

ALGERIAN IMMIGRANTS IN FRANCE:
A Case Study of Domestic Immigration Policy and its International Implications

Elizabeth E. Detter
International Studies Honors Thesis
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Approved
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INTRODUCTION

In January 1997, I arrived in Paris, France anticipating a semester immersed in a culture noted for its art, literature, food and architecture. My years of French language study had left me with the impression that French culture could be distinguished by Impressionist art, red wine, brie cheese and baguettes. Once in France, however, I realized the shallowness of my understanding of French culture, and I endeavored to study French culture with the same diligence as I studied the language. I became increasingly aware of the link between France and Africa and the legacy of colonialism. I grew to be fascinated by the way that France manages to maintain a relatively monocultural cohesion despite the large number of immigrants and the diversity of her populace. Out of the project of understanding French culture, the idea for this paper emerged.

If you pick up a copy of *Le Monde* or the more conservative *Le Figaro*, among the top stories there will surely be coverage of the current hot topic in France: immigrants and integration. In the past generation, France has changed from a nation that recruited immigrants to fill economic and demographic needs to a nation that views immigrants as a national problem. France, the number one immigrant nation in Europe, welcomed immigrants until economic stagnation and racial violence prompted the government to re-examine its policies. In 1974, non-European immigrants were banned from France and the government cracked down on illegal immigration. Since 1974, immigration stabilized while the debate over the “immigration problem” intensified.

My interest in immigration policy led to investigation of the idea of integration. The interconnected issues of immigration and integration spark heated debate throughout France because they touch a subject of concern to every Frenchman: the question of national identity in modern France. France maintains a tradition of assimilating immigrants to the ideals of republicanism; however, many regard the large minority of Arab immigrants as an inassimilable threat to cultural cohesion. A xenophobic political party, the National Front, has capitalized on these fears and garnered the support of 15 percent of the French populace. The failure of the mainstream Left and Right to adequately address public concerns have left immigrants vulnerable to criticism and persecution.

In researching integration policy, I began to contemplate the link between the integration of immigrants and international relations. The domestic relations between different ethnic groups impacts the international relations between different countries, as well. If a Frenchman says, "I hate Arabs," and his intolerance is the product of poor domestic ethnic relations in France, his tolerance of the Arab world in the context of global relations may also be minimal. Likewise, if Muslim immigrants of Arab origin in France feel excluded from the opportunities afforded to the Catholic bourgeoisie, their loyalty during international conflict may lie with their ethnic kinsmen, not their French countrymen.

This paper focuses on immigrants in France, but it is of worth to those interested in immigration, nationalism, and international relations regardless of its limited scope. French immigration policy is not unique in Europe; it forms part of the "Fortress Europe" club of nations who have tightened their restrictions on immigration by non-Europeans. As European integration continues, common immigration policies among all European Union member nations will be inevitable, and a compromise will need to be reached that placates the French and the other members of the EU. The Moroccan minority in Belgium, Turks in Germany, and Indian and Pakistani immigrants in Britain present similar challenges to national integration as the Muslims in France.

The study of France also offers lessons on this side of the Atlantic. As Americans grapple with a burgeoning Latino population, an examination of other Western nations immigration policies and attitudes enables the United States to learn from their successes and failures. While the U.S.A. has adopted a multiculturalist approach to incorporating immigrants, the discussion of the weaknesses of multiculturalism is as applicable to the United States as to France. Whereas Muslim immigrants in France present a cultural challenge to immigration in terms of religion, the perpetuation of linguistic traditions among Latin Americans in the United States can be viewed as an equally difficult cultural hindrance to integration. Allegations that the cultural fabric of American society is in shreds abound at the same time that the U.S.'s common linguistic heritage is being challenged by its increasingly bilingual population. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of a bilingual public domain, and the implications for relations between the United States and Latin America can be inferred from this paper's treatment of France and its Arab-Muslim population.

The case of immigrants in France presents a particularly well-suited opportunity to examine

the international implications of domestic integration because of the nature of the immigrant population in France relative to the French. The differences between Muslim culture and French culture are profound, and some authors argue that they are intractable. Islam is opposed to the materialism and secularism of the Western world; France represents the West in all of its glory. The Republic embodies the Enlightenment principles of liberty, fraternity and equality, and French nationalism and commitment to secularism arose earlier than elsewhere in Europe. Thus, France is the antithesis of the traditional Islamic unity between church and state.

My paper examines the history of immigration in France, the positive and negative aspects of the public policy of integration in France, and the alternative means of incorporating immigrants into mainstream French society. In Chapter 1, I debunk the argument that immigrants steal jobs from natives, and I detail the history of immigration in France over the last century. Chapter 2 explores the process of nation-building in France, with a theoretical basis formed by Anthony Smith and Ernest Gellner's writings on nationalism. In connection with nationalism, racism and the modern political scene are discussed, with reference to Count Arthur de Gobineau and Jean-Marie Le Pen. In Chapter 3, I argue that the current French integrative model articulated by Dominique Schnapper and Patrick Weil is comparatively superior to the Anglo-Saxon multicultural approach promoted by John Rex and others. Chapter 3 also discusses the contentious issue of Muslim communitarianism in France. I make use of writings by Gilles Kepel, Oliver Roy and Bernard Lewis, among others, in determining that a true community of Muslims cannot be found. Chapter 4 discusses the differences between Islam and the West on a larger scale. Rafiq Zakaria, Samuel Huntington and John Gray provide the intellectual foundation of that chapter.

My argument rests on the idea that despite the difficulties of integration, the alternatives are worse. The "different but equal" approach of multiculturalism can lead to factionalism. Multiculturalism fragments society into numerous ethnic subcultures, undermines political cohesion and destroys the shared national culture valued by the French. Moreover, as Huntington asserts, multiculturalism sabotages international security by perpetuating an international ethnic diaspora. Integration is possible only when a nation adheres to a common ideology; in the case of France it is the republican triad of liberty, fraternity and equality. While integration may be effected domestically, universal adherence to one set of principles is not feasible, and I caution against

applying the principles of integration on a global scale.

Finally, I advocate pluralism as an alternative to liberal nihilism. In the years since the collapse of the Soviet Union, international relations theorists have been preoccupied with understanding the new world order. Some authors, like Francis Fukuyama, have determined that the triumph of liberalism is at hand. Others, like Huntington and Gray, scoff at such illusions of the universalism of liberalism — an idea, they say, that results from Eurocentric thinking. The modern challenge to international relations is to come to terms with a world no longer divided into two distinct ideological camps hellbent on destroying each other, but home to a variety of ideologies, religions and races. In short, internationalists of today must learn tolerance of inter-civilizational differences if we are to avoid large-scale conflicts in the future.

Shorthanded — Immigration at the Turn of the Century

Immigration became a more widespread phenomenon during the late nineteenth century. During the 1830s, immigration was a private affair; it was not directly controlled or overseen by the government. The Napoleonic Wars had depleted the population of young men, French women were having fewer children, and the demographic growth rate in France fell far below its neighbors in Europe. Industrial growth in France lagged behind, owing to protectionist agricultural policies; at the same time, a rural exodus was taking place, draining the countryside of workers.² Immigrants provided cheap and easy labor, and migration to France responded to the demand for labor in France. Between 1851 and 1856, the number of foreigners in France increased threefold from 381,000 to 1,127,000, raising the population by three percent.

With the growth of the foreign population, concerns about protecting French jobs waxed, and government regulation of the status of foreigners increased during the late nineteenth century. In the late 1830s, the French government began to address the interests of French citizens and

Chapter 1 A SHORT HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION IN FRANCE

Modern France is a nation of immigrants who have conformed to a strong national identity and forged a united community out of disparate roots. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as most of Europe lost large sectors of its population to emigration to the Americas and Australia, France became the primary immigrant nation of Europe. France welcomed immigrants to help cope with the shortage of workers caused by industrialization and the slowdown in demographic growth. Historically, immigration was an economic necessity for the prosperity of the nation as industries relied on foreign workers to fill the labor gap. Initially, most immigrants to France were European, but colonialism further internationalized the flow of labor by establishing links between the *métropole* and Asia.¹ By the 1930s, the percentage of un-naturalized immigrants in the total French population had reached its current level of 7.5 percent. Today, one in four Frenchmen has a parent or grandparent who is or was an immigrant.²

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With the growth of the foreign population, concern about protecting French jobs waxed, and government regulation of the status of foreigners increased during the late nineteenth century. In the late 1880s, the French government began to address the interests of French citizens and

immigrants. In 1888, it mandated that foreigners declare their residence at the town hall (*mairie*). In 1890, foreign workers were granted protection under law from work-related accidents.⁴ The year before, the Code of Nationality defining French citizenship was introduced. According to the Code of Nationality, a child of French parents was automatically a French citizen if born on French soil. A child born in France of a father not born there acquired citizenship at age 18 if he still resided in France, but for a year following his 18th birthday, he retained the right to opt for the nationality of his father. New residents could apply for citizenship after five years.

However, the introduction of rights for *étrangers* alienated some Frenchmen and contributed to the growth of the nationalist movement. One turn-of-the-century nationalist, Maurice Barrès, summed up his position on the influx of foreigners: "The decline of our birthrate, the exhaustion of our energy for one hundred years during which our most active countrymen destroyed themselves in wars and revolutions, has brought about the invasion of our territory and our blood by foreign elements who work to subjugate us."⁵ At the same time that this type of anti-immigrant sentiment was on the rise, anti-Semitism gained supporters. In 1898, anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic agitators joined to form the nationalist movement *Action Française*, which labeled Jews "*étrangers*" as well.⁶

French business was unfazed by the sentiment against immigrants, who remained easy and disposable sources of labor. Industries actively recruited foreign workers from Europe and from French colonies abroad with little intervention from the state. In the early twentieth century, most immigrants were unskilled Southern Europeans who worked in industry concentrated in Paris, Nord-Pas-de-Calais and the Midi-Pyrenees regions.⁷ During this period, immigrants from French colonies were few; those who immigrated to France did so as part of a sporadic, individualistic pattern.

The Wars

The First World War further reduced the number of working-age men in France, at the same time as the need for manual laborers increased. During World War I, the French colonial office was charged with the mission of recruiting colonial workers. The wave of recruits numbered 223,000⁸ and included Chinese, Indochinese, Moroccan, Malagachi, Tunisian and Algerian workers. The influx of foreigners was considered temporary and necessary, but uneasiness with immigration led

the government to require in 1917 that all immigrants carry an identity card to facilitate monitoring them.⁹

In the interwar period, the link between the colonies and France continued and foreign workers were recruited by industries needing labor. Limited involvement by the state was institutionalized in the form of the Inter-Ministerial Manpower Commission.¹⁰ Throughout the 1920s, larger waves of immigrants came to France. The number of immigrants climbed from 1,523,000 in 1921 to 2,409,000 in 1926, and reached 2,715,000 in 1931.¹¹ Restrictions on immigration were enacted during the depression, and by 1936 the number of immigrants fell to 2,198,000.¹²

Immigration during the Second World War ceased because of strict control, but following the war, the French realized a great need for immigrant labor. To help meet this need, the National Immigration Office (ONI) was established as a branch of the Ministry of Labor in 1945.¹³ From this point forward, the state was to play an active role in the recruitment and placement of immigrants. The government envisioned a need for five million immigrants to rebuild France in the wake of the war. It hoped to maintain control over the influx and placement of workers by requiring that employers furnish the Ministry of Labor with job descriptions, salary agreements and proposed housing arrangements for prospective immigrants. Upon approval by the Ministry of Labor, these were forwarded to the ONI. The ONI disseminated the contracts to its offices abroad, where workers were recruited based on health, employment records, and "moral conduct."¹⁴

It is interesting to note that the ONI's complicated immigration process actually had the effect of decreasing immigration to France. Meanwhile, the influx of workers from Algeria rose. As subjects of France, Algerians were exempt from the bureaucratic administration of the ONI and held French citizenship, but despite this, the expectation of most French was that the Algerians would return to Algeria once their work was done. They began arriving in France during the first wave of recruitment during World War I and by 1916, 78,000 Algerians lived in France as guest workers. This was a notable increase from the 5,000 Algerian workers in France in 1912.¹⁵ More Algerians tried their luck in France as they realized the economic advantages to be gained. Algerians had been alienated from their land by *colons*, and the best jobs in Algeria were reserved for Europeans. Furthermore, in 1919, while the average salary in France was 15 to 30 francs per day, complemented by a social welfare package, Algerians could only expect to make five francs a day at home, without

additional benefits.¹⁶ The Algerian community increased to 100,000 by 1929, but decreased to 31,000 by 1936 because of depression-era restrictions and repatriation measures.¹⁷ Despite the fact that Algerians remained a minor community of immigrants in France (in 1931, Algerian immigrants ranked sixth), their cultural dissimilarity with the French made them stand out. But Algerians were not deterred from immigrating to France by anti-Algerian attitudes there.

In 1947, French law established freedom of movement between Algeria and the *métropole*. The result was that “between 1946-55 Algerian immigration far outstripped the total number of immigrants recruited through the ONI.”¹⁸ As their numbers grew, so did the concentration of Algerians in Paris. Fifty percent of Algerian immigrants lived in metropolitan Paris in 1947, markedly more concentrated than the twenty percent who lived there before the Second World War.¹⁹ From 1946 to 1954, the Algerian population in France rose tenfold, from 20,000 to 212,000,²⁰ as overall immigration in France reached new heights. By 1962, the number of Algerians was 350,000, and the migration was no longer limited to men. 50,000 of the Algerians were dependents of immigrants. The French economy needed the unskilled workers from Algeria and elsewhere, who were absorbed by the steel, auto, construction and agriculture sectors.²¹ Throughout the 1960s, France accepted over 100,000 immigrants per year from around the world.²²

Post-colonial migratory movement

1962 brought an end to the eight year Algerian War for independence from French imperialism. The Evian Accords limited immigration from Algeria to France, and anti-Algerian sentiment in France ran high. The *Harkis*, Algerians who had fought on the French side during the War, were granted French citizenship as compensation. 900,000 French *colons* and *Harkis* moved to France between 1962 and 1968, raising the labor force by 1.3 percent.²³ As large numbers of Algerians continued to immigrate, the words “*immigré*” and “*Algérien*” became interchangeable. In response to bilateral concern about the high level of immigration, the French and Algerian governments in 1964 entered into an agreement limiting the number of Algerians that could enter France to 35,000 per annum.²⁴

Throughout the years 1962 to 1974, economic expansion continued to surpass demographic growth in France. Many immigrants lived in *bidonvilles* or shantytowns, and immigrants were still

regarded as inferior to French nationals. In 1971, Joseph Fontanet, Minister of Labor and Population, said: "It remains a fact that the refusal by the French to do certain jobs coupled with demographic stagnation means that the need for foreign workers is crucial."²⁵ The importance of the ONI increased; whereas the ONI had been responsible for 24 percent of the introductions of foreign workers in 1968, in 1972 it was responsible for 56 percent.²⁶ The ONI "officially introduced" or "regularized" roughly 2.3 million during this period.²⁷ In addition to these immigrants, by January 1974, 846,000 Algerians were living in France.

According to one French source, "The need for workers, stimulated by growth, encouraged immigration, and the legislation became more liberal. From 1968 to 1974, it was organized according to the principle of free circulation and was dominated, notably for the Magrébins, by bilateral conventions."²⁸ However, concern about illegal immigration was also on the rise. Legislation became more restrictive in terms of the protection of the rights of non-nationals. The 1972 Marcellin-Fontanet circulars granted one-year residency permits to qualified immigrants upon proof of employment and housing; immigrants who failed to comply with these regulations were expelled without the right to appeal.²⁹

During the course of the past two decades, immigration had changed from a temporary economic phenomenon controlled by French recruiters to a migratory movement of families, many of North African origin. French law allowed family reunification, which had the effect of undermining efforts to control and direct immigration. As a consequence of family settlement in France, immigrants began to regard France as their home and to expect more protection from the law than they had been granted as guest workers. Immigrants protested against the Marcellin-Fontanet circulars and other repressive legislation through hunger strikes and walkouts.³⁰

Oil Prices ↑, Toleration ↓

By the late 1960s, certain vocal factions of French society were concerned, even angry, about the "invasion" of foreigners in France. This concern reached the government as well. According to Maxim Silverman, increased immigration from North Africa had led certain officials to believe that a quota system favoring those likely to assimilate should be adopted. This system would establish the ONI as the enforcing body, and the regularization of immigrants would be suppressed

for those who did not adapt.³¹ But, if ethnic tensions were at the root of disaffection for immigrants, the energy crisis of 1973 certainly exacerbated the situation as the French economy plummeted and unemployment shot up. Silverman claims: "It was not economic slow-down and manpower surplus which provided the initial justification for immigration controls in the modern period; it was more question of ethnic 'balance' and fears of the social tensions which would ensue if this balance was not maintained."³²

Bloodshed in Paris during the riots of the summer of 1973 vividly, and violently, displayed the extent of the anti-immigrant sentiment in France. In the aftermath of the riots, the government of Algeria moved to suspend emigration to France. The total population of immigrants was tallied at 4.1 million by the Ministry of the Interior in 1974; a year later the census revealed 3.4 million immigrants. Immigration was stabilizing, but the government perceived it as a problem in the face of the recession. Unemployment had been at 2.8 percent of the labor force in 1974; throughout the next decade it climbed steadily to 9.7 percent.³³ French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing closed French borders to immigrants on July 5, 1974 in an effort to solidify the economy. The arguments for closing the border included: (a) high management costs owing to the turnover rate of immigrants; (b) fear that an overabundance of low-skilled labor would lead France to develop an advantage in low-skill, labor intensive, low-wage fields and not in high-skilled, capital intensive industry; (c) the shift from temporary migration to permanent settlement.³⁴ Other European nations, including Switzerland, Germany and Belgium, closed their borders to immigration as well in 1973 and 1974, as Europe as a whole converged toward a "Fortress Europe" policy of restricted immigration.³⁵

Despite the ban on immigration, the French still allowed foreign workers to enter the country. Economic conditions in France outshone the situation in most African and North African nations, and seasonal workers, temporary migrants and asylum seekers continued to apply to enter. Family reunification increased, which caused the feminization of the foreign population in France, brought the fertility rate in line with that of nationals and increased the incidence of intermarriage. Illegal immigration also became a greater concern.³⁶ Employers exploited illegal immigrants because they were cheaper than legal immigrants or native labor. Unskilled illegal immigrants were willing to work longer hours in unregulated conditions for lower wages than their French counterparts, and employing them avoided the cost of contributing to social security.³⁷

In 1977, the government developed repatriation schemes to induce immigrants to return "home" to their countries of origin. The program was the brainchild of Lionel Stoléru, the second Secretary of State for Foreign Workers under the Giscard administration. Stoléru sought to place tighter controls on entry into and residence in France, to substitute French workers for foreign workers, to combat illegal immigration, and to entice foreigners to leave France. He promised to expel one million *étrangers*, but the "*aide au retour*" program met with little success. The primary beneficiaries of the government-subsidized repatriation plan were Spanish and Portuguese immigrants — not the North Africans for whom it was intended.³⁸

Dispelling the Myth of the Link Between Immigration and Unemployment

Immigration policy has been primarily directed by economic considerations, although cultural factors have played a part as well. Immigrants cannot be held accountable for the high rate of unemployment in France, but they continue to be regarded as a primary factor for unemployment. Economist Klaus Zimmermann writes, "The threat of further increases of unemployment caused by immigration is the essence of the European migration problem."³⁹ He also points out that several studies have proven that this fear lacks grounding in economic reality, as immigrants may actually benefit certain groups within the host country. Zimmermann asserts that "sophisticated empirical work [on Europe and the U.S.] has also failed to find much connection between migration and unemployment."⁴⁰ In fact, he says in another paper: "Most empirical studies confirm that immigration is largely beneficial to receiving countries."⁴¹ This is the case in France.

Immigrants in France are neither perfect substitutes nor perfect complements for French nationals. "The evidence does not support the thesis that foreign workers, because of their political and social vulnerability, are preferred by employers over citizen workers."⁴² Although immigrants are concentrated in labor-intensive occupations and unemployment is highest in those sectors, immigration is tied to the business cycle in France, and immigrants are affected most severely by recessions. The unemployment rate of immigrants is higher than that of natives in general, particularly in low-skilled sectors.⁴³

The majority of immigrants are unskilled laborers, but this fact has not led to specialization in unskilled labor-intensive industry and factor price equalization. Wages in France have remained

relatively high because of rigid wage negotiation regulations. It is this inflexibility that has caused France's economy to stagnate. This finding matches the discussion of the causes of unemployment in France by the OECD, which focused on macroeconomic factors. The OECD found that the reasons for unemployment and labor cost increases in the low-skilled sector of the economy are that the minimum wage in France increased sharply throughout the 1960s, '70s and early '80s; meanwhile the government mandated higher contributions to social security. The OECD recommended increasing wage flexibility as one of the most important steps in economic recovery for France. Nowhere in its recommendations did the OECD discuss the need for a more restrictive immigration policy as a means to curb unemployment.⁴⁴

In recent years, economists like Georges Tapinos have advanced theories that international trade can act as a substitute for international migration.⁴⁵ This approach fails to adequately consider the benefits provided by immigrants. French immigrants constitute an important part of the workforce, primarily in the low-skilled sectors of the economy. As such, they complement the high-skilled sector of the French economy and provide services such as housekeeping, sanitation, trash collection and construction that the French find unsavory.⁴⁶ Moreover, the increase in population resulting from immigration creates economic growth because of the multiplier effect. Immigrants increase the cultural diversity of a nation and infuse the population with youth and vitality which contributes to entrepreneurship.

Increased Complication

The Socialist presidency of François Mitterrand was more amenable to immigrants than the previous administration. The idea of repatriating immigrants was tossed out with the arrival of the Mitterrand government. Initially, the Socialists appeared sympathetic to immigrants, as those without papers were regularized in 1981. But the real focus of their plan was to balance control of immigration with integrating the existing immigrant population into mainstream French society. The scales seemed to be tipped in favor of gaining control first, as the government passed 16 laws, 79 decrees, 62 "*arrêtés*", and 220+ circulars in regard to immigration between 1981 and 1986.⁴⁷ At a meeting of the Council of Ministers on August 31, 1983, Mme Georgina Dufoix, Secretary of State for the Family, for Population and for Immigrant Workers, announced her intention to fight against

illegal immigration, a sentiment echoed by President Mitterrand. Dufoix said that she feared illegal immigrants would impede the integration of legal immigrants. Mitterrand promised to “send back the illegals.” The new hard-line approach was well-received by the French public.⁴⁸

The Mitterrand government worked to strengthen the position of legal immigrants while increasing pressure on illegal immigrants to return home. In 1984, “*la carte unique*” combined residence and work permits into one ten-year automatically renewable permit, lessening the administrative burden on immigrants.⁴⁹

The right and the left have adopted only once a common attitude since the vote on the law of the ‘*titre du séjour unique*’ (both for lodging and work) of 17 July 1984 with the institutionalization of the residence card. That privileged moment coincided with the debut of the stirrings of the National Front, which soon weighed in heavily in the debate. It is significant that each political shift [in power] is translated into a new law about foreigners in the first months of the legislature⁵⁰

However, later that same year, the tide began to turn against immigrants as requirements for family reunification became stricter.

In 1986, the Socialists lost their majority in the National Assembly, and the government clamped down on immigrants. Jacques Chirac became Prime Minister as leader of the RPR-UDF Gaullist coalition majority. His Minister of the Interior, Charles Pasqua, declared that he would deport illegal immigrants by the train-load; he took steps in that direction with the *Loi Pasqua*. This law created stricter regulation of entry and residence and gave the power to determine expulsions to local prefects, not the judiciary. The law made it more difficult to renew ten-year residence permits and easier to expel delinquents. The *Loi Pasqua* also prescribed that foreigners under the age of majority must choose French citizenship or the nationality of their country of origin at age 18.⁵¹ The net effect of the law was to expedite the expulsion of immigrants by streamlining the process’s administration.⁵²

In 1988, the Socialists regained their parliamentary majority, renewing government benevolence toward immigrants in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1989, the *Loi Joxe*, named after Minister of Interior Pierre Joxe, amended the *Loi Pasqua*. According to Silverman: “This law attempted both to ‘humanise’ the drastic procedures for expulsion . . . and at the same time to maintain the ‘rigour’ of control which successive governments of Right and Left have introduced

over the last twenty years.”⁵³ The law re-established judicial control of the detention and expulsion of foreigners.

The Crackdown

An incident that year undercut the government’s ability to win public support for any measures to ease the situation for immigrants. In 1989, the “headscarf affair” brought the issue of immigration to national prominence when three schoolgirls were sent home after reporting for classes wearing the traditional Islamic headscarf. More discussion of the affair follows in Chapter 2, but it is important to note here that the episode was seized upon by the xenophobic National Front party, which used it to gain support. Anti-immigrant sentiment became more widespread in France. The result was that the government promised even stricter controls on immigration. In 1990, Mitterrand removed his support from Pierre Mauroy’s idea to give foreign residents the right to vote in the 1995 municipal elections. The Left endeavored to speed the integration of immigrants as it continued efforts to clamp down on illegal immigration. In 1991, Edith Cresson, the Socialist Prime Minister declared that the government would continue to expel illegal immigrants, despite the complications involved.⁵⁴ Cresson sharpened the government’s focus on border control during her two-year tenure as Prime Minister.

In 1993, the resurgence of the right brought the second *Loi Pasqua*. This law legally established preventative measures for the acquisition of the long duration entry permit by persons of certain nationalities. Moreover, the law made it more difficult for students and immigrants’ children and spouses to obtain ten-year residence grants. The administration’s powers to limit those granted the right to asylum were expanded. Immigrants were required to wait two years before family reunification would be considered; before the second Pasqua law, the wait had been one year’s residency in France.

In March 1997, President Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppé continued to crack down on immigration. The right-wing team put into place the *Loi Debré*, a controversial new measure of control. The *Loi Debré* requires that immigrants be fingerprinted, and their files be kept by the government. The law liberalized the ability to regularize certain categories of immigrants in irregular situations, but it also limited the ability of the judiciary to free immigrants in detention.

In May 1997, President Chirac dissolved Parliament and called for new elections. He had hoped to solidify his RPR-UDF majority in the National Assembly. Instead, his plan backfired, the Socialists overwhelmingly took power, and Juppé was replaced as Prime Minister by Socialist Lionel Jospin. Soon after the Socialists came to power, they launched an initiative to examine the state of immigration and integration in France. In addition, the Socialists have developed several approaches to a plan to rework the Code of Nationality.

Conclusions

Although expulsions increased during the 1980s and '90s, the overall sum of new entries, expulsions, births and deaths has remained stable from year to year since the initial ban placed on immigration in 1974. Immigrants continue to be perceived as primarily Arab (read Algerian), as thieves who steal French jobs, and as drains on the French economy. The reality of the situation is quite different. In actuality, immigrants in France primarily act as complements, not substitutes, for French workers, working in the low-end service jobs and manual labor positions that the French disdain.

Despite the realities of immigration, many still view immigrants as economically undesirable. In an interview with Bernard Benoît, a counselor at the Élysée (the Republic's executive office) insisted on the "economic facet of the immigration problem:"

The civil servant being interviewed simplified the words of Charles Pasqua, 'if you do not want the to come here, give them enough to eat there.' to which he immediately added, 'you know, I do not believe that there are many Algerians that come to France out of choice. Here, they are looked upon poorly, they are pariahs, they have difficulty in practicing their religion, to say nothing of climate (. . .) as long as Algeria remains a poor country, nothing will change in the nature and orientation of migratory fluctuations.'⁵⁵

Adherence of this sort to anti-immigrant economic rhetoric may be partly the result of social conditioning. According to sociologist Ronald Koven:

The French have never really pictured their country as a land of immigrants. They tend to see themselves as a seamless population bloc directly descended from the tribes of Gaul. The centralism of both the monarchy and the republican tradition encouraged this vision, requiring that Alsatians, Flemish, Bretons, Basques, Corsicans, Provençals, Catalans, and Savoyards be turned into Frenchmen. All received the same education, the

elites finished their schooling in Paris, and pupils caught speaking their provincial dialects during recess risked corporal punishment.⁵⁶

The following chapter will explore the way in which such cohesive nationalism has been achieved.

On October 5, 1989, three young girls woke and got ready for school in Creil, a suburb of Paris. As they dressed, they probably had little idea that their choices of attire would gain them national attention. Their appearance in class wearing the traditional Muslim *foulard*, or headscarf, not only had them sent home from school by their headmaster, but it ignited a debate about the role of immigrants in French society, the success or failure of integration policy, and the place of religious symbols in a secular school system. For some, what was called *l'affaire des foulards* epitomized the failure of the immigrant community in France to adopt French ways of life. For others, the controversy surrounding the episode stood as proof of the unwillingness by the French to accept the manifestation of its large community of Muslim immigrants. For our purposes, *l'affaire des foulards* illustrates the emergence of immigration as the most charged political issue in France in 1989 and unveils the reason that immigration remains at the forefront of political discourse in France nearly a decade later.

L'affaire des foulards was thought to present a challenge to the core principles of French republicanism, and the reaction of the government, media and populace reflects the intensity of French support of individualism and secularism. The Creil headmaster's decision not to allow the girls to wear the *foulard* to school had been an attempt to apply pressure to the family to conform to the secular norms of French society. Although the headscarf was worn without incident in other school districts, and had been for some years,¹ the Creil headmaster believed it to be disruptive. On October 7, in *Le Monde's* full-page layout devoted to *l'affaire des foulards* in the Society/Culture section, the headmaster articulated his position against the headscarf on the grounds that it was a form of proselytism, would intimidate other Muslim girls, and therefore was intolerable in a secular educational environment.² While small crosses, Fatima's hands (Muslim religious symbols) and stars of David are not an affront to the secular schools of the Republic, the *foulard* was inappropriate.

Media coverage of the issue remained widespread for three months. Anti-racist groups argued for the Muslim children's "right to be different" and urged compromise in favor of the headscarf.

Chapter 2 NATIONAL IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION IN FRANCE

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Islamist associations capitalized on the phenomenon of “provocation-repression-solidarity” to gain supporters.³ As Lionel Jospin, the Socialist Minister of Education, leaned in favor of allowing the children to continue to wear the headscarf to school, teachers threatened to quit. Jospin made a practical argument in favor of allowing the headscarf to be worn: “it would be a serious mistake to adopt a rigid attitude and thereby unite the whole of this Muslim community around a few isolated elements, by stimulating a solidarity reflex.”⁴ Finally, individual schools were allowed to set their own rules based upon guidelines from the Ministry of Education. Then, in 1992 following another headscarf affair, the Council of State ruled that according to the constitution, “the wearing by pupils of insignia by which they intend to show allegiance to a particular religion is not in itself incompatible with the principle of secularity.”⁵ And in 1996, despite the Ministry of Education’s ban on “ostentatious” religious symbols, the Council of State determined that as long as no religious proselytizing is connected to the wearing of headscarves, students may not be expelled from school for wearing the *foulard*.⁶

The difficulty in applying the traditional secular standard to the case of the Muslim headscarf raised questions about the relevance of the old republican principles. Do they facilitate integration and bring about equality? Or do they maintain the cultural status quo at the expense of immigrants’ cultural identity and thereby create resentment? These issues have yet to be fully put to rest. As this chapter will discuss, the xenophobia and dissatisfaction with the French government revealed by public opinion polls indicate that the process of integration has not been completely successful. *L’affaire des foulards* continues to stand as a symbol of challenge to integrationists and as a symbol of oppression to Islamists. In this chapter, we will examine the reasons why the French favor integration within the construct of the liberal, secular republic. The next chapter will focus on the alternatives to integrationism and the nature of the Islamic population in France.

Nation-building

The uproar surrounding *l’affaire des foulards* shows that some French citizens felt that their national identity was threatened by an “invasion” of immigrants. In order to better understand why *l’affaire des foulards* caused such tumult and how it illustrates the current difficulties faced by French nationalism because of immigration, it is necessary to probe the question of what is meant

by “French national identity” or “French nationalism.” Through a discussion of the roots of the modern French republic, I will endeavor to provide an overview of the rise of French nationalism in order to establish that the French nation has been constructed. However, before examining the development of nationalism in France, we must establish a theory of the rise of nationalism to provide the framework for this discussion.

In *National Identity*, Anthony Smith asserts that in order for an ethnic community, or *ethnie*, to form a political nation, “a moral and political revolution [is imperative], one which requires the people to be purified from the accretion of centuries, so that they can be emancipated into a political community of equal citizens.”⁷ Smith says that an *ethnie* is “a community of historical culture with a sense of common identity.” It often has a sense of primordiality, but an *ethnie* is not a race, and is not formed on the basis of shared biological traits.⁸ Smith pinpoints five interrelated processes by which the transformation of an *ethnie* into a nation is achieved. He includes: (1) the heightened awareness of political power; (2) the solidification of territorial unity; (3) the economic integration of the territory; (4) the re-education of the people to establish common national values, memories and myths; and (5) the enfranchisement of ethnic members to establish their civil, social and political equality under the law.⁹ A nation, once formed, is “a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.”¹⁰

Ernest Gellner, another prominent scholar of nationalism, asserts in *Nations and Nationalism* that nationalism does not arise in the absence of the state. Thus the state gives rise to the nation. According to Gellner, two persons are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture and recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. He defines culture as a system of ideas, signs, associations and ways of behaving.¹¹ Nationalism lays the groundwork for modern industrialism and perpetuates the social structure necessary for economic growth by expanding and strengthening the cultural ties between members of a state. Like Smith, Gellner cites education as key to the successful nationalization of a state:

The employability, dignity, security and self-respect of individuals, typically, and for the majority of men now hinges on their education; and the limits of the culture within which they were educated are also the limits of the world within which they can, morally and professionally, breathe. A man’s education is by far his most precious investment, and

in effect confers his identity on him. Modern man is not loyal to a monarch or a land or a faith, whatever he may say, but to a culture.¹²

Based on Smith and Gellner's arguments, we can see how the concept of nationalism and mass identification with one culture were necessities in French nation-building and remain important to the modern French republic.

The Roots of the Republic

The French nation is not a primordial concept which lay dormant until the Jacobins of the French Revolution sensitized the peasantry to its existence. The modern nation-state of France was formed as a result of the fusion of a group of people into a political body. As early as the fourteenth century, the Capetian Monarchs initiated measures to unify France. The Hundred Years' War, regionalism and rivalries between lesser kings impeded the centralization of the royal state, but definitive progress was made in 1539 when Francis I established the Gallo-Roman and Frankish influenced *langue d'oïl* as the sole official language, French.¹³ According to the historian Hugh Seton-Watson, "[The French were] the first European people to be formed into a nation and French governments were the pioneers of the European form of the centralized administration and uniform national culture."¹⁴ France continued to transform from a disparate group of *ethnies* into a cohesive nation over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries — a transformation that was largely made possible and effected by intellectual and political efforts. The internal strength of the French state helped enable France to become one of the foremost powers of Europe.

An application of Smith's model of nation-building to the establishment of the modern French republic reveals that the institutionalization of modern nationalism in France began with the French revolution. In 1789, the Jacobins overthrew the monarchy, espousing liberty, fraternity, and equality for all Frenchmen; these revolutionaries introduced the republican principles which form the foundation of French nationalism today. Smith writes:

Under the Jacobins . . . French nationalism was essentially civic and territorial; it preached the unity of the republican *patrie* and the fraternity of its citizens in a political-legal community. At the same time a linguistic nationalism emerged, reflecting pride in the purity and civilizing mission of a hegemonic French culture In the early nineteenth century French cultural nationalism began to reflect more ethnic conceptions of the nation¹⁵

As Andy Green writes in *Education and State Formation*, the new Revolutionary government planned to use education as a tool “for forging national unity, for supplying the state with its trained cadres and for raising popular consciousness in line with ideologies of the new classes.” Furthermore, the Revolution “consolidated the principle of secular, state controlled education whose object was the service of the state and the fostering of a national and republican ideology.”¹⁶

The imperial regime of Napoleon from 1852 to 1870 was a setback to the development of nationalist republican ideology, but the post-imperial republican government sought to encourage the rise of nationalism in order to bolster its efforts to industrialize the nation and increase her international standing. The Opportunist republic that came into being in 1879 successfully institutionalized republicanism on a broad scale. From 1879 to 1899, the Opportunist Republic governed France, and republicanism became firmly entrenched as a permanent component of French national identity.

As Smith claims, re-education of the people is a necessary component of nationalism. The establishment of public education provides the means to inculcate the masses with common historical myths taught in a common language. The Opportunist Republic developed the French public school system, which dated from 1850, to spread the doctrine of secularism to the population at large and combat what was seen to be the negative influence of Catholicism.¹⁷

Writing in 1853, Alexis de Tocqueville clearly saw the advantages to be gained from cultivating the body politic through education and the propagation of mass culture. He said, “I am quite convinced that political societies are not what their laws make them, but what sentiments, beliefs, ideas, habits of the heart, and the spirit of men who form them, prepare them in advance to be, as well as what nature and education have made them.”¹⁸ The school system worked to counter regionalism and nurtured the growth of national French culture. According to Green, “Whereas the centralized state had only managed to impose an administrative unity on the nation it was mass education which first made possible the spread of a uniform national culture.”¹⁹ With this statement, Green substantiates Smith’s assertion that education is the state’s most effective means of nation-building.

From Nationalism to Imperialism of the dominant culture?

Public education enabled the government to indoctrinate its citizens with shared language, history and culture. According to Green, the system was designed to “impart a limited version of the national culture that would encourage political loyalty and civic obedience amongst the working class and impart a modicum of useful and appropriate skills without encouraging excessive ambition or the desire for social advancement.”²⁰ The educational system taught bourgeois values, but it was detached from the realities of the industrial world. Emphasis on philosophy, literature, language and liberal arts prevailed over scientific-technical training, and the meritocratic system promoted and graduated more students than could be employed in the liberal arts sectors of the economy. Liberally-educated and often radical young men found opportunities abroad in the French colonies. They took with them the ingrained belief in the supremacy of French culture and sought to export French culture to the colonies. Under the nurturing care of the state, French cultural identity had come of age, but a by-product had been created in the form of a new supra-nationalism.

One danger of nationalism is that in encouraging its development, the state might create a sentiment of superiority which will lead to attempts to impose one culture upon another through imperialism. Imperialism is the domination of one nation by another to increase its economic, military, and/or political power. Imperialism results from a sense that one nation is superior to another, and that it has the right to exploit other nations for its own use. The imperialist mission of France to “civilize” her colonial subjects shows that nationalist sentiment, like an overgrown child, had burst out of its nursery and seized upon “uncivilized” colonial natives as malleable clay to be formed into Frenchmen.

The French extended secular state-run education to the colonies. Just as French schoolchildren were taught about their Gaullic ancestors, blue of eyes and blond of hair, and brought up to believe in a common historical and ancestral heritage of liberty, fraternity and equality, so were native children in the colonies. Colonial subjects could assimilate and attain cultural equality in the eyes of the French by adopting the culture of the colonizers. However, as Silverman claims, assimilation rests upon an intractable dichotomy. The dominant culture (i.e. the more powerful culture) says that you must conform to its culture, maintaining that some initial difference exists which must be removed. At the same time, that initial difference cannot be expunged; therefore, one can never truly

be accepted as a full-fledged member of the dominant culture.²¹

Ultimately, the policy of assimilation was to fail in the colonies, but it is important in connection to the current attitude toward immigrants and national identity. In present-day France, the attitude persists that immigrants can attain equality if they conform to French norms and integrate into French society, but the integrationist model rests upon the removal of an initial difference between immigrants and Frenchmen. Some of the perceptions of the differences between these two groups have resulted from the historical relationship between France and her former colonies.

France's Uneasy Relationship with Islamic North Africa

The French outlook on integration today is largely shaped by the experiment with assimilation in *Algérie française*, where the most extensive attempt to assimilate a colony was made. First colonized in 1830, Algeria remained an integral part of France until 1962, when the six-year war for independence led to the liberation of Algeria from French rule. By November 1848 the success of coastal military campaigns made possible the formal declaration that Algeria was part of France. The theories on assimilation, culture and race formulated during the colonial period shed light on the failings of assimilationist policy in the past and the anxiety about integration today.

The goals for Algeria included the assimilation of the Algerian people to the French Republican ideals. Jules Ferry, a colonial-era education activist urged free, secular education in France and in colonial Algeria on the grounds that it was undeniable that “there is more justice, more material and moral order, more equity, more social virtue in North Africa since the French conquest.”²² However, Arabs were reluctant to assimilate to French norms. They did not share the French view that their lives had been improved by colonialism. Their nomadic way of life had been disrupted by the French *colons*, who had alienated them from their lands. The French found Arab statelessness and devotion to Islam to be incompatible with assimilation. Although they regarded Arabs as inferior and stubborn because of their unwillingness to assimilate, the French did not give up the idea of assimilation.

The French turned their hopes to the Kabyles, an ethnic group in the Atlas Mountains of Algeria. According to classical Greek and Roman accounts and cursory observation, Kabyle culture

was more compatible with French norms than was Arab culture. Kabyles were honorable, monogamous, less fervently Islamic, and exhibited a sense of equality.²³ Their society more closely resembled that of the French. Attempts to conquer the Kabyles were unsuccessful until 1857, but the mistaken perception that Kabyles were superior to Arabs and somehow innately suited for assimilation continued to thrive until 1871.

A large body of “scientific” work by Kabylephile soldiers and intellectuals claimed that within a century the Kabyles would be French.²⁴ These ideas were magnified as letters and studies about Algeria were circulated in France.²⁵ As more civilians moved to the colony, Arabs were dislocated and displaced; deprived of the hope of acceptability into the new society, apathy and criminality increased, perpetuating the good Kabyle/bad Arab stereotype.²⁶ The burgeoning European civilian populations disliked Algerians in general, and when civilians took power away from the military in 1871, assimilation was abandoned in favor of association.²⁷ However, academic circles in France continued to perpetuate the Kabyle Myth, and dealt with the subject from a racial, rather than ethnic, standpoint. Historical, archaeological, and geographical societies “served as repositories of contemporary monographs, studies, complete works and journals, in short the corpus from which ideas on race were plucked and developed.”²⁸ The Kabyle Myth gained widespread acceptance by the 1880s throughout Europe, despite its irrelevance in Algeria.

In the following years, racial discourse in Europe led to the rise of the Latino-Mediterranean myth, which eclipsed the Kabyle Myth.²⁹ The new theory propagated the concept that a Latino-Mediterranean race and culture were superior. However, the Kabyle Myth clearly set precedents for thought about race³⁰ and assimilation, and it influenced French colonial policies in Morocco and Tunisia.³¹ As recently as 1958, the Kabyle Myth was reinvigorated when Kabyle democracy was presented at a conference in France as the ideal democratic form.³² Today, Kabyle nationalism presents a source of ethnic tension in Algeria, a result of the French creation of a Kabyle nationalist sentiment.

The Racialization of Colonial Policy

The rise and fall of the Kabyle myth and the attempt to assimilate Algeria exemplify imperial France’s hopes to expand French nationalism and the negative effects of the attempt to do so. French policy-makers recognized that the strength of the relationship between the *métropole* and the

colony would be determined by the extent to which both were bonded by one culture. The modernization of Algeria would be made possible by the allegiance of Algerians to the same ideas, signs, associations and ways of behaving and communicating to which the French adhered. As Gellner said, two persons are of the same nation only when they share the same culture.

The impediment in French Algeria lay with Gellner's second criteria for shared nationalism — that the two men must recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. The effort to convince Algerians that they were French failed in part because of the audacity of such a venture, but more so because of the lack of equality in economic and social opportunities for Algerians and *colons*. The French state had been instrumental in the construction of French nationalism, and the common economic and political opportunities guaranteed by the state worked in tandem with the shared historical culture to cement the French nation. As we have seen above, nationalism is cultivated by the state, especially through public education, to create cadres of trained workers who will successfully negotiate the French system, enriching themselves and the state. Algerians were not privy to the same economic opportunities and advantages, negating the supposed equality achievable through assimilation. Incentive to assimilate was destroyed by the hypocrisy of the system.

Moreover, an ethno-racial stereotype evolved out of the initial cultural exclusion of Arabs; once formed, the racial stereotype became a powerful pejorative label. Arabs were then locked out of the chance to enter the French system because of their "race," while leaving the door open for the Kabyles to ascend the ladder to French enlightenment. French elites advanced the theory that Algerians could be cultural equals of the French, but the concept never caught on with most *colons*, who did not draw a distinction between Arabs and Kabyles and rejected both groups as foreign and unassimilable. According to Gellner:

Some deeply engrained religious-cultural habits possess a vigour and tenacity which can virtually equal those which are rooted in our genetic constitution. Language and formal doctrinal belief seem less deep rooted and it is easier to shed them; but that cluster of intimate and pervasive values and attitudes which, in the agrarian age, are usually linked to religion . . . frequently have a limpet-like persistence, and continue to act as a diacritical mark for the populations which carry them.³³

Gellner's theory can be readily applied to the foiled attempt at assimilating Algeria. The French

determined that Muslim North Africans could never be incorporated into French culture. Algerians were unwilling to give up their culture, and Algerian culture was innately incompatible with French culture.

The French may have been incorrect in the assumption that the intractable differences between French secularism and Islamic universalism could not be overcome. The difficulty with applying lessons learned from an imperialist experience to the domestic situation with immigrants in France is that the same rules do not apply. In the colonial situation, the native population was unwillingly targeted for assimilation. The conquering civilization demanded that Algerians adopt its ways. It is hardly surprising that Algerians were unreceptive to the idea of abandoning their culture for that of France. However, immigrants in France today have made a conscious choice to leave behind their homeland and their ways of life. They are willing to live within the confines of French culture in return for the chance to further their prosperity. Both the immigrants and the French stand to gain from the successful incorporation of newcomers; nonetheless, prejudice hinders integration on a broad scale to the satisfaction of both immigrants and nationals.

Racism and Xenophobia in France

The Kabyle Myth is one example of the emergence in mid-nineteenth century France of racist discourse. During the imperial era of the mid-nineteenth century, while French nationalism was at a high and academics like Alexis de Tocqueville discussed democracy and liberalism, such optimism was met with criticism by some, including Tocqueville's friend Arthur de Gobineau. Michael Biddiss, an expert on Gobineau (a.k.a. the "Father of Racism"³⁴), claims that the Enlightenment reinforced racist views:

It seems at first paradoxical to imply that racism drew strength from an Enlightenment famed for its rationalism and cosmopolitanism . . . For many, the widening horizons suggested not the oneness of humanity, but rather the profound cleavages among men . . . Despite its cosmopolitan pretensions, the Enlightenment's vision of civilization was predominantly ethnocentric, concentrated upon a White world.³⁵

Just as the French are inheritors of the Enlightenment principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, so have they inherited a legacy of racism. Over the last century and a half, racism in France has targeted Jews, and more recently, Muslim Arabs.

One explanation for racism's endurance in France could be its utility as a unifying measure. Biddiss asserts that racial discourse is an effective means of unifying a people: "Though it has claimed to describe social reality, racism deals rather with political symbols, and with ones peculiarly suited to the cultivation of intense group loyalties. It provides a point of effective emotional union yet, being but a symbol, its doctrines elude empirical investigation."³⁶ Gobineau believed that a state was a function of its people, primordial ethnic groups that gave rise to its laws and constitutions.³⁷ According to Biddiss, Gobineau abhorred equality on principle³⁸ and viewed nationalism as the "vain and uncritical admiration for one's unworthy compatriots" for the purposes of establishing guiding political principles.³⁹

Gobineau's pessimism was not admired by Tocqueville, who sanctioned his assignment of men and women to roles predetermined by race. He asks, "What advantage can there be in persuading base peoples living in barbarism, indolence or slavery that, such being their racial nature, they can do nothing to improve their situation or to change their habits and government?"⁴⁰ Tocqueville endeavored to dissuade his friend of his racist beliefs by expounding on the virtues of the pursuit of liberty:

You profoundly despise the human species, at least ours; you believe it not only fallen, but also incapable of ever raising itself up In my eyes, human societies like individuals become something only through the practice of liberty. That liberty is more difficult to establish and to maintain in democratic societies like ours than in certain aristocratic societies that preceded us, I have always said. But that it is impossible I will never be so rash as to think. That it might be necessary to despair of succeeding in it, I pray that God will never inspire me with such an idea.⁴¹

Tocqueville's efforts to convince his friend were unsuccessful because Gobineau lacked confidence in the universality of democratic republicanism. He thought that some peoples were innately unsuited for self-government, and that an aristocracy of the highest race should dominate. According to Biddiss, Gobineau's views were the outgrowth of alienation from European social, economic and cultural conditions. Whereas Karl Marx's communist manifesto provided a paradigm for social interpretation in terms of class; Gobineau interpreted society in terms of race.⁴² Feelings of alienation from society have contributed to the attractiveness of communism and racism as ideologies in France and elsewhere. In our time, as in Gobineau's, many people feel alienated from society, and evidence that racist discourse still attracts supporters gives testament to the staying

power of Gobineau's ideas.

A study conducted in 1997 under the auspices of the European Union uncovered the extent to which racism is present and acknowledged in France and provided an illuminating basis for comparison with other European countries. A public opinion poll conducted in the 15 member states of the EU determined current trends in racism and xenophobia. Nearly 16 percent of those interviewed in France classified themselves as "very racist;" the European mean for this category was 9 percent; France ranked second only to Belgium as the most racist European country.⁴³ Another 32 percent in France classified themselves as "quite racist," compared to a mean of 24 percent. Thus nearly half of the French sample were found to be racist. The survey revealed little correlation between unemployment and racism, but a higher degree of correlation between employment insecurity and racism. A low degree of confidence in government institutions was also expressed by the French sample; 78 percent of those surveyed were "critical" to "negative" of the institutions and political establishment in France.⁴⁴

In the same survey, respondents were asked to express their support for assimilation and integration. In Chapter 3, we will examine assimilation and integration in more detail, but it is of interest to discuss the survey's findings at this point. Asked whether they agreed with assimilation, defined as the relinquishment of minority culture as a condition for social acceptance, 44 percent of the French supported the principle, compared to a mean of 36 percent for Europe. Integration, defined as the relinquishment of religious or cultural practices which conflict with the law, was supported by 32 percent, compared to the mean of 25 percent. The remainder of those surveyed disagreed with both concepts. France ranked sixth out of fifteen in support of assimilation and fifth in support of integration.⁴⁵ France ranked the fifth least tolerant of the prospect of the growth of minority groups; 69 percent, compared to a mean of 65 percent, agreed with the statement, "our country has reached its limits; if there were to be more people belonging to these minority groups we would have problems."⁴⁶

Within the wider context of racism, specific antipathy is directed at Muslim Arabs. Statistics reveal the frighteningly high extent to which the French feel aversion toward North African immigrants and their children. In November 1992, nine out of ten surveyed believed that widespread racism toward North African immigrants and their children exists; 41 percent of those surveyed

“expressed their clear antipathy” toward French North Africans; 65 percent thought there were “too many Arabs in France” (although the figure had been 76 percent in 1990).⁴⁷ According to some analysts, anti-Arab sentiment has surpassed anti-Semitism against Jews in France. This statement is telling, because of the long history of anti-Semitism which began with the virtual exclusion of Jews from the French Declaration of the Rights of man, and continued with the anti-Semitism exhibited by the Dreyfus Affair, the extensive collaboration between Vichy France and the Nazi regime during World War II, and the desecration of Jewish graves in cemeteries. Some Muslims living in France fear the same sort of exclusionary behavior, and the actions of some French have aggravated these fears.

Deep-seated Fears

As we have seen in Chapter 1, up until the headscarf affair in 1989, the debate in France about immigration had been primarily couched in economic arguments for or against immigration. However, throughout the 1980s, the nature of the debate changed as a dichotomy between immigration policy advocating integration and the political discourse on the problem of immigration became increasingly evident, to the benefit of the extreme right.⁴⁸ In *The National Front and French Politics* Jonathon Marcus makes the case that immigration was presented by Jean-Marie Le Pen, the leader of the xenophobic National Front (FN) party, as an invasion of Muslim North Africans who were responsible for unemployment, crime and many of France’s urban problems. Unchallenged by mainstream political leaders, the FN succeeded in redefining the terms in which immigration was discussed.⁴⁹

After *l’affaire des foulards*, the debate about the cultural impact of immigrants gained an audience as economic concerns regarding immigration were put aside. In this way, *l’affaire des foulards* “crystallized the debate on immigration around questions of national identity and revealed a deep French malaise about the Muslim presence in France, represented as a threat to French values.”⁵⁰ The emotional aspect of the issue primed it for exploitation by political parties, and the National Front benefitted from the publicity surrounding *l’affaire des foulards* to gain adherents to its far-right anti-immigration platform. As mainstream parties lost voters to FN, the Right and the Left were forced to give credence to Le Pen’s concerns. Prime Minister Michel Rocard went so far

as to say that Le Pen had the wrong answers to the right questions.⁵¹ According to Martin Schain, a scholar of modern French politics, evidently, “in the context of French party politics, the National Front has succeeded in expanding the terms of the political debate from specific issues of immigrant integration to broader questions of French national identity.”⁵²

In 1985, the FN devised a fifty-point agenda to deal with the “problem” of immigration based on the concept of “France for the French.” Le Pen claims not to be racist, but he blurs the distinction between ethnic and racial differences (see “Nation-building” above for a discussion of the differences between ethnicity and race) and clearly classifies men according to their ethnic/racial background. According to Le Pen:

In this world where different races, different ethnic groups and different cultures exist, I take note of this diversity and this variety, but I establish a distinction between individuals and peoples or nations . . . I cannot say that the Bantus have the same ethnic aptitude as the Californians, because this is simply contrary to reality.⁵³

The FN proposes that the French would prefer to live among people like themselves. According to Marcus, although the National Front has expanded its platform since 1985 to include a wider array of issues, in the four hundred page *Three Hundred Measures for the Renaissance of France*, published in 1993, the FN “affords a pride of place to immigration policy.”⁵⁴

The FN garners the support of 15 percent of the French. 41 percent of FN’s supporters are under 35; 29 percent are working-class; 56 percent are men.⁵⁵ The adherents of the FN are often former communists or the children of European immigrants who have been lured away from their traditional political affiliations because of disenchantment with what they perceive to be the erosion of the French state. Marcus tells us, “Immigration has become a sort of shorthand for a complex pattern of concerns — the fear of unemployment, of housing problems, rising crime, AIDS, drug abuse, and uncertainties about France’s place in the world and what it is to be French.”⁵⁶ It is not coincidence that FN voters are concentrated in areas with large populations of immigrants and resettled colonials (though the immigrants in these regions are certainly not supporters of FN). According to Schain, the success of the FN can be attributed to Le Pen’s adroit manipulation of inter-party conflict, the emergence of new policy issues in the political realm, and the adoption of Leftist rhetoric to exploit the traditional anti-immigration stance of the far Right.⁵⁷

As we have seen in the previous section, widespread disenchantment with the government in France exists, and racist ideology attracts adherents under such conditions. Over the last decade, the liberalization of border controls under the Schengen Accords and the impending European monetary union have contributed to feelings of confusion about what it means to be French. Add to this mixture the lingering economic slump and the controversy stirred up by the headscarf affair. Le Pen has expertly tapped into the feelings of alienation that have resulted from this combination of factors. Prior to 1989, the FN had been losing national attention. After *l'affaire des foulards* the FN received widespread recognition. In an interview, Le Pen said:

Let me remind you of something. The so-called democratic parties are trying to exclude us from the game. But one small episode, the so-called Headscarves Affair, and the following Sunday, Madame Stirbois [the Front's candidate in a parliamentary by-election] was elected with 63 percent of the vote. Madame Roussel in Marseilles received 49 per cent On the same day one of our young candidates in a cantonal election defeated a Socialist who had been there for thirty years! . . . In other words . . . with a simple episode like the Headscarves Affair, in virtually three constituencies we broke into the majority parties' stronghold. It's at that moment that the establishment parties took fright.⁵⁸

For once it would seem Le Pen was not exaggerating.

The Left and Right Respond to Le Pen

Following the FN's success, the mainstream parties were confronted with a choice: to malign Le Pen and alienate large chunks of the electorate, or to adopt some of the FN's concepts. The FN advocates racial quotas for schools, a stricter Nationality Code, impediments to the construction of Islamic mosques and schools, tighter regulations on political asylum, and the expulsion of clandestine immigrants. Some of these ideas may sound familiar to observers of French politics because they have also been put forth by the mainstream Left and Right. Since 1989, the Left and Right have made every effort to appear tough on immigration, and it has often been difficult to see a clear delineation between the programs advocated by Socialists, Gaullists and Le Pen.

The FN's disturbing success in parliamentary elections soon after *l'affaire des foulards* in 1989 prompted the Socialist government to respond with new measures on integration:

Three days after these electoral results, the socialist Prime Minister Michel Rocard presented a program to the nation based on 48 measures intended to facilitate the

integration of immigrants and their families into French daily life. One week following this announcement, President François Mitterrand stated on a television talk show his concern on immigration⁵⁹

Soon thereafter, a High Council on Integration was created by the government to devise new solutions to the problem of integrating immigrants. However, Socialist Prime Ministers Rocard and his successor Edith Cresson also sought to set tighter controls on new immigration and renewals of residence and work permits, while promising to deport illegal immigrants — hardly measures that create a welcoming climate for immigrants living in France (see Chapter 1). Extensive administrative controls regulating the presence of immigrants contribute to their insecurity. If immigrants anticipate deportation or plan to return home as soon as they have saved enough francs, it is unlikely that they will wholeheartedly adopt French ways and attitudes.

The aim of the Socialists' integration measures was to encourage "a dynamic, reciprocal process, which, while recognizing the importance of cultural differences, stresses the importance of those cultural elements shared by the entire community."⁶⁰ The new policy moved away from the Jacobin tradition of cultural unity, but did not go so far as to embrace multiculturalism. Although multiculturalism has become the model in Anglo-American policy, the French find the idea of parity of cultural communities contradictory with the republican tradition which grants the individual equality before the law, regardless of his origins, race, and religion.⁶¹ A more thorough exploration of the integration/multiculturalism debate will follow in Chapter 3, but the crux of the matter is that the French government did not want to institutionalize minorities and perpetuate the "otherness" of immigrant communities. Moreover, the Socialists' policies in the early '90s were opposed to concentrated ethnic communities, fearing that immigrant neighborhoods would prevent integration through the "ghettoization" of immigrants.

In 1995, the RPR-UDF came to power under Gaullist president Jacques Chirac. In the first round of the election, Le Pen won 15 percent of the vote; Chirac won 20.8 percent.⁶² Chirac enjoyed substantial parliamentary support and was the acknowledged leader of the Right. Nonetheless, Chirac faced difficult choices regarding immigration and integration policy. "As polls of May 1995 showed, 33 percent of all French voters and 43 percent of those who voted for Chirac desire 'that the ideas of the National Front be taken into account more by the new president.'"⁶³ In this vein, the

Right responded by adopting a hardline approach to integration policy, even while restricting further immigration to the country. Chirac was slow to implement the Schengen Accords (adopted by the EU in 1991) dismantling border controls,⁶⁴ probably in part because he did not wish to appear soft on immigration.

Chirac and his Prime Minister saw eye to eye on many issues, and the premier played the role of “loyal lieutenant” to the powerful president during his first term.⁶⁵ Prime Minister Alain Juppé advocated integration, but maintained staunch loyalty to the Republican principles. To this end, he appointed Eric Raoult to be his Delegate Minister for Cities and Integration. Raoult explained the right’s position on integration to *Figaro Magazine* in April 1997:

To fortify the French melting-pot, we must look to the spirit of its fundamental principles: to give privilege to the individual and not communities, extol the right to resemblance and not to divide by the right to difference. The Republic is one, she must not recognize minority communities, nor urban or cultural ghettos. Our compatriots are not shocked by the color of faces but by the persistence of different cultures which are irreconcilable with our republican values and our way of life.⁶⁶

Of the Left, Raoult said that it lives in an unrealistic utopia and lacks faith in the republic: “They advance the respect of differences on legal principle and prefer the United Colors of Benetton to the tricot of the Republic. The socialists like to make fashion, on the right, we like to make France.”⁶⁷

Raoult claimed that integration may be achieved only through small steps, and through individual efforts. He cites acclaimed actress Isabelle Adjani and Abdel Benazzi, the captain of the French rugby team, as examples of second-generation immigrants who have successfully adapted.

Apparently, the Right missed the mark. One month after that article appeared, Chirac dissolved parliament in a miscalculated attempt to strengthen the RPR-UDF majority. Instead, a Socialist-Communist coalition came to power, and Lionel Jospin became the new Prime Minister. Under Jospin, the Socialist vision is being formulated in an effort led by Patrick Weil. Weil criticizes recent immigration policies as having created a complicated web of laws which paralyzes the government’s ability to master the control of immigration or the rights of immigrants. Rather than annulling the precedent law, each new law introduced during the 1980s and 1990s was laid upon the existing network of regulations.

Weil hopes to streamline immigration policies and jettison those which are ineffective.⁶⁸ The

report recommends that social services be extended to immigrants upon their arrival in France, including education, medical care and unemployment benefits for those injured at work.⁶⁹ Retired immigrants who wish to be able to return to their native countries should be allowed to collect their retirement benefits and allowed liberal circulation between France and their homes.⁷⁰ The Ministry of Immigration should maintain close links with newly arrived immigrants in order to facilitate their insertion into French life, and an OMI investigator should make a house call to determine the capacity of the immigrant and his family to integrate.⁷¹ Weil's recommendations veer away from the strident tone of the recent immigration policies advocated by the Right.

The Socialists are aligned with anti-racist organizations and immigrant associations, and have proven to be friendlier to immigrants than have the Gaullists. The Right's collaboration with the FN by running joint ballots during the 1983 municipal elections and its continued alliance-forming with Le Pen have undermined the extent to which the Right's claims to favor integration can be taken seriously. In fact, the RPR-UDF seems to be increasingly influenced by the FN: by November 1995, conservative party mayors reported plans to cut back on programs that favored immigrant integration over exclusion.⁷² In March 1997, the Center-Right came under fire again for forging alliances with the FN. Several members of the RPR and UDF parties were expelled after making statements intimating that the only way for the mainstream right to succeed was to include the FN under its umbrella.⁷³ The political infighting among the Right and the unwillingness to risk being labeled "soft" on the part of the Left have contributed to the paralysis of which Weil spoke and led to dissatisfaction among those who desire change.

Conclusions

The government has yet to formulate and follow through with a good policy on integration, and there is no solution that will please everyone. Pressure on the French system to accommodate immigrants has fed the National Front's electoral base. The FN will complain about any concessions to immigrants, and the immigrant community will continue to feel oppressed until it is accorded full equality. Disenchantment with political infighting, dissatisfaction with a 13 percent unemployment rate, and the impending European monetary unification contribute to the fear that France is falling apart. Scapegoating immigrants for the present malaise and the difficulties ahead worsens the

problem because it divides the population and shifts attention from the realities of the political landscape.

To emerge from the present predicament intact, the French nation must share a vision for its future. The myth of nationalism rests on the similarities — real or perceived — between the people of the nation.

In effect, the national community, because it is the product of history, is characterized by its reference to the past. It is also characterized by its sense of the present, which manifests itself in its affirmation of a national identity, and by its will to share the future. It typically thinks of itself as a unitary whole, a social community whose language, beliefs, ideologies and way of life are legitimated and reinforced by the state. The question which arises is whether it is in the interest of the nation-state to encourage feelings of belonging on the part of emigrants and whether it should not preserve its cultural homogeneity and integrity in the face of newcomers and their new ways.⁷⁴

France's complex cultural identity renders the answer to this question more obscure.

The French are not racist in the sense that they exclude individuals based on race; theirs is a culturalist discrimination. This analysis lies at the heart of Silverman's work. According to Silverman, racism in France in the twentieth century is national racism. National racism, he says, is: "a racism which is deeply embedded in the structures (institutions/ ideologies) of the nation-state. The divorce between the concept of 'race' and 'nation' and between ethnic and contractual models of the nation has made it more difficult to locate this racism at the heart of everyday, common-sense nationalism."⁷⁵ But the line between cultural and racial exclusionary practices is fuzzy, in part because "anti-racism has frequently shared a similar discourse (or even the same discourse) as racism yet maintains its distance simply by cloaking itself in a cultural nationalism as opposed to biological racism."⁷⁶

Are we witnessing the breakdown of French nationalism? Perhaps. Journalist Dominique Schnapper questions the ability of France to integrate immigrants because she doubts that French society exists as the cohesive body that politicians claim it to be:

The real problem is that of the capacity for integration of the nation herself. If the social fabric disintegrates, if the political project, civic mindedness and common values continue to weaken, the whole idea of integration will be called into question, that of immigrants and their children, without doubt, but above all of society as a whole. One can't integrate immigrants into a society that is not itself integrated. The story of the

French melting-pot, in the words of Gerard Noiriel, can only be perpetuated if French society itself is not overcast by fragmentation.⁷⁷

In the past, integration measures have been successful because of cooperation of various groups within French society. According to sociologist Michel Crozier, Catholics and anticlerics, student union leaders, journalists, civil servants, political club members, and President Charles de Gaulle are responsible for the successful re-integration of Algerian *colons* in the late 1960s.⁷⁸ Under de Gaulle's leadership, returning *colons* and *Harkis* were absorbed into society, which inevitably brought about change. But public involvement in realigning French socio-political priorities through the protests of May 1968 ultimately led to the restoration of order and strengthened the integrity of the French nation.

... questions, the first asking the French: 'Which secularity?', and the second asking Muslims: 'Which Islam?' Perhaps surprising was the emergence of a kind of a general consensus ... that Islam should be 'modernized', i.e. tailored to fit in with French secularity.

That the idea was put forth that Islam should mold itself to the secular French system should not be surprising. Secularism and education are inexorably linked to French national culture; the case can be made that secularism is also indelibly connected to modernism and industrialization. When Algeria developed from an agrarian to an industrial society, the place of religion changed with the emergence of nationalism.

To perform the discritical, nation-defining role, the religion in question may in fact need to transform itself totally, as it did in Algeria: in the nineteenth century, Algerian Islam with its reverence for holy lineages was for all practical purposes co-extensive with rural shrines and saint cults. In the twentieth century it repudiated all this and identified with reformist scripturalism ... The shrines had defined tribes and tribal boundaries; the scripturalism could and did define a nation.²

Indications that Islam is metamorphosing in France into a creed more compatible with secularism are given by the low incidence of practicing second-generation immigrants; however, it would be incorrect to claim that kernels of the Islamic faith will not remain.

Several paradigms exist for the incorporation of minorities into the political and social fabric. The first is assimilation; the second, integration; the third, multiculturalism; the fourth, segregation. All of these theories are dependent upon the division of social relations into two spheres: public and private. We have already seen in Chapter 2 that the assimilative tradition of the French has given way to the integrationist approach. But is this approach best? Should the French adopt

Chapter 3
ASSIMILATION, INTEGRATION, MULTICULTURALISM OR SEGREGATION?
FOUR MODELS FOR THE INCLUSION OF IMMIGRANTS

The debate on integration in France can be whittled down to the question of whether or not it is possible for Islamic minorities in France to adhere to the secularism of the Republic. During the intense press coverage of the headscarf affair:

A typical front-page headline would be 'Islam and Secularity'. . . . The debate was pared down to two questions, the first asking the French: Which secularity?, and the second asking Muslims: Which Islam? Perhaps surprising was the emergence of a kind of a general consensus . . . that Islam should be 'modernized', i.e. tailored to fit in with French secularity.¹

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multiculturalism, the alternative advocated by John Rex in *Ethnic Minorities in the Modern Nation State*? Or is Huntington correct that multiculturalism poses problems in the arena of international relations? To answer these questions, Chapter 3 will examine the alternatives for the treatment of ethnic minorities in modern nation-states. Chapter 4 will explore the implications for international relations. I argue that Huntington's analysis of the weaknesses of multiculturalism is especially applicable to the case of France.

The Theory of Two Domains

In the tradition of Max Weber, sociologists endeavor to classify social relations in terms of the relationships between individuals within groups and the larger interactions between these groups within political institutions. Social scientists generally categorize social interaction as belonging to either the public or private sphere. John Rex and Sarah Wayland both construct their models for the incorporation of immigrants in terms of the public and private domains. According to Rex, the public domain consists of law, politics, the economic sector, and education insofar as it is concerned with selection, the transmission of skills and the perpetuation of civic culture. The private domain includes moral education, primary socialization and the inculcation of religious beliefs.³

Rex attempts to delineate the division between the two domains, but he admits that there are difficulties in so doing. Functionally, the two-domain thesis may be utopian. In post-industrial society, a functionalist approach to the private domain's impact on the public domain prevails. Rex says, "There seems to be no place . . . for the idea of two separate sociocultural domains which have no impact or effect on one another. The moral values inculcated by the family, for example, are looked at in terms of their functionality or dysfunctionality for performances in the political spheres."⁴ However, some scholars claim that the increasing secularization of the modern world causes differences within the private domain to diminish in influence. Rex asserts that social organization, the market, bureaucratization, modern science and technology increasingly supplant the influence of religion, morality, and family on shaping behavior.⁵

The demarcation between the two spheres is no more clear in France than elsewhere, and the French way of life obfuscates the already grey line between the two domains. In France, the public domain is secular almost to the point of being sterile. Crossover from the private sphere to the

public sphere is considered noxious by the French; take the headscarf affair as an example. State-sponsored or subsidized day care begins at an early age, thus the inculcation of moral values and the primary socialization of children may not be carried out exclusively in the private domain. Moreover, Muslims do not all agree with a division between the public and private spheres of life. Rex claims, "Most Muslims if asked would in the first place reject the whole 'two domains' idea. Islam, they would say, is a whole way of life."⁶ Nonetheless, the French concept of integration rests upon the two-domain ideal. Our examination of the various approaches to incorporating immigrants will be couched in terms of the two-domain theory.

Four Models: Assimilation, Integration, Multiculturalism and Segregation

The assimilative model was discussed in Chapter 2 in the context of the French treatment of colonial subjects in Algeria. Regarding immigration, this model requires that immigrants relinquish their native cultures and adopt the language, ideas, historical myths and mass culture of the host nation. In its purest sense, assimilation aspires to make a people of one mind, heart and spirit; conformity is obligatory in both the private and public domains. As Silverman argues, assimilation is problematic because immigrants must overcome a fundamental difference between their ways of life and those of the host culture; since this difference is the result of an ingrained perception of the world, it can never be fully effaced. According to Rex, "there will be some who are willing to accept the hard bargain [of assimilation] . . . if it brings sufficient rewards . . . but generally the attempt simply to destroy minority culture is likely to provoke resistance."⁷ Rex claims that assimilationism may be a source of ethnic conflict because it denies immigrants the emotional, moral and political support provided by a community; he also claims that assimilation stigmatizes immigrant culture.⁸ Partly because assimilation exacts a heavy emotional toll from immigrants it is widely disregarded as a legitimate alternative in modern democratic societies. Instead, nations which have traditionally sought to assimilate immigrants (e.g. France) have adopted a new approach: that of integration.

Integration also requires immigrants to become like natives, but it is less harsh than assimilation because integration also calls for a reciprocal toleration of immigrants by natives. Integration can be understood as the attempt to allow immigrants to maintain their native culture in the private domain while adopting the habits and practices of the host culture in the public domain. Wayland

describes integration as follows, "It is a two-way process in which elements of the majority and minority cultures are merged into a single national framework. Like assimilation, integration is an individual strategy: all persons are recognized formally as equal, with no favors or distinctions based on group identity."⁹ According to Wayland, Schnapper and others, in France integration consists of the attainment of equality in the public domain and the right to practice one's own beliefs in private. Integration is the "melting-pot" model of incorporating immigrants into a nation.

Whereas integration grants individuals rights in the public domain while allowing them cultural space in the private domain, the third alternative, multiculturalism, recognizes the rights of minority groups in the public as well as private domains. Individual conformity to the public culture is minimized because ethnic communities insulate immigrants. If integration is a "melting pot," multiculturalism is a "salad bowl" in which ethnic communities harmoniously complement one another. However, (as was discussed in Chapter 2) the acknowledgment of minority communities contradicts the tradition of individualism in France and is seen as the "ghettoisation" of minorities.

The most commonly heard criticism of multiculturalism is that it creates ethnic communities where none exist and that it perpetuates communities that should have passed out of existence. If this were taken to the extreme, segregation would be the result. Segregation is best exemplified by the former system of apartheid in South Africa; although Wayland points to American Indian and Australian aborigine reservations as other examples of enforced segregation, as well as the "guest worker" status of Turkish immigrants in Germany who are prevented from attaining citizenship. Enforced differences in terms of rights and opportunities in the public and private domains characterize segregation. However, some minority groups, like the Amish in the United States, choose to separate themselves from the national culture. Segregation of groups within a nation, whether imposed by law or voluntary, undermines equality and contradicts the French republican tradition. We will reject this alternative out of hand as an option for France.

Classifying Integration and Multiculturalism

The dissimilarity between the two extreme models outlined above — assimilation and segregation — can be easily perceived; however the line between integration and multiculturalism blurs. In practice, the two often appear identical, and the slipperiness of drawing distinction between

them renders it troublesome to compare arguments for or against either theory. While distinguishing between the practical applications of integration and multiculturalist policy can be muddling, in theory the philosophical orientation of each alternative is evident. The French tradition of assimilation lends itself more easily to the integration model today. The Anglo-American tradition of segregation (in the British colonies as well as in the American South) has transformed into the more acceptable ideal of multiculturalism. The differences between integration and multiculturalism become most clear when examined from the vantage point of the requirements of each for behavior in the public and private domains.

Despite the inherent difficulties in so doing, Rex devises several qualifications for each of the domains within a multicultural system. These qualifications call for acceptance by minorities of their status as communities of outsiders within the larger culture, while nationals learn tolerance of cultural pluralism. He argues that minorities can speak their native language within family and community settings, practice their own religion, manage their household and family relations as they see fit and maintain traditions without threatening the "overall political unity of the national society."¹⁰ In the public domain, immigrants should expect: (1) to use a recognized national language for state business, (2) to understand and operate in terms of the established national culture; (3) to find universal opportunities within the economic and political systems; (4) to benefit from a universal legal system; (5) to accept the political duties of citizenship; (6) to respect ethical limits to cultural diversity (e.g. female circumcision); (7) the recognition of cultural differences in school; (8) interaction between groups in artistic and literary circles.¹¹

The integrationist model, on the other hand, shies away from creating a community of outsiders within the nation. While several of Rex's qualifications of the public domain also apply to the French integrationist ideal, clauses 6, 7 and 8 do not apply. The French would expect the ethical norms of French society to be respected by individuals, pre-empting the need for ethical limits to cultural diversity. We have already seen that the recognition of cultural differences in school is not French policy. Lastly, the French would expect interaction between individuals, not groups, in the realm of the arts and high culture. The integrationist model perceives the public domain to be a forum for interaction between individuals of all ethnic backgrounds. It is an equal playing ground, and individuals work, trade and compete with one another as *individuals*, not as members of

minority communities.

Examining the expectations of the private/communal domain reveals multiculturalism and integration to be more obviously at odds. Rex also devised limits to the private and communal domain. He envisioned the dark possibility that ethnic mobilization can be distorted into ethnic cleansing, and advises that a commitment to coexistence and participation within the overall system is essential. Second, apartheid and secession must be rejected as unacceptable. Third, political loyalty must lie with the state and not the homeland. Fourth, minority cultures must be fluid, not viscous.¹² The implied contract between the immigrant and the nation to which he is emigrating requires that he accept these limits upon his private life; he may retain his ethnic identity in the bargain.

Of Rex's four qualifications of the private sphere, only the second and third apply directly to integration as well. Apartheid and secession are completely opposed to integration. And in the private domain, an integrationist approach would emphasize that the loyalty of individuals should lie with the nation of residence, and not the homeland. Regarding integration, in 1994 the adviser on immigration to the French Minister of the Interior, Jean-Claude Barreau, said, "When somebody emigrates, he changes not only his country, but also his history. Foreigners arriving [to settle] in France must understand that from henceforth their ancestors are the Gauls and that they have a new homeland."¹³ The philosophical break dividing multiculturalism and integration appears irreconcilable from the standpoint of the immigrant's limitations in the private sphere. There is no space — public or private — within the integrationist prototype for the mobilization of ethnic groups or the reification of minority culture.

Criticisms of Multiculturalism

Examining the conceptual obligations of multiculturalism in the public and private domains highlighted some of the contrasts between the two models. Although both theories have merit, multiculturalism's focus on integrating groups has attracted criticism. According to Rex, "[Multiculturalism] is an ideal which is regarded with grave suspicion in the media, amongst politicians and social scientists and in public opinion generally, as well as amongst educated members of the migrant communities themselves."¹⁴

Why so much suspicion? The fear is that by labeling a group “ethnic,” it is assigned inferior status. This criticism is not baseless, because sociological theory tells us that a culture defines itself by what it is not. If a minority culture is defined by its opposition to the majority, and the majority institutionalizes this cleavage by acknowledging a group as an ethnic minority, one could argue that the fundamental assumption underlying this division is that the dominant culture is superior. The majority culture is a product of the nation, as much as the nation is a product of the culture. So the argument goes that the national culture dominates because it is inherently better-suited to confront the challenges of the national economic and political system. Therefore, in a worst-case multicultural scenario the national majority can protect minorities, secure in the knowledge that its pre-eminence will not be challenged as long as immigrants are encouraged to remain a community apart — not segregated, but different nonetheless.

This scenario is particularly repugnant to the French, who vehemently criticize multiculturalism. According to Rex, “In France, Wieviorka (1994) has suggested that the very term ‘ethnicity’ is one which is only applied to inferiors. As he sees it, ‘they’ are thought to have ethnicity, while we indigenous people are thought of as being merely normal.”¹⁵ Similarly, Schnapper rejects multiculturalism in favor of integration on the grounds that:

Integration is both a political and social necessity, since everything must be done to avoid the formation of urban ghettos, born of poverty, exclusion and ethnic apprehension, where, as in certain sectors of American cities, social and ethnic disadvantages are compounded. But integration is foremost a value *per se*, insofar as it rests on the fundamentally democratic notion that, in spite of the divergence of their beliefs and their experience and their allegiances, people who have respect for what is right and, in particular, for human rights can live in harmony.¹⁶

The French do not want to institutionalize ethnic communities and in so doing institutionalize particularist practices which could lead to favoritism or discrimination.

At its best, multiculturalism would not resemble this specter of injustice. Silverman asserts that the French failed to realize that distinctive cultural communities, or “ghettos” of immigrants have been a constant feature throughout the history of France. He cites historian Gerard Noiriel and holds that concentrated communities of immigrants have occurred naturally since the Second Empire and rather than inhibiting integration, they are part of the process of assimilation.¹⁷ In Rex’s conception,

multiculturalism would not bring about a change from a monocultural society to a multicultural one, but a modification of the overall culture in which symbolic ethnicity would remain in the form of festivals and foods, enriching peoples' identities as well as the national culture.¹⁸ However, for the French and other critics of multiculturalism, integration provides the best means for achieving Rex's stated ends. Schnapper suggested that France itself might not be a cohesive nation united in one culture (see the conclusion of Chapter 2). She would agree with Rex that: "National societies are not necessarily culturally and economically united prior to arrival of immigrants."¹⁹ But where Rex asserts that "They are often divided in terms of classes and status groups, and any national culture will often rest upon some kind of compromise negotiated between these groups,"²⁰ Schnapper would argue that social disunity is a result of discord and inequality among individuals. In order to determine which view is more relevant to the question at hand, we must examine whether or not an identifiable Islamic community is present in modern day France.

Does an Islamic Community Exist in France?

The existence of a Muslim community in France is a contentious issue. Most scholars repudiate it. Oliver Roy says, "Far from being a rising force, Islam in France has failed to provide itself with truly representative institutions, for the probable reason that, in spite of there being a French Muslim population, there is no Muslim community."²¹ Roy claims that three forces are responsible for projecting a sense of community onto the Muslims in France: "1) Islamic lay preachers, often foreign and connected with Islamic international organizations; 2) An elite that is integrated but of immigrant origin, which seeks a role as an intermediary and interface between a community perceived to be more ethnic than religious and the French government and French society; 3) The French government, anxious to find groups or individuals to negotiate with, form a community in crisis and so forestall the emergence of a political, allogeneous form of Islam."²²

Roy's claims about the Muslim "community" in France are substantiated by Viorst and Kepel. International Islamic organizations are clearly linked to Muslim groups in France. Viorst reveals that the Paris Mosque — the largest mosque in France — once had links to Morocco, but since 1962 has received financial support from the Algerian government. The imam of the mosque is appointed by the Society of Habous in Algiers with approval by the Algerian government. The Stalingrad

mosque in Paris, a large warehouse converted into a place of worship, was purchased in the 1980s with Saudi funds. And, although its leaders deny it, the Union of French Islamic Organizations (UOIF) has been linked to the international Muslim Brotherhood founded in Egypt. The UOIF seeks to unite the 200 disparate local groups in favor of Islamic Orthodoxy in France.²³ Furthermore, according to Kepel, the Algerian-born imam of the Marseilles mosque is a member of the *salafist* movement, which seeks to purify Islam by ridding it of French influences, among other things.

We can also find evidence that certain integrated elites of immigrant origin hope to gain power by promoting themselves as leaders of the Muslim community. Their efforts are made easier by the government's complicity. Viorst and Kepel support Roy's assertion that the government endeavors to create a Muslim leadership where none exists. According to Viorst, "It annoys Paris that Islam contains no provision for a clerical hierarchy, and even more that the Muslim community is too divided to choose political chiefs."²⁴ However, the government, and particularly the RPR-UDF party, cultivated a relationship with the Paris Mosque, which took on the role of a sort of religious embassy in France under the leadership of Sheik Abbas. According to Kepel, after the death in 1989 of Sheik Abbas, "The appointment of his successor revealed the omnipotence of the Algerian government and the inability of the French government to have any say in the leadership of Islam on its territory. As a result, the French government redoubled its efforts to set up a Muslim body free of Algerian influence."²⁵

In reality, French Muslims comprise a wide array of peoples from sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, as well as French converts. The affiliation between the Paris Mosque and Algeria designates the leader of the Mosque as the leader of French Muslims of Algerian origin; to claim that he represents a larger body is illegitimate. The special relationship between the government and the Paris Mosque caused resentment of the Mosque by other Muslims in France, who fault the government for assigning its imam the role of the leader of French Muslims. The French government has realized the limitations of looking to the Paris Mosque as the pinnacle of Muslim leadership in France, and it has endeavored to encourage independent French Muslim leadership. More to the point, faced with deteriorating conditions in Algeria and related terrorism in France, the impetus to sever the links between the Paris Mosque and Algeria has been increased, and the chaos in Algeria effectively ended its financial support for the Mosque.

The failure of the various elements of the Muslim population in France to work together also refutes the existence of a Muslim community. Minister of the Interior Pierre Joxe set up a Discussion Group on Islam in France (CORIF) in November 1989 (just after *l'affaire foulard*). The new leader of the Paris Mosque, Dalil Boubakeur, did not cooperate with the group. Some authors attribute this to his refusal; others say he was not invited to participate. Regardless, the CORIF never achieved the status of a body truly representative of the Muslims in France, and by 1993 it was dissolved. In part, its work was undermined by Boubakeur's lack of participation and his relentless efforts to promote himself as the foremost negotiator between the Muslim "community" and the French government. In line with Roy's argument that a real Muslim community does not exist in France, it makes sense that the government's efforts to form one from the top down was not credible.

Lastly, elites in France do not, for the most part, identify with an Arab-Islamic community. Nadia Rachedi conducted research on the integration of minority elites in France, and found that the majority of those she interviewed resented what was seen as the government's attempt to exclude Muslims by superimposing a community upon a population of individuals. During the Gulf War, Rachedi examined whether French of Maghrebi extraction would adhere to a community bonded by "twin loyalties" to France and to Islam. A doctor born in 1945 in Algeria vocalized the most common sentiment of those she surveyed:

I found it difficult to accept the way the French state looked on us as hostages by addressing the Algerian or Maghrebin or Arab 'community' in France, by addressing Muslims as if the secular principle had no place in the Arab community, whereas previously they'd made such a hoo-ha about it. . . . In fact, I'm very uneasy about the future and the way the whole question of immigration into France is likely to be handled.²⁶

Rachedi's research found that, "[Muslim immigrants] reproach the political and intellectual class in French society with failing to clarify an already complex situation, especially with abdicating the chance of any real debate. They see themselves as the 'victims' of generalizations deliberately cultivated by intellectuals and politicians."²⁷ The government bolstered this impression by bestowing upon the CORIF undue status as the leadership of the Muslim "community." After the Gulf War, President Mitterrand thanked both the Muslim and Jewish communities for their "dignity" and "sense of responsibility" during the crisis; he later met with the CORIF to extend similar remarks of praise.²⁸ In a footnote to this discussion, Kepel points out that this action, "surprised

those who thought that the French state did not recognize any 'community affiliation' on the part of its citizens."²⁹

Creating a Community

If a Muslim Arab community does not already exist, should one be created? Multiculturalists espouse the protection of immigrant *communities* because they believe that communities are best able to mobilize and combat existing social, political or economic inequalities that inhibit the initial integration of individuals. Rex charges that:

[Immigrants must counter] the process of what Parkin (1979) calls 'double closure'; that is what happens when an indigenous group fighting for equality and having made gains for itself, seeks to exclude others from benefitting from those gains. In joining in class struggles, immigrant minorities have to form parties within parties and unions within unions to ensure that their interests are defended.³⁰

Rex contends that structures intermediate between the state and individuals provide "psychological security" for immigrants, allowing them to make use of the "valuable resource" of ethnic solidarity to achieve equality within the nation.³¹ Minority lobbies form relationships with the state which assume a moral dimension, says Rex: "The individuals who negotiate with one another do not simply have an external relation with each other; they become united in their consciences and their pursuit of justice."³²

Muslims may also agree that minority lobbyist groups can be a useful tool of achieving equal treatment. According to Kepel, Muslims in a Western country consider integration not on an individual basis, but from a communitarian vantage point. He says: "integration does not mean the search for a private, individual relationship to faith, but rather the practical application of Islam-based communalism."³³ So perhaps, in the absence of a definitive Arab-Islamic community, it is necessary to create one. Then how should the development of this community be encouraged, and by whom? Several alternatives exist.

Roy offers three strategies for community building. The first of these is to form the Arab-Muslim community into a political interest group or lobby. Roy argues that this strategy is thwarted by the pejorative connotation of the term "Arab." As seen above, among the more integrated members of the population there is little interest in laying claim to an Arab ethnic identity.³⁴ The second strategy

is to use grass roots proselytizing to broaden support for an Islamic community which maintains separatism from the mainstream in France. Few Muslims participate in such schemes; those who do are often low-skilled workers who have not succeeded in integrating and turn to fundamentalism. The third strategy is the formation of a Muslim community by the French government in an effort to “sever the link between Islam in France and its overseas sponsors and to provide itself with an interlocutor.”³⁵

Of the three options, the first and third have already been ruled out in the discussion above. Grass roots activism has met some success among average Muslims in France. According to Kepel, the UOIF’s goal of re-Islamization has been aided by the headscarf affair, the publication of Salman Rushdie’s novel *The Satanic Verses* and the Gulf War. He says: “These events helped people who up until then had not paid any great attention to that part of their identity to discover that they were Muslim, by realizing their solidarity with fellow believers who they saw demonized by the Western media.”³⁶ Kepel’s account of the grass roots movement to form a Muslim community is an account of a movement that sprung out of alienation from a set of beliefs which then formed the basis for a cultural identity. Hadani Ditmars substantiates Kepel’s story:

Indeed, in the *banlieue*, where the State has less and less control, where essential services such as public transport, post offices, and sometimes even garbage disposal are virtually non-existent, and where gangs fight each other for control of their “turf,” fundamentalist Islam presents an attractive alternative for many young people. It can provide a sense of structure and belonging for those neglected or ignored by the State and, most importantly, a sense of identity.³⁷

This alienation has enabled political activism to arise from grass roots organizing among the *beurs* (the common appellation of the children of North-African immigrants). The Union of Young Muslims (UJM) advocates political activism and involvement, but not on an individual basis like France-Plus (see below); rather, the UJM seeks a political activism based on cultural solidarity among French Muslims.³⁸

Political mobilization as a response to marginalization

Writing in 1976, Abdul Said and Luiz R. Simmons claimed that ethnic conflict can be viewed from an ecological perspective; it is most likely to develop when ethnic groups compete for

resources, territory or jobs. Said and Simmons argued that the politicization of this competition led to conflict: "One might not expect ethnic conflict even if ethnic group A has a predominant advantage in political representation if ethnic group B is not politicized. Internecine behavior is as much a function of commonality of values as of a multiplicity of values."³⁹ Exclusion or marginalization can lead to politicization, which may lead to conflict. In France, as immigrants perceive themselves as marginalized by those who long to cling to the traditional homogeneity of French culture, some have taken steps to become politically mobilized. The FN has catalyzed this mobilization, and immigrants repudiate its claims about their inability to mix with the French.

The National Front taps deep fears about national identity and the ethnic danger posed by large numbers of North African immigrants of the Islamic faith, fears that have been fed for decades by leaders of all major political parties, as well as by administrative reports. Nevertheless, the most recent study of Algerians in France indicates a steady process of quiet integration: a high level of intermarriage (50 percent for men born in France) and a low level of religious practice rivaling that of the "native" French population.⁴⁰

Some immigrants are becoming increasingly vocal in their assertions that they want and deserve equality.

In 1990, Azouz Begag wrote that a new reality has been established: "even if they are 'torn between two cultures,' the children of North-African immigrants command new respect because they have become an active part of French society and they participate in redefining what it means to be French"⁴¹ The political association France-Plus was created by beurs in 1985 with the goal of integration. France-Plus believes that integration has not been successful in the past because of the reluctance of immigrants to let go of their native culture:

When Algeria was legally counted as part of France, the assimilation of Algerian migrant workers in France was not hampered by any physical, genetic difference between, say, a Kabyle and a southern French peasant. The generally impassible fissure between the two populations, precluding an assimilationist solution, was cultural and not physical.⁴²

The ideal of integration necessitates that the beurs relinquish the "myth of return" often perpetuated by their parents. Organizations like France-Plus encourage immigrant youths to claim their membership in French society through involvement in French politics. France-Plus funds events and projects to sensitize the population at large to the problem of racism and the exclusion of immigrants from mainstream French society.

According to Begag, in metropolitan Lyons, 70 percent of immigrants' children between ages 16 and 25 lack vocational training or employment; worse yet, 90 percent of working-age children of the *Harkis* are unemployed.⁴³ A high failure rate in school exists among the community of immigrants' children; French programs to ameliorate the situation have netted little success. France experimented with partial education in the original language and culture of immigrants, but "Research on the education of immigrant children in France shows the failure of the specific educational policies (multicultural or intercultural) based on recognition of cultural origin. Migrants seem to want to integrate and they demand that equal opportunity be made available by improving their knowledge of the French language."⁴⁴ Smith and Gellner would agree that the economic and political inclusion of immigrants within the French system is vital if immigrants are to become full members of the French nation.

Conclusions

Political mobilization and community formation are related, but distinct, phenomenon. Political mobilization is directed at the realization of equal rights and opportunities. Minority communities can have similar goals, but are not exclusively political in nature. The question remains as to the motivation for and the benefits from the creation of a minority group. Rex argues that ethnic communities provide support and reduce the alienation of individuals; in France, ethnic communities seem to have arisen out of alienation. Could this alienation have been prevented if a multicultural system had been in place? I doubt that Muslims in France would have felt more psychologically secure during the headscarf affair and international crises like the Gulf War if an Islamic 'community' in France had been recognized as a real community. One could argue that the entire community could have been ostracized and singled out for discrimination, leading to friction between the French nation and the Muslim community within it. Huntington asserts, "People use politics not just to advance their interests but also to define their identity. We know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against."⁴⁵ Perhaps the presence of a clear Muslim community would have been more dangerous and created a less secure environment in general by establishing a ready-made enemy within the nation, as was the case in Britain, where the Muslim community vocally broke with the British government's policy on Iraq.

In France, the situation differs greatly from Britain, where the Muslim population is almost exclusively of Pakistani origin. This paper focuses primarily on Algerian Muslims in France, not because they constitute the entire population of Muslims in France, but because of that population, they most closely resemble a *community*. To the French Muslim population at large, Algerian Muslims do not authoritatively represent the entire "Islamic community." The Algerians certainly form a large part of the overall population of Muslims, but the CORIF experiment shows that despite the non-participation of Boubakeur, the leader of Algerian Muslims, a group of Muslim wise men could be formed. By the same token, the ultimate failure of the CORIF demonstrates that without the participation of the Algerian sector, no real community can claim to exist. The unwillingness to cooperate shows that a community — in the sense of a group of people with shared values and goals who cooperate to gain greater equality — does not exist. The artificial creation of a community creates a myriad of problems and would not solve the integration dilemma. Finally, it is not friction between two "communities" *per se* that underlies the question of how to incorporate Muslim immigrants into French society. It is friction between two civilizations.

Building upon Gellner's discussion of the influence of modernization on the nation-state, Rex claims that in the modern nation-state, communal institutions and ethnic culture are subverted by the strength of the polity and economy.⁴⁶ However, *ethnies* may resist this subversion. The nation-state "may deal with this either by destroying the *ethnies* and their culture or granting them a degree of subordinate autonomy. If it fails to do either of these the *ethnies* themselves may develop in the direction of ethnic nationalism seeking to establish their own states."⁴⁷ Le Pen claims that the French should fear a Muslim takeover of this sort, but the reality is that the Muslims in France are by no means organized to take over the nation. Indeed, it can be fairly argued that identification by immigrants with Arab-Islamic culture diminishes from generation to generation. Roy states that Arabic is seen by second-generation youth as "a foreign tongue of little value."⁴⁸

The French government advocates integration of individuals on one hand, but finds it easier to deal with groups for political expediency. By creating an ethnic minority out of a disparate population which lacks the desire to form a community, the French create a reluctant ethnic minority. At the same time, they deny the community a place within the integrationist framework. The

incoherence exhibited in this behavior sows the seeds of discord and fertilizes the soil for ethnic conflict.

Rex offers a proposal for how to resolve ethnic conflict according to the multicultural paradigm. His proposition includes: (1) clear explanation by the host government to the electorate what its economic needs for immigrants are and its international obligations toward refugees; (2) emphasis should be placed on naturalizing immigrants and extending to them the full rights of citizenship; (3) arrangements should be made to prevent unequal treatment of those who are distinguishable by their color, culture, religion and national origin; (4) members of minority groups should be encouraged to participate in the political mainstream, while provision should be made for liaison with community-based organizations; (5) the consultative mechanism established should not be limited to consultation only with minority elites; (6) the state should decide how far and for how long to encourage ethnic minority groups and culture to persist; (7) the government should counter racist and xenophobic propaganda.⁴⁹

Integration is dependent upon a contract between the state and the immigrant. Rex believes that an intermediary group can help cement the contract, but the French find that intermediaries complicate the process of integration by forming special interest groups. How is the government to be sure that immigrants do not maintain more loyalty to the homeland than to France, or that ethnic nationalism will not arise out of minority associations? The French do not want to see their universalist principles destroyed by particularist favoritism for one ethnic group over another. In order to weather the storm of fallout from civilizational clash, the French must continue to maintain their commitment to *liberté, fraternité et égalité* while facilitating the process by which immigrants gain inclusion.

Today, what is needed to undertake the project of integrating immigrants is leadership, solidarity and good policy. If, as Schnapper and others contend, French society is suffering from fragmentation, it is not unfeasible that France will reject its immigrant population as an undesirable subculture and abandon efforts at domestic integration while developing a new cultural perception of herself linked to the future of Europe. In *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* Samuel Huntington claims that cultural homogeneity within the West is vital to its survival in the global context of tension along deeper civilizational fault lines. Thus, the pressure of outside forces may impel France to strengthen the solidarity of her own culture.

Chapter 4

INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOMESTIC TREATMENT OF IMMIGRANTS

The divide between the Islamic immigrant sector of the French population and the rest of the French nation is a small-scale reproduction of larger civilizational dividing lines. Today, the heterogenous composition of many nation-states mimics the make-up of the world at large. Although some authors like Francis Fukuyama claim that in the age of democracy and capitalism mankind has arrived at the end of history, others reject such universalist pretensions. In *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel Huntington decries the theory that we have arrived at the age of universalism:

Some people argue that this era is witnessing the emergence of what V.S. Naipaul called a "universal civilization." What is meant by this term? The idea implies in general the cultural coming together of humanity and the increasing acceptance of common values, beliefs, orientations, practices, and institutions by peoples throughout the world.¹

Huntington offers a picture of the world divided into seven major civilizations: Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Western, Latin American and African. He predicts that conflicts will develop between these civilizations based on their values, beliefs, institutions and social structures. He says: "In the post-Cold War world flags count and so do other symbols of cultural identity, including crosses, crescents, and even head coverings, because culture counts, and cultural identity is what is most meaningful to most people."²

Culture counts. As we have seen, the attempt to influence the preservation and development of culture lies at the heart of the debate over immigration in France. Immigrants are a problem in France. Why? The issue is not whether immigrants steal jobs from the French. They don't. The question is whether Muslim immigrants can be incorporated into French society in a way that is acceptable to the French and the immigrants. The answer to this question is less simple. Attempts to create a homogenous French culture in France will face some of the same challenges that Western civilization would meet should it attempt to universally impose itself upon other civilizations.

Fault Line Between Islam and the West

According to Kepel, *l'affaire des foulards* marked the end of an era in France. The 1980s had been an era in which the French government was making steps to reconcile with Islam. It was an era in which Islam was gaining ground in France. Progress was being made toward negotiated co-existence. Plans were being drawn up for large new mosques to be built in Lyons and Marseilles, and Minister of the Interior Joxe was laying the groundwork for establishing a body to represent Islam in France. It seemed possible that there could be a French Islam. But *l'affaire des foulards* changed the basis for discussion. "It was no longer a question of mosques, but schools; no longer a question of foreign interference, but of a new kind of Islam which had become a reference for youth born or at least brought up in France. The state's efforts to institutionalize Islam came too late to be able to defuse the conflicts and the social problems of the 1990s."³ The headscarf affair changed the discussion from one of communities to one of the fundamental incompatibility of Islamic and Western cultures, indeed between Islamic and Western civilization.

How do we define civilization, as distinct from culture? In Chapter 2 we established that culture is, according to Ernest Gellner, a system of ideas, signs, associations and ways of behaving. According to Huntington, "a civilization is a culture writ large."⁴ Civilization is the product of culture; according to Oswald Spengler, it is the destiny of culture. Civilization includes blood, language and most importantly, religion. It is an entity without clear-cut boundaries that encompasses the broadest possible cultural category (smaller than humanity) with which a person identifies. Civilizations endure and evolve, but they also die. They may contain states, but they do not perform as political entities.⁵ A civilization is a totality, a frame of reference shared by several states or cultural groups. Huntington names seven of them. And he tells us that Islamic civilization is the polar opposite of Western civilization.

"Each has been the other's Other,"⁶ says Huntington of Islam and the West. Some argue that the chasm between the two civilizations cannot be bridged. History is rife with examples of conflict between the Islamic and Western worlds, and many aspects of the two civilizations may be irreconcilable. Writes Bernard Lewis:

For the modern Westerner, religious freedom is defined by the phrase 'freedom of worship', and means just that. But the practice of Islam means more than worship. . . .

It means a whole way of life, prescribed in detail by the holy texts and treatises based on them. Nor is that all. The primary duty of the Muslim. . . is to command good and forbid evil. It is not enough to do good and refrain from evil as a personal choice. It is incumbent upon Muslims also to command and forbid — that is to exercise authority.⁷

Modern day clashes between these civilizations occur in the international theater, as well as within the confines of the nation state. The collision in France between Islamic and Western civilization is clear from the discussion in Chapter 2 of the uneasy relationship between the French and Islamic North Africa and the deep-seated fears tapped by the FN. The conflicts that arise in this context are not easily resolvable through compromise. Huntington says, “Neither French authorities nor Muslim parents are likely to accept a compromise which would allow schoolgirls to wear Muslim dress every other day during the school year. Cultural questions like these involve a yes or no, zero-sum choice.”⁸ Either French secularism must bend to the will of Islam, or *vice versa*.

The cohabitation of Islam and Western democracy presents new challenges to Islam. According to Lewis, in early Muslim doctrine a Muslim permanent resident of a non-Muslim country was considered “an infidel in the land of infidels who sees the light and embraces Islam — surely a rare occurrence.”⁹ In the modern situation of voluntary migration by Muslims to non-Muslim states, have the rules changed? There is no precedent in Islamic juridical law for the status of Muslims in France. “A mass migration, a reverse *hijra* of ordinary people seeking a new life among the unbelievers is an entirely new phenomenon that poses fundamental major problems . . . The most common argument offered in defense of such migration is *darura*, necessity, interpreted in economic terms.”¹⁰ Traditionally, Lewis contends that “in any encounter between Islam and unbelief, Islam must dominate. That is why mosques must overtop non-Muslim places of worship . . . and why — and on this point all the jurists are unanimous — a Muslim man may marry a non-Muslim woman, but a non-Muslim man may not, on pain of death, marry a Muslim woman.”¹¹

However, Islam has responded to the challenge to compromise in order to fit into the French system. All of the Muslim population in France today does not adhere to such inflexible traditional doctrine. One reason for this may be that in choosing to emigrate, French Muslims strayed from the value system established in Muslim countries. According to Viorst, “France’s Muslim community is probably the first in history that has contemplated integration into a Christian society.”¹² Just as

their behavior strays from tradition, their interpretation of Islamic law diverges from tradition. The Paris Mosque has been one of the most progressive organizations. Boubaker approves of a less strict interpretation of Koranic law and believes that rationality and modernism have a place in religion. "I do not accept," Boubaker told Viorst in 1996, "for example, the orthodox doctrine that Islam makes no distinction between religion and the state. . . . Living in France, in a Christian community under secular rule, we have no reason to reproach ourselves for violating Muslim ways."

However, as we have seen in Chapter 3, Boubakeur does not speak for all Muslims in France. There are those who dispute his relative liberalism, and in so doing undermine the already difficult project of adapting Islam to mesh with Western ways. It is inevitable that something must give, because pure Islamism cannot work in conjunction with Westernism. Daniel Pipes postulates that one reason for the fundamental incompatibility of the two world-views is that Islam is inhospitable to post-industrial modernism. In *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power*, Pipes argues:

Muslims have but one choice, for modernization requires Westernization. . . . Islam does not offer an alternate way to modernize. . . . Secularism cannot be avoided. Modern science and technology require an absorption of the thought processes which accompany them; so too with political institutions. Because content must be emulated no less than form, the predominance of Western civilization must be acknowledged so as to be able to learn from it. European languages and Western educational institutions cannot be avoided, even if the latter do encourage free thinking and easy living. Only when Muslims explicitly accept the Western model will they be in a position to technicalize and then to develop.¹³

To continue along Pipe's line of reasoning, a logical assumption would be that Islamic civilization is ill-suited to the modern world, and that Westernism will prevail. Therefore, the current problems in France are transitory, and will dissipate over time because Western civilization will triumph in the battle of universal ideologies.

This line of thinking is unhelpful. The animosity across the fault line in France endures, regardless of which civilization can profess to be "truly" universal. Viorst argues that the twin goals of Muslims in France, to keep faith with Islam and to become French, are not incompatible in theory because of the low percentage of the Muslim population which practices on a regular basis.

According to Viorst:

The conclusion both Muslims and non-Muslims in France seem to be reaching is that Muslim resistance to cultural change is indeed greater than that of earlier immigrant groups, and that pessimism about Muslim integration is justified.

Given the size of the community, this alienation is not a minor matter. Conflict in the Islamic world is likely to continue, and Muslims in France will inevitably be drawn in. . . . All the Western democracies, in one form or another, face immigration pressures from the developing world that are unlikely to abate. The clash of cultures that some have predicted for the next century may not take place at the frontiers where these cultures meet, but rather, as events in France suggest, inside the borders of the Western states.¹⁴

Despite progressive interpretations of Koranic law and the low rate of practicing Muslims, the public perceives a wider chasm than actually exists. The French equate Islam with fanaticism, and continue to hold fast to their faith in the universality of secularism, liberty, equality and fraternity. (See p. 211-12 Huntington for more).

Some argue that the complete divide between Western liberalism and Islam originates in the foundations of the two ideologies. Rafiq Zakaria makes a powerful argument that this is the case in his book *The Struggle Within Islam*. According to Zakaria, during the lifetime of Muhammad, the indivisibility between the state and religion was an unquestioned part of Islamic theory. After the Prophet died, a dichotomy emerged between those who argued that religion could be separated from politics and those who believed the two to be inexorably linked.

After. . . [Muhammad] died his followers began to argue whether or not religion could be separated from politics. They could not agree on either mixing the two or keeping them apart.

In a sense, most of the turmoil in the world of Islam emanates from this original tension. The conflicts took different forms at different times, but basically they revolved around spiritualism and materialism, or in modern terms, between fundamentalism and secularism.¹⁵

Zakaria cites a particularly colorful explanation of fundamentalists' criticism of secularism by Altaf Gauhar:

The fundamental assumption of secularism is that material well-being does not remain only the means to an end but becomes an end in itself. This is the major dilemma of a secular culture. As secular society progresses from lower levels of material well-being to higher levels, efficiency becomes its sole preoccupation. Production and prosperity are the twin gods of secularism. Inflation, like Satan, becomes its mortal enemy. Hell

is a place with high prices, recession and unemployment. Its concept of paradise is affluence with full employment and lots of leisure. Since there are no limits to man's desires, his life becomes a baseless quest in pursuit of pleasure.¹⁶

Secularism emerged in the Christian world, and Zakaria says that some Muslims believe that there is no place for such materialism and anti-spiritualism in Islam.¹⁷ Zakaria names three major differences between Islam and Christianity which contribute to the distaste for secularism: (1) Islam mixes the spiritual and the temporal; (2) Islam does not have an organized priesthood; (3) Muhammad, unlike Christ, was both the spiritual and temporal leader of his community.¹⁸

Colonialism brought about prolonged contact between Western civilization and the Muslim world and influenced the development of secularism. Zakaria states: "Christian values were presented in a way which made many Muslims doubt whether theirs was, as the Qu'ran had proclaimed, 'the best community'. Having lost their freedom, they felt down-graded; and now their laws and practices were being ridiculed as archaic and immoral."¹⁹ The educated elites admired Western-style democracy and alienated the ulama who did not want to imitate the colonizers. According to Zakaria, a conflict developed between the two sides:

The battle between the fundamentalists who wanted to return to the past and the secularists who urged assimilation and transformation began to be waged with great fury. What tilted the scales in favour of the secularists was the patronage they received from the colonizers who realized that the fundamentalists would not be their allies.²⁰

This pattern holds in French Algeria, where Western-educated socialists Ben Bella, Ben Khedda, Muhammad Khider, Boumedienne and Benjadid led the movement for independence and established a secular socialist state. The theologians who supported the secularists are now denounced as heretics, and the rise of fundamentalism gives evidence of a backlash against them.

Western Universalism — A Dangerous Fallacy

We have already seen that unshakable belief in Western universalism does not aid in finding a workable compromise for the coexistence of Islamic and Western civilization within one nation. Worse than unhelpful, this approach can do more harm than good. Huntington warns: "In the emerging world of ethnic conflict and civilizational clash, Western belief in the universality of Western civilization suffers three problems: it is false; it is immoral; and it is dangerous."²¹ It would

be presumptuous to claim that Westernism is universal in a world that is home to seven distinct civilizations. Western civilization is inexorably linked to the Occident, thus how can one argue that its values, principles, ideology and beliefs can be applied to the world at large? Huntington constructs the argument against universalism as follows:

Europe, as Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., has said, is 'the source — the *unique* source' of the 'ideas of individual liberty, political democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and cultural freedom These are *European* ideas, not Asian, nor African, nor Middle Eastern ideas, except by adoption.' They make Western civilization unique, and Western civilization is valuable not because it is universal but because it *is* unique. The principle responsibility of Western leaders, consequently, is not to attempt to reshape other civilizations in the image of the West, which is beyond their declining power, but to preserve, protect, and renew the unique qualities of Western civilization. Because it is the most powerful Western country, that responsibility falls overwhelmingly on the United States of America.²²

This argument is laden with heavy concepts, but the crux of it is that belief in Western universalism is arrogance and folly. Having "won" the Cold War, the West cannot rest on its laurels and await the demise of other rival civilizations.

In the post-Cold War world, some argue that the West defeated the Soviet bloc, but perhaps it is more accurate to say that the Westernism outlived Communism. Far from celebrating a moral victory, Huntington cautions that Westernism is now threatened from within:

The future health of the West and its influence on other societies depends. . . on its success in coping with [trends of moral decline], which of course, give rise to the assertions of moral superiority by Muslims and Asians.

Western culture is challenged by groups within Western societies. One such challenge comes from immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home societies. This phenomenon is most notable among Muslims in Europe, who are, however, a small minority.²³

Huntington is correct that overall Muslims make up a small minority in Europe, but in France, with Muslims outnumbering Protestants, their challenge to Western values is not minute. French law prohibits asking individuals to state their religion for the census, but the estimated population of Muslims is 3 to 4 million people. This population constitutes the largest minority concentration of Muslims in Europe.

Muslims in France are aware of their predicament, and although willing to compromise on some issues, they do not accept Western-style secularism as infallible or superior to their own civilizational frame of reference. Ahmed Jaballah, the director of studies at the European Institute of Islamic Studies in Burgundy, France, told Milton Viorst in 1996:

Muslims fear Western hegemony. The French fear we will undermine their civilization. French pressure on us to assimilate is great. Some of the French say their culture is available only on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, without the slightest concession to our culture or our origins. We don't want to change French culture, and we think we can be good Frenchmen. But we must have the freedom to express our differences and be able to practice our religion as it is.²⁴

Whether or not a Muslim community exists, the Muslim population in France seeks the cultural space to breathe.

Compromise is only possible if the French relinquish universalist claims about their culture and Western civilization. Immigrants can become proficient at operating within the public sphere according to the cultural norms established by the majority culture, but will be reluctant to try if they feel they are pre-assigned to inferiority by virtue of their Arab-Islamic heritage. Rex admits that even within the relative security of minority communities, some immigrants will hesitate to make the attempt: "There will be those who retreat from its challenges, particularly if the rewards which the new modern society appeared at first to offer are not forthcoming, and where minority cultures and religions are subject to insult."²⁵

In a system of individual integration, Rex's contention would be more true. Some French proponents of integration are willing to make concessions to Islam on the condition that French Muslims subvert Islamic law to the law of the state. But even those Frenchmen willing to compromise with Islam hold fast to Western principles with a tenacity that would make Huntington proud. Schnapper maintains: "Muslims must accept the norms that regulate communal life. But on their side, the democracies of Western Europe will be able to resolve the problems posed by the Muslim presence only by remaining loyal to the values to which they lay claim."²⁶ Government officials have echoed Schnapper's sentiments. Speaking at the opening of a new cathedral-mosque in Lyon in 1994, then-Minister of the Interior Charles Pasqua said that France would not compromise its secular traditions for Islam or any faith. "There must now be a French Islam," he

said.²⁷ On the other hand, the French have yielded a bit to their Islamic population in the military and in prison by serving *halal* food and providing Islamic chaplains. And according to Viorst, “Business and industry offer Muslim employees time and facilities for prayer.”²⁸

Making the case that Western civilization is universal insults other civilizations and undermines the goal of integration. Muslims in France do want to integrate, but the concept of the role of religion in life is not the same for a Muslim as for a Christian. Bernard Lewis relates the story of how a young *beur* in Paris told him, “My father was a Muslim, but I am a Parisian.” Says Lewis, “What, I wondered, did he mean — that Islam is a place? Or that Paris is a religion? As stated, obviously neither proposition is true. Yet, as implied, neither is completely false.”²⁹ Lewis says that this comment reveals that another barrier to integration lies with the fact that Muslims “hold a radically different concept of what religion means, demands, and defines”³⁰ than the French. But despite a different frame of reference for understanding the world and the place of religion within it, compromise may be possible once Western universalism is discounted.

International Implications

At this point, the cleavage between Islam and the West should be clear. Equally evident should be the imperfections of multiculturalism and the relative superiority of integration as a method for incorporating immigrants into French society. Left to be explored are the international ramifications of the presence of Arab-Islamic immigrants in France. My final argument for integration rests upon the notion that supporting an Arab-Islamic diaspora across the Mediterranean threatens the stability of the region. Thus multiculturalism’s reliance upon group formation further discredits it and renders it almost as dangerous as fallacious universalism.

The civilizational divide between Islam and the West is manifest in the platform of the Front Islamique de Salut (FIS) in Algeria. The FIS believes itself to be waging a *jihad* against the Cross, and it seeks a total break with French influence and values in Algeria. According to Kepel, the FIS has rewritten the history of the Algerian war for independence in terms of a war against the infidel, and has labeled the FLN the “party of France.” He contends, “By demonizing France and all the values associated with it, the FIS refined the frontiers of allegiance to Islam on the basis of a rhetoric of radical separation.”³¹ In order to establish an Islamic state, the FIS wants to purge Algeria of

those people who have been influenced by French culture. The leader of the FIS said of the Algerian revolution, "My father and my brothers (in religion) may have *physically* expelled the oppressor France from Algeria, but my struggle, together with my brothers, using the weapons of faith, is to banish France *intellectually* and *ideologically* and to have done with her supporters who drank her poisonous milk."³²

Further evidence of the split in thinking between Paris and Algiers is revealed by the interpretation of each of *l'affair foulard*. The FIS's newspaper *Al-Munqidh* asks if "the French regime is not itself extremist and hostile in its attempt to force the sisters to wear 'secular' clothing: where are the individual freedom and human rights which the regime invokes? Or does it just mean the freedom and right to alienate Muslims from their religion?"³³ The ways in which the Algerians and the French view the debate about the *foulard* are diametrically opposed. Kepel relates that Muslims in Algeria invoked God's law as a defense of the headscarf; whereas in France, Muslims argued for the veil on the grounds of individual freedom.

When the French left Algeria in 1964, they left behind a country in chaos. Years of brutal warfare, torture and economic distress had demoralized the Algerian people, pitting them against one another. A political and cultural vacuum was left in the wake of colonialism. France hastily distanced herself from her former colony, and watched as Algeria descended the road toward ruin. What was Algerian identity? How was Algeria to cope with its newfound independence? As if in answer to these conundrums, events in Algeria presaged Huntington's words in 1993: "For people seeking identity and reinventing ethnicity, enemies are essential, and the potentially most dangerous enemies occur across the fault lines between the world's major civilizations."³⁴ France was the obvious target for Algerian rage.

However, France is simply the centerpiece of Algerian fury. France represents a larger body — Western civilization. According to Kepel: "In the battle between the West, symbolized in all its evil by France, and Algerian 'authenticity,' represented by the FIS's interpretation of Islam, the main dividing-line concerns notions of democracy."³⁵ He argues that from the Islamic point of view, democracy must be completely rejected because "democracy as the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people contravenes the doctrine of 'sovereignty of God,' which is the political credo of radical Islamist activists."³⁶ Some Islamists believe that democracy must be rejected in Algeria, but more

radical Algerians want to wipe it out elsewhere as well. In the last decade, several terrorist bombs in France have been planted by the Algerian GIA (*Groupe Islamique Armée*) as part of its guerilla jihad against the evil empire of Western democracy.

The links between Algeria and France remain strong. Although France has distanced itself from Algeria politically and economically, it remains bonded to the region by history and blood.

Kepel succinctly sums up the situation when he says:

France was not only the mythical demon of *Al-Munqidh*'s articles or the sermons of FIS imams; it was also a real place with a language, a culture and political institutions which made their presence felt in Algeria, and where millions of Algerians lived. Every Algerian has a relative who lives or has lived in France at some time, so every Algerian has access directly or indirectly to its market of goods and services. Conversely, every person of Algerian origin living in France has a close or distant relative who voted for the FIS in 1990 or 1991. In the interpenetration of these two worlds, what does the demonization of France mean in reality? How are the Islamists' diatribes against secularism, democratic doctrine, the language of Voltaire and Rousseau, or emancipated women transposed from one side of the Mediterranean to the other?³⁷

Kepel concludes, "In 1958, events in Algeria triggered the fall of the Fourth Republic. Although they will not reach the same scale in the 1990s, the situation in Algeria is likely to cause similar shock waves in end of millennium France."³⁸ It is little wonder that the French are preoccupied with questions of national identity, cultural pluralism and integration.

Political Unrest in Algeria

Post-independence Algeria was relatively stable until the elections of 1991. The democratic elections for parliament revealed that support for the ruling *Front de Libération National* (FLN) was losing support. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the FIS, a moderately Islamist party, began to gather supporters. This worried political observers outside of Algeria, but the Algerian government was far more concerned. Following the results of the election of 1991, in which the FLN received 1.6 million votes to the FIS's 3.3 million,³⁹ the military prevented the second round of elections and replaced the president with another FLN leader. The new president was later assassinated, and in 1995 the military placed Liamine Zeroual, an army general, in power for an indefinite period of time. Lacking popular support, Zeroual remains the "temporary" President of Algeria.

In the past seven years, the situation in Algeria has deteriorated into chaos. Newspapers report the slaughter of civilians on a regular basis. Although Zeroual was willing to meet with the FIS, in 1994 talks were broken off when it became clear that the FIS was unwilling to concede to the demands of the regime, namely to condemn violence. According to a report by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, "The FIS also would not agree to unilaterally condemn acts of violence unless it could also condemn the violence that the regime used against its adversaries."⁴⁰

The Carnegie report attributes the political crisis in Algeria to have been the result of a sociocultural crisis. According to the report, following independence, Algeria pursued an economic policy of capital-intensive heavy industrialization. Poorly planned and badly executed educational programs attempted to produce an arabo-phone population to replace the French-speaking elite. A generation of children was brought up with a poor command of both languages and found employment scarce. The FIS skillfully attracted those who had been educated enough to become dissatisfied with their lot in life — doctors, teachers, and other professionals who felt that their chances in life had been blocked. The FIS had a simple solution: "Islam is the answer."⁴¹

The rise of the FIS in Algeria has been regarded with concern in France; according to Bernard Benoît, in 1990, the FIS's victories in municipal elections in Algeria caused President Mitterrand to declare that he was "troubled". At the same time, Pierre Joxe, who became Minister of Defense in January 1991, worried that the republican model of integration would be adversely affected by repercussion of the rise of the FIS.⁴² In *Le Syndrôme algérienne*, Benoît criticizes French policy toward Algeria as lacking rationality and cohesion. He postulates that French policy is directed by the calculation of that which would avoid the installation of an Islamist or totalitarian state that would be succeeded by a wave of immigration.⁴³ According to Benoît, in 1993:

For Edouard Balladur, Alain Juppé and Charles Pasqua, the basic equation did not differ fundamentally from that of the President of the Republic: a decrease in immigration would increase security at home and would facilitate the integration of the populations already present, whereas, as the Minister of the Interior liked to repeat, the maintenance of economic aid in regard to Algeria must *in fine* effect the democratization of the country, this required a prior end to the political violence. It was in this spirit that the Minister of Foreign Affairs welcomed in Paris, the 20 June 1993, his [Algerian] homologue.⁴⁴

According to the Carnegie report, the GIA claimed credit for several bombings and the hijacking of an Air France flight in 1994 and 1995. An October 1995 communiqué reveals the GIA's line of thinking:

The GIA vowed to continue the terrorist campaign "with military strikes in the heart of big cities. . . until Islam has triumphed." It underscored its threat with a map of Paris showing the Eiffel Tower exploding and it demanded that France close its embassy in Algiers and stop providing economic aid to the Algerian government. For good measure, the GIA also demanded that President Chirac convert to Islam.⁴⁵

The French government has responded with a hard line against terrorism and a striking emphasis on law and order. In Paris today, one finds trash cans nailed shut to prevent bombs being planted in them; *gens d'armes* patrol the subways, airports and thoroughfares brandishing large weapons, and suspicious looking persons are often stopped for questioning.

In 1997, *The Economist* reported that France lacked a credible policy to address the violent movement by the GIA to overthrow the government. Although the more moderate FIS receives popular support in Algeria, it has been outlawed by the FLN government. France continues to support the government of President Liamine Zeroual, fearing that the FIS's claim to be moderately Islamist is an oxymoron. According to *The Economist*, the French government hopes that a new party will supplant the ruling FLN, be it very mildly Islamist or completely secular.⁴⁶

The Carnegie report claims that the solution to the Algerian problem lies in goals-oriented economic aid aimed at ending the violence and restoring political liberty. Perhaps greater political freedom in Algeria will temper the rise of Islamic fundamentalism sentiment there. But even in 1847, Tocqueville recognized that liberty did not always work hand in hand with religious temperance. "I think it incontestable that political liberty has sometimes deadened, sometimes animated religious passions. That has depended on many circumstances: on the nature of the religions, on the age at which they occurred, either the religious passion or the political passion; because, for passions as for everything else in this world, there is growth, manhood, and decay."⁴⁷

The Carnegie report criticizes the French for failing to understand Islam. However, in my estimation, the Carnegie report fails to comprehend the greater civilizational divide at work in French-Algerian relations. The Carnegie report states that the exodus of educated, middle class Algerians "considerably weakens the efforts of those who plead for a democratic process and a

middle course between military repression and Islamic insurgency.”⁴⁸ The report attributes France’s opposition to Islamism to fear, “Again, fear and anxiety help explain the unusual and noteworthy consensus behind France’s opposition to a radical Islamic takeover in Algiers. For a nation with a tradition of deep cleavages on Third World issues — Indochina in the 1950s, Algeria itself in the early 1960s, and Central America in the 1980s — the lack of sympathy with, not to mention support for, Islamic fundamentalists is striking.”⁴⁹ To the contrary, I believe that it is predictable.

The French see in radical Islamism the antithesis to the entire French way of life. As we have seen above, France very clearly embodies the Western principles of secularism, liberty and democracy. Radical Islamists would not compromise with those advocating the “middle road,” indeed they would seek to eradicate democratic elements. Fundamental Islamism is completely foreign to French nature, and the lack of support for it in France follows from the conception of civilizational dividing lines developed above. The Carnegie report falls prey to the trap of applying Western liberal principles to a situation governed by the conventions of Islamic civilization.

Opposition to Huntington — Liberalism’s Defenders

In 1990, a book entitled *The End of History and the Last Man* by Francis Fukuyama ignited debate among political philosophers. Fukuyama’s claimed that the triumph of the Enlightenment had been achieved with the collapse of the Soviet Union. He lauded the developed world for ending the “old tension” between “the is” and “the ought” and providing autonomous individuals with a satisfactory existence.⁵⁰ According to Timothy Burns in *After History?*,

The society we finally bring into being is strictly human, and its inhabitants bow to nothing and no one. It has no supernatural code of law, presumes no transcontextual knowledge, attempts no transcendence. It neither needs nor admits of the transcendent God whose existence would “delimit” our self-determining freedom, our reciprocal and full recognition of our merely autonomous selves. The new social world is, in a word, *atheistic*.⁵¹

The proponents of this theory claim that the principles of the Enlightenment are applicable to all. But the if the universal application of liberal principles results in the formation of a society which would be highly *unsatisfactory* to Islamists, then how can this claim be made?

Gregory Bruce Smith answers that the similarities between Islam, Christianity and Judaism indicate possible compatibility. He writes:

Is not political marginality far more accountable for the frustration that presently finds vent in Islamic fundamentalism, for example, than simple moral outrage at the Western understanding of justice and the good? If that is the primary ground of frustration, there is no reason why accommodation is not possible. Otherwise, it would be necessary to explain why, even if a radical choice for or against Islam develops, the realities of the modern world would not force a decision for modern technological civilization.⁵²

Here Smith places himself in the same category as Fukuyama, in so doing, he puts himself in line for the same criticism leveled at Fukuyama by Theodore H. Von Laue. Von Laue says of Fukuyama:

He should have done some reading in the field of cultural anthropology. It might also have prevented his affirmation of the universality of the liberal democratic ideal and shown him how excessively Eurocentric — or even America-centered — his thesis is. Disputing Max Weber's assertion that democracy was the product of the specific cultural and social milieu of Western civilization, he argues that "it was the most rational possible political system and 'fit' a broader human personality shared across cultures" (220-21). But he offers no evidence of indigenous non-Western liberal democracies; in fact none exist. Liberal democracy spread as a result of the Westernization of the world; its appeal is based on a wide range of factors, all derived from superior power.⁵³

Von Laue's criticism is just, and agrees with Zakaria's and Pipes' analyses of secularism in the Islamic world. Secularism is the outgrowth of Western civilization, and to conjecture that Islamic civilization must be moving in a direction toward the adoption of secular principles is founded on the *a priori* assumption that secularism is a universal good. Whether secularism is universally applicable cannot be proven, and a well-developed school of thought exists which disagrees emphatically with such a notion.

Conclusions

It was Hegel who said that "The state is the divine idea as it exists on earth," not Muhammad. The West cannot simply graft its doctrine onto another civilization at will. Faced with intractable differences between Islam and the West, what is the best path to follow to avoid conflict? Intracivilizational security and intercivilizational tolerance. But today, tolerance is a word that is not always met with acceptance.

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Toleration as a practice can be viewed as a means of coming to terms with the pluralistic world in which modern nation-states trade and negotiate. In *Enlightenment's Wake*, John Gray makes a good case for toleration, but he admits that it is decidedly offensive to the new liberals because it is non-neutral. He writes:

It is unavoidably and inherently judgmental. The objects of toleration are what we judge to be evils. When we tolerate a practice, a belief or a character trait, we let something be that we judge to be undesirable, false or at least inferior; our toleration expresses the conviction that, *despite* its badness, the object of toleration should be left alone.⁵⁴

From toleration can arise intolerance, and he cautions against the collectivization of rights — a sure way to create intolerance, according to Gray. Gray would therefore advocate integration as the correct domestic policy toward immigrants and other minorities. Says Gray:

It is in the area of multiculturalism that a policy of toleration is most needed, and ideas of radical equality and positive discrimination most unfortunate. . . . In modern Western pluralist societies, policies which result in the creation of group rights are inevitably infected with arbitrariness and consequent inequity. . . . The nemesis of such policies. . . is a sort of reverse apartheid, in which people's opportunities and entitlements are decided by the morally arbitrary fact of ethnic origins rather than by their deserts or needs.⁵⁵

Moreover, asserts Gray, a radically multicultural society undermines stability by eroding common culture. The importance of common culture was present in Rex's argument for multiculturalism on the grounds that it was a transitional method of re-creating national culture in response to the influx of new elements.

Peace can best be achieved by respecting the uniqueness of each civilization and allowing it to flourish or flounder with minimal outside intervention. It is time for the West to relinquish claims of universalism and accept the pluralist reality of the world. According to Gray, pluralism centers around the idea that "different legal and political institutions are desirable and legitimate in different cultural and historical milieux."⁵⁶ Gray argues that pluralists reject the idea that universal cultural unity can exist; whereas conservatives and liberals argue for universal cultural unity from two inverse points of view. "Both [conservatives and liberals] seek to roll back the reality of cultural diversity for the sake of an imaginary condition of cultural unity — whether that be found in a lost past or in a supposed future condition of the species in which cultural difference has been

marginalized in a universal civilization."⁵⁷ Pluralists, on the other hand, accept the reality that the world has been — and will remain to be for the foreseeable future — a diverse meeting place of different cultures, languages, religions and political systems.

Gray holds that the non-Occidental peoples may be the best hope of reinventing a political ideology to navigate the future; in some ways, Algeria presents a case study of this process. If the West cannot renew itself, says Gray:

Any prospect of cultural recovery from the nihilism that the Enlightenment has spawned may lie with non-Occidental peoples, whose task will then be in part that of protecting themselves from the debris cast up by Western shipwreck. Or it may be that even those non-Occidental cultures which have modernized without wholesale Westernization have nevertheless assimilated too much of the Western nihilist relationship with technology and the earth for a turning in man's relationship with the earth to be any longer a real possibility.⁵⁸

Both the Islamist and secular movements in Algeria have arisen out of her contact with the West, namely France. Today, Algeria finds herself home to radicals who desire a break from Western civilization and to some who favor secularization as the best means of modernization and enrichment. If Algeria is to modernize as a secular state, however, this movement must be led by Algerians; it cannot be the result of goals-oriented economic policy imposed upon Algeria by the West. This will only lead to resentment of the West, primarily directed at France.

Just as France became a cohesive nation devoted to the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, Algeria can become a secular nation-state only through a slow process of education, through the creation of national identity, and through the desire of her citizens to cooperate for the benefit of greater political stability and economic opportunity. But the possibility remains that this process will never transpire successfully in Algeria, simply because Algeria is part of Islamic civilization and does not share (in Schlesinger's words) the unique set of circumstances that bring about a commitment to Enlightenment principles that formed the West. Gray contends that the West may be unwilling to accept this possibility:

In the Western cultures, the foundations of Christian and Enlightenment humanism are now wholly eroded, but the universal project which they animated is still far from being abandoned. The idea that Western civilization is simply one set of cultural forms among others remains as alien and unfamiliar as the idea that liberal regimes must expect to share the earth with others which will never adopt their institutions or political culture.

In truth, the perception in the public cultures of Western societies that they in no sense constitute the germs of a universal civilization, if and when it comes to pass, will signify a major discontinuity in Western cultural history, since it will represent the acceptance that the West's foundational claims, on which its sense of privilege and security in respect of other cultures was grounded, are hollow.⁵⁹

Gray and Huntington concur that in the absence of the renewal of Western civilization and the acceptance of the passing of the Enlightenment project (Gray) or the intractable clash between civilizations (Huntington) the international repercussion of Western nihilism will be dire.

We have seen in this paper that the coexistence of Islamic immigrants and French nationals in France exhibits some of the characteristics of a civilizational clash on a smaller scale. I explored the history of the relationship between these two cultures in France, and on an international level. I examined the alternatives for incorporating immigrants into the nation-state, and I argued that integration provided the best mechanism. Multiculturalism was rejected because it perpetuated an international ethnic diaspora and institutionalized inequality. I delved into the difficulties in integrating Muslims in a Western society, but learned that within France, the will of Muslims to be integrated helps erode civilizational barriers to integration. Finally, I discussed the danger of inferring from the possibility that domestic integration can be achieved that civilizational barriers could be overcome in an international context. I concluded that the universal application of liberalism is impossible in light of the peculiarly Western nature of liberal principles.

Finally, we must surrender the universalizing project of the West, and replace it with a willingness to share the earth with different cultures. Gray admonishes that: "Such acceptance of diversity among human communities must not be a means of promoting ultimate convergence into sameness, but rather an expression of the openness to cultural difference."⁶⁰ Moreover, Huntington cautions that "In the emerging era, clashes of civilizations are the greatest threat to world peace, and an international order based on civilizations is the surest safeguard against world war."⁶¹ Although Huntington's grim depiction of civilizational strife in the century to come may be farfetched, his analysis of the profound differences between civilizations provides material for discussion and further study. Applying his ideas to immigration policy in France demonstrated that the issues he raised are not solely of concern in the international arena, but also influence domestic politics.

Indeed, the project of incorporating immigrants into French culture may prove to be a litmus test for the compatibility of Islamic and Western culture on a larger scale.

Chapter 1:

1. Maxim Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism, and Citizenship in Modern France* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 30.
2. *Ibid.*, 10.
3. Jeanne Singer-Kerel, "Foreign Workers in France, 1894-1936," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 14, no. 3 (July 1991): 279-80.
4. Silverman, 30.
5. Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, "L'Invasion," *Les Migrations Humaines, Chance ou Fatalité* (Paris: FLON, 1992), 186.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Singer-Kerel, 285.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Silverman, 30.
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11. Duroselle, 187.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Philip E. Ogden, "Immigration to France since 1945: myth and reality," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 14, no. 3 (July 1991): 295.
14. Silverman, 38-41.
15. Maximine Amar and Pierre Milza, *L'Immigration en France au XXIème siècle* (Paris: A. Colin, 1990): 36.
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17. *Ibid.*
18. Silverman, 41.
19. Amar and Milza, 38.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Silverman, 45.
22. Silverman, 42.
23. Klaus F. Zimmermann, "European Migration: Push and Pull" *International Regional Science Review* 19, no. 1-2: 115 and Rachel M. Friedberg and Jennifer Hunt, "The Impact of Immigrants on Host Country Wages, Employment and Growth" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9, no. 2 (spring 1995): 37.
24. Silverman, 51.
25. *Ibid.*, 47.
26. *Ibid.*, 49.
27. Duroselle, 185.
28. Catherine Golliau, "Les travailleurs étrangers: des 'travailleurs glorieux' aux années de crise," in *La Vérité sur l'Emploi en France* (Paris: Larcousse, 1987), 64, (translated by Detter).
29. Silverman, 49.

NOTES

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1. Maxim Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism, and Citizenship in Modern France* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 30.
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3. Jeanne Singer-Kerel, "Foreign Workers in France, 1891-1936," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 14, no. 3 (July 1991): 279-80.
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6. Ibid.
7. Singer-Kerel, 285.
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16. Ibid., 37.
17. Ibid.
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24. Silverman, 51.
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