers are well qualified; 3) that the ‘number of students’ is relatively large; and 4) that the school facilities are ‘clean.’”⁴⁰⁸ In addition to accepting students from all religious backgrounds, religious education classes must be optional for all students.⁴⁰⁹ Important benefits of this status include that teachers’ salaries are paid by the state, families receive a subsidy for each child’s tuition, and the school’s curriculum and diplomas are officially recognized.⁴¹⁰

While a number of Christian and Jewish schools have achieved this status, the requirements have proven very difficult to achieve for Muslims in France due to financial constraints and a lack of qualified teachers. Additionally, as Bowen explains, “given that many French see ‘integrating Muslims’ as an unfinished task, they carry different attitudes toward Muslim schools than toward Catholic or Jewish schools.”⁴¹¹ There is even disagreement among French Muslims as some are strongly in favor of Muslim schools while others share the concern of many non-Muslims that separate schools will lead to “ghettoization” of Muslim students.⁴¹² Under these conditions, the first publicly subsidized Muslim school in France was not achieved until 2003.⁴¹³ As of 2015, however,

⁴⁰⁶ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 23.

⁴⁰⁷ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 110.

⁴⁰⁸ Sabine Monchambert, *L’enseignement privé en France*, (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1993), 53–64; quoted in Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 85.

⁴⁰⁹ Fetzer and Soper, 85.

⁴¹⁰ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 23; Katrin Bennhold, “For French Muslims, a Catholic Education,” *The New York Times*, September 25, 2008, sec. Europe, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/25/world/europe/25iht-schools.4.16488061.html>.

⁴¹¹ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 116.

⁴¹² Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 86.

⁴¹³ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 23.

there were also roughly forty-five privately funded Muslim schools in France, which often include Arabic instruction and are permitted to offer a religiously oriented education.⁴¹⁴

Due to the cost of tuition and the fact that there are fewer religious and private schools in the urban areas where many Muslims live, most Muslim children attend state public schools.⁴¹⁵ But with only four Muslim public schools and 8,847 Catholic schools as of 2008, a significant number of French Muslims have also opted to send their children to Catholic schools, which they have found to be more accommodating of Islam than state public schools.⁴¹⁶ This is often to avoid the stringent secular requirements of the state public schools where Muslim students experience a complete suppression of their religion and struggle to receive accommodations for religious sensitivities regarding issues such as overnight field trips with co-ed sleeping arrangements, co-ed physical education classes, halal meat in cafeterias, and support for fasting during Ramadan.⁴¹⁷

The national curriculum is another sensitive issue for French Muslims. As students in state schools, they receive no religious education and receive only a brief factual introduction to Islam within the standardized history curriculum of the French equivalent of the United States' seventh grade.⁴¹⁸ Since state-subsidized Catholic schools are allowed to offer voluntary religious education courses, some have pursued offering Islamic instruction "in parallel with" Catholic instruction, often in consultation with a local imam.⁴¹⁹ By the end of the 1980s, many mosques had also begun offering Islamic instruction for the increasing number of French Muslim children.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁴ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 23.

⁴¹⁵ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 23.

⁴¹⁶ Bennhold, "For French Muslims, a Catholic Education."

⁴¹⁷ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 85.

⁴¹⁸ Nielsen and Otterbeck, "France," 23.

⁴¹⁹ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 23.

⁴²⁰ Nielsen and Otterbeck, 23.

5. The Headscarf Affair

The issue of strict secularism in French state schools came to a head in October 1989 with the *Affaire du Voile* (veil) or *Foulard* (scarf). In this case, a public secondary school north of Paris expelled three Muslim schoolgirls after refusing to remove their headscarves or *hijab*, which the school considered to be in violation of *laïcité*.⁴²¹ The girls were allowed to return to school with their headscarves on the condition that they lower them to their shoulders when in the classroom. Ten days later, the girls again refused to lower their scarves and were suspended from classes.⁴²² Muslim girls in other schools throughout France began to refuse to lower their scarves in solidarity, and multiple demonstrations were organized to protest what they perceived to be direct discrimination against Muslims. Headscarves were eventually permitted in schools on the condition that they were not to be used for proselytizing.⁴²³ The guidance promulgated by the *Conseil d'État* in 1989 and later codified in the 2004 law “prohibiting the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols” was somewhat ambiguous and subject to individual interpretation, however.⁴²⁴ Today, whether Muslim students are permitted to wear the hijab in school still often depends largely on the orientation of its principal.⁴²⁵

The 1989 incident sparked a national debate with significant media coverage surrounding freedom of religion and the right to education.⁴²⁶ While a precise number is not universally agreed upon, many Muslim girls were expelled from school and deprived of a normal state education. Left with several undesirable options, some girls continued classes through distance learning but experienced difficulty on the French standardized test, *le bac*, which is a crucial step determining one’s professional path after secondary school.⁴²⁷ Some families could afford to hire private tutors or lawyers to fight to have

⁴²¹ Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” 64.

⁴²² Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 78.

⁴²³ Decherf, “French Views of Religious Freedom.”

⁴²⁴ Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 163.

⁴²⁵ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 79.

⁴²⁶ Jones, “Beneath the Veil: Muslim Girls and Islamic Headscarves in Secular France.”

⁴²⁷ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 81.

expulsions overturned in court. Many working-class Muslim families could not afford these options, however, so some girls were forced to abandon their education.⁴²⁸ This can be particularly crippling in a country like France, which has a highly competitive and rigid education system.

The *hijab* issue was complex from both the Muslim and the non-Muslim perspective.⁴²⁹ Some Muslim girls in France supported and welcomed the law as a validation for their preference to not wear the hijab in school while others feared that they would be ridiculed by family and friends for not wearing it. Others wanted to wear the hijab and felt it should be their right. Conflicting demands from family, friends, and schools caused significant distress, even driving one young Muslim girl to attempt suicide.⁴³⁰ The state's central arguments against the hijab were that wearing it on school grounds was a direct violation of public schools' secular nature, that it was a tool of oppression against women, and that it was an indication of fundamentalism among France's Muslim population.⁴³¹ Ultimately, however, expelling Muslim girls from school only impedes their ability to integrate into society and the workforce.

According to Fetzer and Soper, "for many Muslims, the education system in the West is viewed as hostile to their religious values" and is preferential toward Christian religious traditions.⁴³² Moreover, while the state advocates *laïcité* as a means of protecting religious freedom, many French Muslims perceive it as "a direct attack on their religious faith and on their efforts to transmit their religious beliefs to the next generation."⁴³³ The headscarf affair is just one example of the ongoing conflict between *laïcité* and the practice of Islam that has led many French Muslims to feel they are being targeted and marginalized by society and the government. The issue of the hijab was largely a symbolic one, as the number of headscarf-wearing French Muslims has always been quite low, but both sides

⁴²⁸ Fetzer and Soper, 81.

⁴²⁹ Fetzer and Soper, 81–84; Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 164–66.

⁴³⁰ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 84.

⁴³¹ Jennings, "Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France," 584.

⁴³² Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 22.

⁴³³ Fetzer and Soper, 155.

have regarded it as an important boundary-defining moment in the relationship between French Muslims and the state.⁴³⁴

6. Religious Accommodation Conclusion

As demonstrated in previous sections of this chapter, Muslims have consistently struggled to practice their faith in France. This is due in part to the fact that the French government did not initially feel a sense of responsibility to accommodate Islam. When most of the Muslims in France were still primarily temporary migrant workers, the government exercised a policy of “Embassy Islam” and was content to leave the administration of Islam to representatives from Muslim-majority states. An interest shared with the French government at the time, these representatives embraced “return-oriented” messages and did not promote the integration of Muslims into French society.⁴³⁵ Once a significant number of Muslims began remaining in France and becoming citizens, however, the state was finally forced to consider the needs of this growing, religiously-defined population.

State religious accommodation can be defined as “the degree to which a government, through its policies, makes it possible for [religious] needs to be met.”⁴³⁶ This is primarily determined by existing church-state structures.⁴³⁷ In France’s case, the church-state policy inherited by Muslims was a strictly secular *laïcité*, which relegates religion entirely to the private domain. This structure allows little room for Muslims to advocate for the state to provide support for their religious accommodation. As Bowen notes, however, “France is striking for the coexistence of explicit and legally enshrined secularism, on the one hand, and equally vigorous state and municipal engagement with representatives of religious groups, on the other.”⁴³⁸ The right to form associations provided an important loophole both for Muslims seeking recognition and for the state to

⁴³⁴ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 165.

⁴³⁵ Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*, 30–31.

⁴³⁶ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 23.

⁴³⁷ Fetzer and Soper, 18.

⁴³⁸ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 33.

be able to work with particular groups while maintaining the spirit of Republican *laïcité*. With this framework, the French government has invested significant effort in its attempts to support and leverage Muslim associations and federations as an effective way to interface with the religion and to promote acceptance of Islam in France within agreed limits. These federations, however, have not yet managed to capture enough popular support across the diverse Muslim population in France to be effective as state interlocutors.

In this context, Muslims in France have been fighting a mostly uphill battle to reach the same level of access, infrastructure, and acceptance enjoyed by other faiths. Because Catholicism was already deeply established by the time France adopted *laïcité*, it was able to retain more of what it had already achieved. Additionally, the Catholic Church “won important concessions” in the early twentieth century concerning education, and the state continues to provide support to churches that existed before 1905.⁴³⁹ As a newer religion in France, Islam was not able to benefit from any pre-existing arrangements or infrastructure and is thus disproportionately disadvantaged by *laïcité* in France.

In Fetzer and Soper’s words, “the societal and political environment in France is surprisingly hostile to public accommodation of Muslims’ religious practices.”⁴⁴⁰ French Muslims have accordingly struggled to achieve basic religious accommodations including prayer spaces and mosques and have had little success in establishing private or Muslim-affiliated public schools. Moreover, issues such as the headscarf affair have led French Muslims to feel discriminated against and targeted by the state policy of *laïcité*. With minimal support from the state, some French Muslims have been forced to rely on foreign support, becoming beholden to their sponsoring nations or organizations. For example, one Muslim private school in France lost financial support from a Gulf state when the sponsors learned its classrooms had mixed gender seating.⁴⁴¹ Likewise, the state’s early attempts to “outsource” the management and leadership of Islam in France prevented the development

⁴³⁹ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 19.

⁴⁴⁰ Fetzer and Soper, 62.

⁴⁴¹ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 117.

of an organic French Islam that could have potentially been better adapted to the Republican state model. Instead, this practice only hindered French Muslims' integration into society. As Laurence emphasizes, "state-mosque relations are of vital importance because these institutional links with religious communities prepare the ground for long-term political integration."⁴⁴²

E. CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of France's Muslim population and the policies that affected their initial settlement and integration into French society. Because most French Muslims have an immigrant background and can trace their origins to former French territories and colonies, immigration policies were most significant in their initial experiences in France. The French government's policies encouraged economic immigration from the early twentieth century until the late 1960s to early 1970s. During this period, there was a major shift in favor of policies that discouraged immigration and even sought to deport Muslims already living in France.

Because Muslim workers were not originally expected to remain in France, the state did not concern itself with their integration into society. Instead, it embraced housing policies that intentionally located Muslim migrant workers out of sight and on the outskirts of major cities. The evolution and hardening of Paris' boundaries demonstrate the city's consistently exclusive nature and its contribution to the development of isolated and impoverished banlieues. Presently, the suburban banlieues and their projects are home to a high concentration of Muslims and foreign-born residents whose struggle with persistent socioeconomic disadvantages precludes them from the education and employment opportunities that could facilitate integration and upward social mobility.

From the religious perspective, France forfeited its ability to influence the development and practice of Islam when it embraced a policy allowing the international administration of the religion. As Laurence observes, "Europeans' demand for spokespeople and interlocutors was destined to change once outsourcing and laissez-faire

⁴⁴² Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims*, 245.

became counterproductive, and when they collectively realized the cost of having intentionally sacrificed immigrant integration on the altar of short-term pragmatism.”⁴⁴³ While French interests initially aligned with those of Muslim-majority sending states in advocating return-oriented approaches, the government later recognized the cost of hindering Muslims’ overall integration when they began to stay in large numbers. Laurence and Vaïsse contend that “by the late 1980s, many politicians and policymakers agreed that Muslims in France had been all but abandoned by the state.”⁴⁴⁴ By this time, younger generations of Muslims born in France were coming of age and “sought more public and civic ways to achieve equal rights and recognition as French citizens”⁴⁴⁵

Nielsen and Otterbeck discuss trends identified in French surveys measuring the “degree to which people of Muslim cultural origin in France are also practicing Muslims.”⁴⁴⁶ Findings indicated a major decline in religious adherence from Muslim immigrant parents to their children from the 1980s to the early 2000s. At this point, however, the trend reversed and surveys revealed a noteworthy increase in activities such as prayer attendance and other Muslim rituals, including fasting. According to Bowen, “some men and women thought that Islam would offer an identity that would distinguish them from both their parents and from the native French society that did not seem to want them.”⁴⁴⁷ As a result, younger generations of Muslims have demanded more support for their religious practice and expression in public. They have also sought to deepen their relationship with Islam by forming associations and by learning more about their faith. Due to the persistent absence of legitimate Islamic religious authority in France, however, they can potentially be influenced by young men with little to no formal religious education or by foreign imams who may have a political agenda.

In conclusion, to assert that Muslims have not done enough to integrate in France provides an incomplete picture and ignores the significant role played by the French state

⁴⁴³ Laurence, 69.

⁴⁴⁴ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 143.

⁴⁴⁵ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 21.

⁴⁴⁶ Nielsen and Otterbeck, “France,” 21.

⁴⁴⁷ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 22.

in ostracizing them. Throughout the twentieth century, the French government deliberately implemented policies that hindered the geographic, socioeconomic, and religious integration of Muslims into society. Furthermore, France has done “precious little positively to accommodate Muslim’s religious practices” and has instead “exerted all too much effort to make Muslims’ life even more difficult than it already is for this largely immigrant-origin, working-class population.”⁴⁴⁸ However, Laurence contends that “the most serious challenge to integration in the next generation will still come in the forms of terrorism and nativism.”⁴⁴⁹ This suggests that as Islam has provided an important sense of identity for many estranged Muslim youths, the lack of legitimate Islamic religious authority in France may leave some vulnerable to potential radicalization.

⁴⁴⁸ Fetzner and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 90.

⁴⁴⁹ Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*, 266.

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IV. RADICALIZATION AND RIGHTS CLAIMS

A. INTRODUCTION

France has experienced a significant increase in violent and non-violent crime since the mid-1990s, particularly in the suburban banlieues.⁴⁵⁰ It has also experienced a “wave of Islamist terror” in 1995 and a series of gruesome terrorist attacks and attempted assaults beginning in the early 2000s.⁴⁵¹ The majority of these terrorist acts were committed by French-born Muslims, a trend that “called into question some of the most basic assumptions French citizens have made about their country, most notably the ability and the willingness of newcomers to continue to assimilate into French culture.”⁴⁵² In light of the observed increases in French Muslim religious adherence, Muslim-perpetrated violence has caused renewed concern in France about the integration of its Muslim population.

This chapter first presents the radicalization and terrorism issues in France and considers how integration issues may have contributed to this phenomenon. It then explores whether multicultural policies could improve integration by analyzing the current status of France’s multicultural policies, the rights claims typically presented by French Muslims, and insights into “what makes Muslims feel French.”⁴⁵³ These claims are then located within the context of French society and elite discourse to evaluate the state’s reciprocal responsibility to facilitate integration. Finally, this discussion informs policy recommendations, based on the likely effectiveness of multicultural policies to both improve integration and potentially curb radicalization and terrorism among French Muslims.

⁴⁵⁰ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 66–67.

⁴⁵¹ Fetzer and Soper, 66; Neiberg, ““No More Elsewhere,”” 24–25.

⁴⁵² Neiberg, ““No More Elsewhere,”” 25.

⁴⁵³ Rahsaan Maxwell and Erik Bleich, “What Makes Muslims Feel French?,” *Social Forces* 93, no. 1 (September 2014): 155–79, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sou064>; Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 46.

B. RADICALIZATION AND TERRORISM

In October 2005, France experienced a widespread outbreak of riots in the urban areas surrounding most major cities throughout the country.⁴⁵⁴ The riots were provoked by the deaths of two French Muslim boys in Clichy-sous-Bois, a suburban commune near Paris in one of France's most impoverished departments, Seine-Saint-Denis.⁴⁵⁵ The teens, both of North African descent, were playing soccer when they were approached by a police patrol. Desperate to avoid confrontation and questioning, they ran and hid themselves inside an electrical power substation, where they were fatally electrocuted. Riots broke out in Clichy-sous-Bois, with violence quickly spreading to other departments in the surrounding Paris region and eventually to many other parts of the country, causing the French government to declare a state of emergency.⁴⁵⁶ The riots lasted almost three weeks and resulted in an estimated 200 million euros worth of material damage.⁴⁵⁷ Nearly 10,000 vehicles, 233 public buildings, and 74 other buildings were burned by rioters in approximately 300 French cities.⁴⁵⁸ Between 10,000 and 15,000 individuals participated in riot activities, with an average age of sixteen.⁴⁵⁹

One of the dominant media narratives initially framing the events presented the young rioters as Islamists.⁴⁶⁰ When the dust settled, however, it was widely acknowledged that the 2005 riots had neither a political or a religious agenda, despite the fact that most rioters indeed came from Muslim backgrounds.⁴⁶¹ Upon investigation, French authorities

⁴⁵⁴ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 2.

⁴⁵⁵ Anne-Therese Aerts, Sandra Chirazi, and Lucile Cros, "Poverty Very Prominent in the City Centres of Large Urban Hubs - Insee Première - 1552," Institute National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques, February 6, 2015, <https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/1370823>.

⁴⁵⁶ Christine Lagorio, "France Invokes State Of Emergency," November 7, 2005, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/france-invokes-state-of-emergency/>.

⁴⁵⁷ Raphaël Canet, Laurent Pech, and Maura Stewart, "France's Burning Issue: Understanding the Urban Riots of November 2005," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, November 18, 2008), 2, <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1303514>.

⁴⁵⁸ Canet, Pech, and Stewart, 2.

⁴⁵⁹ Hugues Lagrange, "Nuit de novembre 2005. Géographie des violences," *Esprit*, (December 2005), cited in Canet, Pech, and Stewart, 2.

⁴⁶⁰ Canet, Pech, and Stewart, 5.

⁴⁶¹ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 2.

determined that most rioters had no history of violence and that Islamic groups had no direct connection to the events.⁴⁶² Muslim clerics had even attempted to calm the rioters, to no avail, demonstrating Muslim institutions' lack of influence in the situation.⁴⁶³

The riots were also generally framed as demonstrating the failure of Republican integration, but Canet et al. argue that they actually indicate the very opposite—that the events should be understood as “manifest evidence that most of the frustrated young men feel entirely French and that they simply want to be accepted by the Nation.”⁴⁶⁴ In this sense, the riots were “a plea for access to French society.”⁴⁶⁵ The attention that the riots received nationally and worldwide highlighted “the reality of daily discrimination against young French citizens of Arab, African, and Turkish origin.”⁴⁶⁶ For example, an investigation throughout metropolitan France by Défenseur des droits, an independent administrative authority of the French government, revealed that young men perceived as black or Arabs were 20 times more likely than others to be searched by the police.⁴⁶⁷ Moran explains that a long history of police brutality and mistreatment toward youth in the banlieues since the 1980s has contributed to “a profound sense of injustice” that has precipitated a distinct “us versus them” mentality.⁴⁶⁸ As a result, he continues, violence has gained legitimacy among suburban youth as not only a “necessary course of action” in the face of injustice but often as “the only means of making their voices heard.”⁴⁶⁹

Violence escalated to another level in 2012, however, when a French Muslim man of Algerian descent killed three soldiers in Toulouse and three Jewish schoolchildren in

⁴⁶² Canet, Pech, and Stewart, “France’s Burning Issue,” 12.

⁴⁶³ Bernard E. Brown, “God and Man in the French Riots,” *American Foreign Policy Interests* 29, no. 3, (May 2007); cited in Canet, Pech, and Stewart, 7.

⁴⁶⁴ Canet, Pech, and Stewart, 3.

⁴⁶⁵ Matthew Moran, “Opposing Exclusion: The Political Significance of the Riots in French Suburbs (2005–2007),” *Modern & Contemporary France* 19, no. 3 (August 1, 2011): 297, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09639489.2011.588793>.

⁴⁶⁶ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 2.

⁴⁶⁷ “Les Jeunes Noirs Ou Arabes Ont 20 Fois plus de Chances d’être Contrôlés Par La Police,” *Le Club Europe 1*, January 20, 2017.

⁴⁶⁸ Moran, “Opposing Exclusion,” 309.

⁴⁶⁹ Moran, 308–9.

Montauban.⁴⁷⁰ Four additional incidents in 2013–2014 included police officer stabbings and ramming vehicles into crowds at Christmas markets.⁴⁷¹ According to Neiberg, by this time, the Islamic State had “become at least a source of inspiration to a small minority inclined to violence.”⁴⁷² The year 2015 witnessed some of France’s worst terrorist attacks. In January 2015, two French-born Muslim men of Algerian descent killed twelve and injured eleven at the site of a satirical newspaper, *Charlie Hebdo*.⁴⁷³ In connection with these perpetrators, another French-born Muslim man killed four and injured nine at a Paris supermarket, Hyper Cacher.⁴⁷⁴ The deadliest terrorist attack in France to date occurred in November 2015, when 130 people were killed and hundreds more injured after terrorists claiming allegiance to the Islamic state entered the Bataclan nightclub in Paris, opening gunfire into the crowd and detonating explosives.⁴⁷⁵ The leader of the attack was again a French citizen.⁴⁷⁶ 2015 also included suicide bombers outside the *Stade de France* soccer stadium in Paris, the beheading of a man at a factory in Lyon, and a thwarted shooting onboard a train bound for Paris.⁴⁷⁷

While these incidents appear numerous and some have resulted in high death tolls, it is important to note that, as Laurence and Vaïsse observe, “the phenomenon is marginal,” considering the size of France’s Muslim population.⁴⁷⁸ This supports their judgement that “there is no automatic link between an individual’s lack of socioeconomic integration and subsequent involvement in terrorism,” as many French Muslims with a shared experience

⁴⁷⁰ Neiberg, ““No More Elsewhere,”” 24.

⁴⁷¹ Neiberg, 24.

⁴⁷² Neiberg, 25.

⁴⁷³ Neiberg, 25.

⁴⁷⁴ Neiberg, 25.

⁴⁷⁵ Rachel Donadio, “What the November 13 Attacks Taught Paris,” *The Atlantic*, November 13, 2018, 25, <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2018/11/paris-attacks-three-years-later/575629/>.

⁴⁷⁶ Neiberg, ““No More Elsewhere,”” 25.

⁴⁷⁷ Neiberg, 25.

⁴⁷⁸ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 244–46.

of poor integration do not resort to radicalization or terrorism.⁴⁷⁹ Instead, Laurence and Vaïsse contend that turning to Islamist terrorism involves a complex set of environmental and psychological factors that often include a personal identity crisis, developing a sense of political awareness, and an experience of religious awakening.⁴⁸⁰ Ultimately, however, they argue that “the personal encounter between ‘re-Islamized’ French youths and recruiters for terrorist networks is...the single most important step in their drift toward violent action.”⁴⁸¹ As many French Muslim youth already experience the environmental and psychological factors enumerated, they could perhaps be more susceptible than others to the influence of a terrorist network should they come into contact with one. Although Laurence and Vaïsse affirm that many Muslim associations denounce violent jihad, Shore notes that among France’s more than 1,000 Muslim associations, “there are also fundamentalist and Islamist groups who profit from the freedoms of a democratic state.”⁴⁸² Moreover, as discussed in the previous chapter, many Muslim religious representatives are still foreign-born and may espouse more fundamentalist teachings of Islam. Interior Minister Sarkozy expelled at least 35 imams between 2003 and 2005 who “praised terrorist violence, called for assassinations, or otherwise expressed ‘hatred.’”⁴⁸³

As noted in the literature review in Chapter I, however, a number of other radicalization models identify situational factors as important contributors to radicalization and potentially terrorism that are present in the French context. King and Taylor identified subjective group-relative deprivation and identity-related issues stemming from discrimination and lack of integration as common psychological factors in homegrown jihadi radicalization.⁴⁸⁴ Taylor and Horgan also argued that social, political, and organizational contexts affect an individual’s choice to engage in terrorism.⁴⁸⁵ Similarly,

⁴⁷⁹ Laurence and Vaïsse, 244–46.

⁴⁸⁰ Laurence and Vaïsse, 247–50.

⁴⁸¹ Laurence and Vaïsse, 246.

⁴⁸² Shore, *Breeding Bin Ladens*, 108.

⁴⁸³ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 245.

⁴⁸⁴ King and Taylor, “The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists.”

⁴⁸⁵ Taylor and Horgan, “A Conceptual Framework for Addressing Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist,” 592.

Bartlett and Miller found that Muslim terrorists, non-violent Muslim radicals, and mainstream Muslims shared experiences of alienation from the state, anger towards Western foreign policy, discrimination, and identity conflicts.⁴⁸⁶ While these scholars and Psoiu all found individual personality traits likely to be a decisive factor in radicalization, it is noteworthy that many of the other contributing factors these scholars identify relate to integration issues.⁴⁸⁷ As McHugh explains, “the link between the banlieue and radical Islam is often more correlative than causal, but certain strains of extremism resonate in the banlieue because they speak to the reality of exclusion.”⁴⁸⁸ While poor integration may not be the leading cause of radicalization and terrorism among French Muslims, it is likely still a contributing factor; and this warrants considering how to improve their circumstances.

C. MULTICULTURAL POLICIES AND RIGHTS CLAIMS

As Chapters II and III have already presented an account of French Muslims’ experience of the traditional French Republican approach to integration, this chapter considers whether a multicultural approach could improve the integration of Muslims in France. Koopmans employs two frameworks to assess multicultural policies, which provide a useful starting point for considering the policies in place in France. The Multiculturalism Policy Index (MPI) assesses countries’ multicultural policies by assigning a score of 0; 0.5; or 1 corresponding to their degree of implementation within eight categories:

1. Constitutional, legislative, or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism.
2. The adoption of multiculturalism in school curriculums.
3. The inclusion of ethnic representation/sensitivity in the mandating of public media or media licensing.
4. Exemptions from dress codes, Sunday-closing legislation, etc.
5. Allowing dual citizenship.
6. The funding of ethnic group organizations to support cultural activities.
7. The funding of bilingual education or mother-tongue instruction.

⁴⁸⁶ Bartlett and Miller, “The Edge of Violence,” 12–13.

⁴⁸⁷ Psoiu, “Coming to Believe ‘Truths’ About Islamist Radicalization in Europe,” 248.

⁴⁸⁸ McHugh, “The French Plan to Fix Inequality—by Ignoring It.”

8. Affirmative action for disadvantaged immigrant groups.⁴⁸⁹

In 2010, France earned a positive score in only categories five and six, as French law has allowed dual citizenship since World War I and due to the Law on Association, which was extended to immigrants and the foreign-born in 1981.⁴⁹⁰ The Indicators of Citizenship Rights for Immigrants (ICRI) assigns a score of -1; -0.5; 0; 0.5; or 1 to 23 indicators of differential cultural rights within five categories:

1. The absence of cultural assimilation requirements for access to rights...
2. Accommodation of (Islamic) religious practices outside of public institutions...
3. Cultural rights and provisions in public institutions...
4. Political representation rights...
5. Affirmative action policies...⁴⁹¹

On a scale of -1 to 1, France scored -0.28 on the ICRI in 2008.⁴⁹² While France's score in both indexes has, in fact, increased as the studies have been repeated since the 1980s, its persistent low scores in both models illustrate a policy framework in France that is not typically supportive of multiculturalism.

In order to consider whether multicultural policies could improve integration challenges for French Muslims, it is important to examine the claims that French Muslims tend to make on the state. Koopmans and Statham define a claim-making act as "a purposeful communicative action in the public sphere" consisting of "public speech acts that articulate political demands, calls to action, proposals, or criticisms, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants or other collective actors."⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁹ Koopmans, "Multiculturalism and Immigration," 152; "Multiculturalism Policy Index."

⁴⁹⁰ Daniel Westlake, "France: Multiculturalism Policies in Contemporary Democracies," Queen's University, accessed April 11, 2021, <https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/immigrant-minorities/evidence/france>.

⁴⁹¹ Koopmans, "Multiculturalism and Immigration," 152–53.

⁴⁹² Koopmans, 154.

⁴⁹³ Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham, *The Making of a European Public Sphere. Media Discourse and Political*

Contention, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 55; quoted in Paul Statham, "How Ordinary People View Muslim Group Rights in Britain, the Netherlands, France and Germany: Significant 'Gaps' between Majorities and Muslims?," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42, no. 2 (January 26, 2016): 222, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1082288>.

To distinguish relevant cases, Statham asserts that claims for group rights are characterized by two criteria: “if granted, the group right goes beyond the set of common civil and political rights of individual citizenship” and, “if realized, the group right constitutes the recognition and accommodation by the state of the distinctive identity and need of the minority group.”⁴⁹⁴ These differential group rights are the essence of multicultural policies.

Carol and Koopmans evaluate “claims made by Islamic groups for religious rights in the public domain.”⁴⁹⁵ They specify that religious rights claims are those that “contest entitlements regarding the performance...or non-performance...of certain actions for religious reasons, or they are about entitlements that require others to perform...or refrain from performing...certain actions for religious reasons.”⁴⁹⁶ Table 2 presents data collected on religious rights claims made by Muslims in six European countries from 1999 to 2008.

⁴⁹⁴ Statham, 218.

⁴⁹⁵ Sarah Carol and Ruud Koopmans, “Dynamics of Contestation over Islamic Religious Rights in Western Europe,” *Ethnicities* 13, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 165, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796812470893>.

⁴⁹⁶ Carol and Koopmans, 167.

Table 2. Issues of religious rights claims.⁴⁹⁷

	Total	Netherlands	Germany	Switzerland	UK	Belgium	France
Headscarf	26.9%	13.6%	31.5%	24.5%	12.8%	33.1%	40.4%
Mosques and minarets	16.9%	7.9%	26.1%	19.6%	5.4%	15.3%	24.4%
Burqa or niqaab (face-covering)	6.2%	11.0%	3.4%	3.8%	17.4%	2.4%	2.6%
Islamic animal slaughtering	6.2%	0.5%	1.0%	5.4%	2.0	20.6%	2.6%
Islamic representative organizations	6.2%	2.1%	5.9%	8.2%	0.7%	9.3%	8.8%
Islamic schools	5.6%	20.9%	0.5%	0.5%	6.7%	1.6%	4.7%
Islamic religious classes	5.1%	4.2%	16.3%	6.5%	0.7%	2.0%	–
Training and selection of Imams	3.9%	7.9%	1.5%	4.9%	2.0%	2.4%	5.2%
Islamic burial provisions	3.3%	–	1.5%	15.8%	2.7%	0.8%	0.5%
Right to adopt Shariah rules	1.8%	4.7%	0.5%	1.1%	6.0%	–	–
Other halal food issues (not related to slaughtering)	1.8%	1.0%	–	1.6%	8.7%	0.4%	1.0%
Refusal to shake hands or make other physical contact with the opposite sex	1.5%	5.2%	–	–	4.0%	0.4%	–
Other rights ^a	14.9%	20.9%	11.8%	8.2%	30.8%	11.6%	9.8%
N	1,168	191	203	184	149	248	193

^aThis includes all rights that did not meet the threshold of five percent of claims in at least one country.

In France, the majority of contested religious rights claims focused on the wearing of headscarves and the construction of mosques. This supports Fetzer's and Soper's

⁴⁹⁷ Source: Carol and Koopmans, 179.

assertion that “Muslims have not been able to put on the policy agenda such things as support for separate Islamic schools or state aid for Muslim social service organizations...instead, Muslims in France find themselves contesting rearguard actions on highly symbolic, though still very significant, issues such as the right of girls to wear the hijab in state-run schools.”⁴⁹⁸ Moreover, Carol and Koopmans observe that in France, the debate surrounding Muslim religious rights mainly concerns rights of low “obtrusiveness,” which they define as “the degree to which rights claims challenge existing institutions and the dominant culture of the host society.”⁴⁹⁹

While religious claims are an important element of the multiculturalism debate, they are not always entirely representative of French Muslims’ grievances. As Fredette asserts, “we should not assume that all Muslim political claims are religious ones or even religiously motivated.”⁵⁰⁰ In 2014, Maxwell and Bleich analyzed whether French Muslims’ tendency toward national identification was “more strongly related to religiosity or other factors such as socio-economic status, social networks, and immigrant integration” to determine “What makes Muslims feel French?”⁵⁰¹ From this study they found that, in fact, “religiosity is not the dominant force shaping Muslims’ attitudes.”⁵⁰² This is significant, as Muslims’ issues tend to be framed in religious terms when their concerns may in fact stem from other sources. In general, higher levels of religiosity correlated with lower levels of national identification, but this trend was also identified among Christians.⁵⁰³ Overall, only 75% of Muslims answered positively to the statement “I feel French,” which was considerably lower than the positive response rates of both immigrant-origin and native-origin non-Muslims.⁵⁰⁴ Furthermore, they found that having segregated

⁴⁹⁸ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 19.

⁴⁹⁹ Carol and Koopmans, “Dynamics of Contestation over Islamic Religious Rights in Western Europe,” 185–86.

⁵⁰⁰ Jennifer Fredette, “Constructing Muslims in France Discourse, Public Identity, and the Politics of Citizenship” (Temple University Press, 2014), 5.

⁵⁰¹ Maxwell and Bleich, “What Makes Muslims Feel French?,” 155.

⁵⁰² Maxwell and Bleich, 155.

⁵⁰³ Maxwell and Bleich, 156.

⁵⁰⁴ Maxwell and Bleich, 162–63.

social networks was negatively correlated with positive French identification whereas better socio-economic status and “being more integrated on immigration-related measures” were positively correlated with French identification.⁵⁰⁵ Consequently, they conclude that “factors associated with immigrant integration have the most profound relationship with Muslim identification.”⁵⁰⁶

Similarly, the Open Society Institute conducted a study examining the concerns of Muslim communities in eleven major EU cities including Paris and Marseille.⁵⁰⁷ Its report indicated that “increased levels of education correlate with a greater sense of cultural identification with the state,” as represented in Table 3.⁵⁰⁸ Findings also indicated that “employment, particularly full-time employment, is a key factor for whether or not a person culturally identifies himself or herself as a national of the country, and whether he or she feels others see them in the same way.”⁵⁰⁹ As Laurence and Vaïsse note, a significant “gap [persists] between Muslims and the general population in level of education.”⁵¹⁰ This factor, combined with the high levels of unemployment among Muslims in the banlieues, would certainly contribute to decreased identification with the French state.

⁵⁰⁵ Maxwell and Bleich, 163.

⁵⁰⁶ Maxwell and Bleich, 155.

⁵⁰⁷ Tufyal Choudhury, “Muslims in Europe: A Report on 11 EU Cities” (New York: Open Society Institute, 2010), 32, https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/uploads/8dfc7811-b0e1-4b40-9ca4-35593a65274b/a-muslims-europe-20110214_0.pdf; This report included Amsterdam, Antwerp, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Leicester, London, Marseille, Paris, Rotterdam, and Stockholm.

⁵⁰⁸ Choudhury, 75.

⁵⁰⁹ Choudhury, 76.

⁵¹⁰ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 39.

Table 3. Do you see yourself as [Belgian, British, French, Danish, Dutch, German, or Swedish]?, Muslim respondents by highest level of education completed⁵¹¹

	Yes	No	Total
No formal education	30.8%	69.2%	100.0%
Primary	42.0%	58.0%	100.0%
Secondary	51.9%	48.1%	100.0%
University	54.1%	45.9%	100.0%

Finally, the report also revealed that “half of Muslims who identified culturally with their country...did not feel that others viewed them in the same way.”⁵¹² This highlights an important element of integration that may not be resolved by state policies.

D. SOCIETAL ATTITUDES

As discussed in Chapter II, the French Republican model seeks to minimize differences among citizens and expects immigrants and minorities to proactively become part of a pseudo-homogenous national body. Gilles Kepel articulates several key “illusions,” cited in Neiberg, that underpin this historical expectation. The first was that “Muslim immigrants would see themselves as more Western and less Muslim over time.”⁵¹³ In light of issues such as French Muslims’ often segregated communities, this has not necessarily been vindicated in the eyes of French society. However, Castaneda observes that “chain migration, social networks, homophily, cheap housing, and exclusion by others often combine to concentrate newcomers into ethnic enclaves, yet this does not

⁵¹¹ Source: Choudhury, “11 EU Cities,” 76.

⁵¹² 22.

⁵¹³ Gilles Kepel, *Terreur dans l'hexagone*, (Paris: Gallimard, 2015); cited in Neiberg, ““No More Elsewhere,”” 32.

signify that these newcomers lack a desire to assimilate structurally.”⁵¹⁴ In fact, Laurence and Vaïsse emphasize that “in poll after poll...self-declared Muslims and, more generally, French of African and foreign origin continue to declare their profound desire to integrate, their attachment to France, and their generally optimistic outlook.”⁵¹⁵ This leads to another “illusion” of the Republican model, that “the majority of French society would be willing to accept Muslim immigrants even if they did fully assimilate.”⁵¹⁶

Muslims in France are regularly subjected to discrimination and sometimes hate crimes.⁵¹⁷ Because “Muslim religious identity often coincides with non-European ethnicity or ‘race,’” it can be difficult to determine whether discrimination is driven by anti-Muslim sentiments, racism, or xenophobia towards those perceived as foreigners.⁵¹⁸ Discrimination is often observed in education, employment, and housing, but it is also experienced in many French Muslims’ everyday lives.⁵¹⁹ For instance, Laurence and Vaïsse note occasions when “young people of foreign origin are denied access to bars or nightclubs, which can be a painful experience that has a profound influence on their attitudes toward French society.”⁵²⁰ Discrimination has significant implications for integration because “for Muslims, the persistence of discrimination and prejudice affects their sense of national belonging.”⁵²¹

⁵¹⁴ Charles Tilly and Harold Brown, “On Uprooting, Kinship, and the Auspices of Migration,” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 8 (September 1967): 139–164; Kenneth Wilson and Alejandro Portes, “Immigrant Enclaves: An Analysis of the Labor Market Experiences of Cubans in Miami,” *American Journal of Sociology* 86 (September 1980): 295–319; cited in Castaneda, “Places of Stigma,” 163.

⁵¹⁵ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 47.

⁵¹⁶ Gilles Kepel, *Terreur dans l’hexagone*, (Paris: Gallimard, 2015); Neiberg, ““No More Elsewhere,”” 32.

⁵¹⁷ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 58.

⁵¹⁸ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 21.

⁵¹⁹ Fredette, “Constructing Muslims in France Discourse, Public Identity, and the Politics of Citizenship,” 9.

⁵²⁰ Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 61.

⁵²¹ Choudhury, “11 EU Cities,” 23.

Discrimination can also be associated with Islamophobia, which is characterized by “multiple forms of anti-Muslim feelings, behavior, and policies.”⁵²² Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate crimes have also increased throughout Western Europe, particularly since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.⁵²³ This behavior has included instances of physical and verbal assault and vandalizing mosques and other Muslim-owned property.⁵²⁴

Islamophobia is often fueled by stereotypes and persistent negative representations of French Muslims within the media and elite discourse. At times, some French Muslims feel they have been portrayed in the media as “an amalgam of terrorist, Islamist, Muslim, North African, Arab and immigrant” or “*Islamalgalmé*.”⁵²⁵ Fredette explains that the perspectives informing French politics and debate are often generated by a highly centralized “elite triad of discourse shapers,” consisting of politicians, prominent intellectuals, and the media.⁵²⁶ Together, these groups form a unique “*politico-media*” class in France that contributes to an insular perspective on Muslim affairs that is prevalent in media discourse.⁵²⁷ Since the 1980s, the predominant narrative perpetuated by this group is that of “failed integration” on the part of French Muslims.⁵²⁸ In this way, French

⁵²² Sabri Ciftci, “Islamophobia and Threat Perceptions: Explaining Anti-Muslim Sentiment in the West,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 32, no. 3 (September 1, 2012): 293, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2012.727291>.

⁵²³ Nathalie Vanparys, Dirk Jacobs, and Corinne Torrekens, “The Impact of Dramatic Events on Public Debate Concerning Accommodation of Islam in Europe,” *Ethnicities* 13, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 211, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796812470899>.

⁵²⁴ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 155.

⁵²⁵ Malcolm D. Brown, “Comparative Analysis of Mainstream Discourses, Media Narratives and Representations of Islam in Britain and France Prior to 9/11,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 26, no. 3 (December 1, 2006): 304, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602000601141216>.

⁵²⁶ Fredette, “Constructing Muslims in France Discourse, Public Identity, and the Politics of Citizenship,” 15.

⁵²⁷ Fredette, 33.

⁵²⁸ Fredette, 7.

Muslims are typically depicted as a homogenous group that is harshly criticized for not making greater efforts to adopt French norms.⁵²⁹

An important element of the failed integration narrative stems from the uniquely French understanding of citizenship. Rooted in traditional Republican values, there is a strong normative understanding of what makes a “good French citizen” who earns the rights afforded by the state.⁵³⁰ Within this narrative, French Muslims are often framed as “*undeserving citizens*, which opens them up to social, political, and...legal marginalization.”⁵³¹ Fredette found this attack on their citizenship to be the primary grievance expressed by most French Muslims.⁵³² As a result, she argues that

many of the claims Muslims make are not rights claims per se. They are more typically *demands for neutrality* that would keep talk of religion out of politics altogether or *demands for recognition* that seek to compensate for the weak protection provided by the empty abstraction of formal rights...French Muslims are not demanding recognition for the purpose of obtaining rights; rather, they are demanding recognition to obtain the social equality they feel they deserve given their self-perception as rights-bearing French citizens.⁵³³

In short, these findings demonstrate that, on the whole, French Muslims tend to be more concerned with the full realization of their equal rights as individual citizens opposed to pursuing differential group rights that are prescribed by multiculturalism.

E. POLICY ANALYSIS

The previous sections have shown that integration is not only a salient issue for non-Muslims in France but it is also a primary concern for French Muslims. Within France’s current Republican model, many forms of inequality, exclusion, and

⁵²⁹ Fredette, 7; Eva Połowska-Kimunguyi and Marie Gillespie, “Terrorism Discourse on French International Broadcasting: France 24 and the Case of Charlie Hebdo Attacks in Paris,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 5 (October 1, 2016): 571, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323116669453>.

⁵³⁰ Fredette, “Constructing Muslims in France Discourse, Public Identity, and the Politics of Citizenship,” 6.

⁵³¹ Fredette, 30.

⁵³² Fredette, 21.

⁵³³ Fredette, 21.

discrimination towards Muslims still persist and impede their full integration into society. Haddad and Balz contend that “it is unlikely that societal conditions will improve for third- and fourth-generation immigrants without a radical departure from current and historical French immigration and assimilation policies.”⁵³⁴ For this reason, this section considers the advantages and disadvantages of multiculturalism as an alternative to republican integration.

Multicultural policies could have some positive effects on the integration of French Muslims in the area of religious rights and accommodation. By allowing state support for some religious affairs, officially conducted multiculturalism could prevent Islam from remaining foreign-influenced. As Laurence observes, “the baton of organizational leadership has not yet been passed to the native-born generations,” and this hinders the development of an organic French Islam that allows the continued influence of potentially more fundamentalist forms of the religion.⁵³⁵ State support for accommodations such as mosques and religiously-affiliated Muslim public schools would allow French Muslims to be less reliant on foreign sponsorship and could foster more autonomy in their religious teachings and administration.

Multicultural policies for religious accommodations could also help Muslims to feel less targeted by the state and society due to their religious identity. It is important to note that it is only in the French context of strict *laïque* secularism that many religious rights are even considered differential rights in France. As a result, many French Muslims perceive *laïcité* as “a direct attack on their religious faith and on their efforts to transmit their religious beliefs to the next generation.”⁵³⁶ For example, before the law banning the wearing of religious symbols in schools was promulgated, Catholic students were allowed to wear crosses and Jewish students were allowed to wear *yarmulkes*.⁵³⁷ While the law

⁵³⁴ Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Michael J. Balz, “The October Riots in France: A Failed Immigration Policy or the Empire Strikes Back?,” *International Migration* 44, no. 2 (June 1, 2006): 30, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2006.00362.x>.

⁵³⁵ Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe’s Muslims*, 246.

⁵³⁶ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 155.

⁵³⁷ Shore, *Breeding Bin Ladens*, 76.

applied to individuals of all faiths upon implementation, it was developed in response to the *hijab*, and Shore notes that “this differential treatment was never lost on France’s Muslims.”⁵³⁸

This trend of bias against Muslims can be observed with respect to other elements of religious accommodation. Statham analyzed the accommodation of Muslim group rights versus Christian religious rights and identified significant gaps between non-Muslim majority and Muslim opinions.⁵³⁹ He found that Muslims were favorable toward state support for both their own faith and the majority religion, whereas majority populations expressed significantly more support for Christian rights than for Muslim rights.⁵⁴⁰ Likewise, Carol and Koopmans found that nearly half of all Muslim claims for religious group rights in France were in fact for parity with the rights of other faiths as opposed to special religious group rights exclusive to Muslims.⁵⁴¹ In the words of Fetzer and Soper, “in many ways, French Muslims seem to be trying simply to obtain a modicum of religious free exercise rather than to create a flourishing spiritual and cultural life.”⁵⁴² Since Open Society Institute research indicates that “religious discrimination against Muslims remains a critical barrier to full and equal participation in society,” it is crucial that Muslims not feel targeted for their religious identity.⁵⁴³

Despite the importance of the religious element of integration, Maxwell and Bleich maintain that “focusing on religiosity is not the best way to analyze [French] Muslims’ attitudes or identities.”⁵⁴⁴ Additionally, as discussed in Chapter I, multicultural policies have some important limitations or weaknesses when it comes to addressing religious rights. As a result, adopting a multicultural approach could present a number of challenges

⁵³⁸ Shore, 76.

⁵³⁹ Statham, “How Ordinary People View Muslim Group Rights in Britain, the Netherlands, France and Germany,” 233.

⁵⁴⁰ Statham, 233.

⁵⁴¹ Carol and Koopmans, “Dynamics of Contestation over Islamic Religious Rights in Western Europe,” 181.

⁵⁴² Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 97.

⁵⁴³ Choudhury, “11 EU Cities,” 22.

⁵⁴⁴ Maxwell and Bleich, “What Makes Muslims Feel French?,” 155.

in the French context. First, it may be very difficult to determine a clear or widely acceptable way to define the specific group or groups that would benefit from the policies. Categorizing Muslims as a religious or ethnic group, particularly for the purposes of state support, is not permitted in France and would likely be quite controversial if it were. Defining groups by other attributes such as socio-economic status, however, as France has tried with some targeted urban housing and education policies, would provide an incomplete picture and would likely be ineffective in addressing some of the overlapping issues that French Muslims experience.

Fredette speaks to the “intersectionality” of French Muslims’ many other characteristics—including gender, ethnicity, class, and immigration history—that contribute to their challenges and that would thus be difficult to address with multicultural policies that target just one element.⁵⁴⁵ This leads to another challenge to developing and pursuing an effective multiculturalism policy in France. As highlighted in Chapter III, the Muslim community in France is very diverse. French Muslims vary widely in ethnicity, immigration timeframes, French language acquisition, geographic distributions, types of employment, and religious denomination. Fetzer and Soper quote Shacher and argue that “a negative consequence of state policies that accommodate group rights—including religious rights and practices—is that they can unwittingly ‘leave members of minority groups vulnerable to severe injustice within the group and may...reinforce some of the most hierarchical elements of a culture.’”⁵⁴⁶ As demonstrated during the headscarf affair, not all Muslims seek the same group rights. This factor would complicate the development and implementation of an effective multicultural policy framework for all French Muslims.

Finally, a number of scholars have noted the unbounded nature of multiculturalism as a fundamental weakness of the policy. As discussed in Chapter I, multiculturalism does not define what claims go beyond reasonable expectations for group rights accommodation within any particular society. In other words, accommodating some group rights may lead

⁵⁴⁵ Fredette, “Constructing Muslims in France Discourse, Public Identity, and the Politics of Citizenship,” 8–9.

⁵⁴⁶ Ayelet Sachar, *Multicultural Jurisdictions: Cultural Differences and Women’s Rights* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001); quoted in Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 151.

to endless requests for additional claims.⁵⁴⁷ This ‘slippery slope’ concern has been substantiated. As Carol and Koopmans have observed, in several European countries “settlements reached over basic rights such as mosque construction or headscarves do not lead to demobilization of the actors involved in them, but shift the focus of the debate to new issues of controversy.”⁵⁴⁸ Moreover, they found that the obtrusiveness of rights claims tended to increase as basic rights claims were granted.⁵⁴⁹ Likewise, Koopmans found that “in countries such as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, which have granted Muslims parity rights and made basic accommodations...the debate has not ended, and demarcation conflicts continue to rage over claims by orthodox minorities within Islam.”⁵⁵⁰ Furthermore, Statham asserts that “significantly extending Muslim rights does not seem to bring majorities and Muslims to a consensus.”⁵⁵¹ While the French Republican model and strict *laïque* secularism have produced a fairly restrictive environment for rights claims, it is not guaranteed or even likely that walking these policies back with a more multicultural approach would result in an equilibrium and resolve all of French Muslims’ integration problems.

Due to complex state arrangements, it would also be difficult to determine the appropriate level of government to introduce multicultural policies in France. Laurence and Vaïsse contend that “since policy toward religious communities is made at the national level, the nation-state framework is the right place to look for developments.”⁵⁵² However, as demonstrated with regard to previous issues of mosque construction or the wearing of headscarves in schools, some decisions about whether or not to accommodate French Muslims’ claims have been delegated to lower levels of government or administration, causing inconsistencies and often resulting in poor outcomes for Muslims’ rights claims.

⁵⁴⁷ Koopmans, “Multiculturalism and Immigration,” 165.

⁵⁴⁸ Carol and Koopmans, “Dynamics of Contestation over Islamic Religious Rights in Western Europe,” 186.

⁵⁴⁹ Carol and Koopmans, 186.

⁵⁵⁰ Koopmans, “Multiculturalism and Immigration,” 165.

⁵⁵¹ Statham, “How Ordinary People View Muslim Group Rights in Britain, the Netherlands, France and Germany,” 233.

⁵⁵² Laurence and Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam*, 99.

This would suggest that multicultural policies would be most effective if adopted at the national level. By contrast, however, Bleich notes that, due to the highly unitary and centralized nature of the French government, “it is thus much more difficult for nongovernmental actors to insert multicultural policies into the national system.”⁵⁵³ Consequently, he argues that “in a country where less than five percent of the population are ethnic minority citizens, it is less clear that multiculturalism is an appropriate policy for the whole nation than it is for localities with higher proportions of ethnic minority residents.”⁵⁵⁴ This suggests that multicultural policies would be more appropriate and perhaps more effective when applied in particular contexts.

Ultimately, as discussed in Chapter II, the differential group rights prescribed by multiculturalism are still fundamentally at odds with the French Republican state model. As Bleich explains, “[leading French authors-and even policy entrepreneurs] argue that any ‘right to difference’ would lead to a ‘difference of rights,’ a situation wholly unacceptable in a state which attempts to maintain a relationship with individual citizens rather than with corporate identity groups.”⁵⁵⁵ With this, a comprehensive policy shift on a national scale has the potential to do more harm than good. To illustrate, Fetzer and Soper assert that “defenders of *laïcité* argue that it is neither easy nor prudent to destroy overnight a political institution that took centuries to create and that has served France well throughout the years.”⁵⁵⁶ The traditional Republican model and values are so deeply ingrained in French society that adopting a comprehensive multicultural policy framework specifically for French Muslims could cause great disruption and resentment. This could be counterproductive to improving conditions for French Muslims and advancing their integration.

Most importantly, however, multicultural policies would not effectively address the core of many French Muslims’ grievances. Whereas multicultural policies are designed to

⁵⁵³ Erik Bleich, “From International Ideas to Domestic Policies: Educational Multiculturalism in England and France,” *Comparative Politics* 31, no. 1 (October 1998): 92, <https://doi.org/10.2307/422107>.

⁵⁵⁴ Bleich, 92.

⁵⁵⁵ Bleich, 94.

⁵⁵⁶ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 96.

impart and defend differential group rights, Bowen contends that obtaining “social and economic equality” has been the primary concern for Muslims in France since the 1980s, after many Muslim immigrants had earned citizenship and when the first generation of French-born Muslims was emerging.⁵⁵⁷ Fredette confirms this in her interviews with numerous French Muslims,

the discussion was about what they deserved given their equal rights. They all saw themselves as rights-bearing citizens already...In short, the claims of French Muslims were typically grounded in a sense of national belonging that is not sufficiently recognized by others. And this sense of national belonging among Muslims is often justified by referencing the rights they already have as citizens of France.⁵⁵⁸

Numerous examples have shown that French Muslims, quite simply, just want to be accepted and seen by society as ‘truly’ French. While rights are an essential element of citizenship, “in the French context, we can clearly see where rights fail to address social inequality.”⁵⁵⁹ With this understanding, we can conclude that multiculturalism is not an appropriate policy framework to adequately address the concerns of French Muslims or to significantly improve their integration into society.

F. CONCLUSION

In light of the increase in violence and terrorist attacks committed by French Muslims throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, this chapter first sought to analyze the potential link between integration issues and radicalization. While integration challenges are arguably not the root cause of radicalization or terrorism among French Muslims, they represent a common theme that is likely a contributing factor. By analyzing the rights claims typically presented by French Muslims and the factors that contribute to their sense of national belonging, it is evident that social acceptance and full access to equal rights are typically the primary concerns. This finding supports a conclusion that a multicultural policy framework of differential group rights will not effectively address these issues in

⁵⁵⁷ Bowen, *Can Islam Be French?*, 21.

⁵⁵⁸ Fredette, “Constructing Muslims in France Discourse, Public Identity, and the Politics of Citizenship,” 21.

⁵⁵⁹ Fredette, 22.

order to ultimately improve integration. French Muslims have repeatedly demonstrated their desire to be fully integrated into French society. However, as Fetzer and Soper note, “‘successful integration’ needs to be a two-way street.”⁵⁶⁰ The French government and society both have reciprocal roles to play in the integration of French Muslims, and neither has delivered. In this context, successful integration will depend on a significant shift in societal attitudes that is more willing to accept French Muslims as full French citizens versus a new rights regime.

⁵⁶⁰ Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 155.

V. CONCLUSION

French observers tend to view events such as the 2005 urban riots and the series of terrorist attacks committed by French Muslims since the early 2000s as indications of the failed integration of its Muslim minorities. France has espoused a unique Republican approach to integration since the French Revolution, an approach which does not recognize individual differences or sub-groups in society. It also embraces the strict secular policy of *laïcité*, which restricts religious practice and expression to the private domain and bars state support for most religious activities. As French Muslims have indeed struggled to integrate in this environment, this thesis considered whether a multicultural approach could improve integration and thereby curb radicalization and the development of homegrown terrorists in France.

World War I and the aftermath of World War II brought large waves of Muslims to France consisting mostly of single men from former French colonies in North and West Africa. During these time periods, many served in the French military or were recruited as a source of unskilled labor. Because these individuals were not expected to remain in France on a long-term basis, the French government did not pursue a deliberate policy to facilitate their integration into society. As a result, their initial experiences in France were largely shaped by changing immigration policies, which shifted from encouraging to discouraging immigration and naturalization in the early 1970s. The economic crisis that struck France in 1974 caused widespread unemployment and fueled resentment toward Muslim migrant workers. Instead of returning to their home countries, however, many Muslim men remained in France, earned citizenship and either started or brought their families.

Throughout the twentieth century, the French government deliberately employed policies that hindered the geographic, socioeconomic, and religious integration of Muslims into society. It implemented housing policies that intentionally situated Muslim migrant workers in large housing complexes and projects on the outskirts of major cities, where they were physically and culturally isolated from mainstream French society and excluded from economic and employment opportunities. Over the years, many of these peripheral

ring cities have evolved into large suburban *banlieues* that are characterized by poor schools, high unemployment and crime rates, and a palpable sense of social exclusion.

Before the French government became concerned with Muslims' integration in the early 1980s, it had also largely disregarded their basic religious needs and instead allowed representatives and imams from Muslim immigrants' sending countries to lead and manage the practice of Islam in France. These foreign representatives often encouraged Muslims in France to return to their home countries and thus did not promote their local integration. Muslims in France also struggled to find support for basic religious accommodations or for establishing religious infrastructure, including mosques, prayer spaces, and Muslim-affiliated schools. As a newer religion in France, Islam did not benefit from any pre-existing arrangements with the state as the Catholic Church did. Therefore, not only do many Muslims feel disproportionately disadvantaged by *laïcité*, but also issues such as the wearing of a *hijab* in public schools have led French Muslims to feel discriminated against and targeted by the policy.

Since the early 2000s, second and third generation French Muslims have demonstrated increased religious adherence compared with that of older generations. This suggests that Islam may provide an important source of identity for many Muslim youths who have encountered barriers to integration and who feel rejected or alienated by French society. The early 2000s also marked a notable increase in violence and terrorist attacks committed by French Muslims. This study therefore sought to analyze a potential link between integration challenges and radicalization among French Muslims. In line with many prominent theories on radicalization and terrorism, this thesis concurs that while integration challenges are not the root cause of radicalization or terrorism among French Muslims, they represent a common theme within incidents and are thus likely contributing factors that can render individuals more inclined to radicalization in the presence of more decisive factors. With this inference, this study sought to determine whether multicultural policies could help resolve French Muslims' integration challenges.

As multicultural policies imply differential group rights, the thesis surveyed French Muslims' religious rights claims, the majority of which focused on issues of low intrusiveness, including the wearing of headscarves and the constructions of mosques.

Religious concerns did not provide a complete picture of French Muslims' grievances, however. These were strongly influenced by experiences of discrimination and negative elite discourse that regularly questions their standing as citizens. This suggests that societal attitudes may play a much stronger role in French Muslims' integration experience than do the state's Republican integration policies. Furthermore, French Muslims tend to be more concerned with the full realization of their individual equal rights than with differential group rights.

Consequently, this thesis concludes that multicultural policies could help to address issues related to French Muslims' religious rights, as many are considered differential in the French *laïque* context. This could help reduce reliance on foreign sponsorship, promote the establishment of an organic French Islam, and reduce feelings of discrimination by the state, particularly as half of Muslim rights claims seek only parity rights with those of other faiths.

This thesis does not, however, recommend adopting a comprehensive multicultural policy framework in France for a number of reasons. These include (a) national sensitivities regarding the defining of racial and ethnic sub-groups and (b) diversity among French Muslims that is reflected in their differing interests in various rights claims. Scholarly research has also shown that expanding group rights has not always yielded long-term resolutions regarding basic rights accommodations and sometimes this leads to additional claims that are increasingly more problematic for states to accommodate. Adopting a multicultural approach would be in great conflict with France's traditional Republican state model, which could invite great social opposition and provoke resentment toward Muslims that would be counterproductive to any potential gains from improved integration. Above all, multicultural policies would not likely resolve French Muslims' primary concerns regarding inequality and access to their equal rights as French citizens. Consequently, this thesis concludes that the most significant barrier to French Muslims' full integration into society is, in fact, the national society's largely negative and unreceptive attitudes toward French Muslims. These attitudes would not be resolved with the implementation of multicultural policies.

In conclusion, French Muslims' exclusion from French society does not indicate that they do not desire to integrate. Decades of intransigence on the part of the French government and society regarding efforts to support the integration of Muslim immigrants from former French colonies has contributed to alienation and sometimes hostility on the part of second and third generation immigrants who are French by birth but who often feel ostracized by society. Moreover, the traditional French Republican model and the strict state-church policy of *laïcité* have hindered France's ability to address the concerns of its Muslim population and to improve their integration. This thesis ultimately expresses doubts about multiculturalism as an appropriate policy framework to adopt in France. However, the potential link of integration failures with radicalization and terrorism presents a salient national security concern deserving of France's attention and warranting consideration of alternative approaches to integration.

Further study of this issue should include an exploration of the experiences of non-Muslim immigrants from similar geographic areas as the Muslim immigrants considered in this study to compare and contrast differing perceptions of acceptance and integration in French society. This would contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of religion in the perceived discrimination experienced by second and third generation French Muslims. It could also consider whether multicultural policies might have been more effective in promoting the long-term integration of Muslims in France if they had been embraced during the first waves of immigration. Additionally, it could examine instances of targeted multicultural policies in other countries to determine whether such policies could prove beneficial to aspects of integration if applied below the national level in France or in select situations.

Further research should also examine the potential benefits of expanding affirmative action programs for French Muslims from underprivileged or isolated areas. These programs could aid disadvantaged French Muslims by providing them opportunities for education to which they would not otherwise have access, given their socioeconomic circumstances. Given the positive correlation shown between national identification and higher levels of education, this could be a worthy investment toward promoting integration and participation in society. Affirmative action programs could also help to increase

contact across racial, socioeconomic, and religious boundaries to build familiarity and to further normalize the participation of Muslims in mainstream French society. An in-depth analysis of the few affirmative action programs that have been experimented with in French secondary schools and universities could help inform the best way to introduce and implement these programs in order to maximize their success in the Republican context. While Muslim representation in the French government is still quite low, additional research should also examine whether Muslim representation in local government has helped to enact policies favorable to Muslim integration.

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