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Immigration, Integration and Ingestion: The Role of Food and Drink in Transnational Experience for North African Muslim Immigrants in Paris and Montréal

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Immigrants in Paris and Montréal

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Abstract

This dissertation is motivated by two research questions: (1) how can food act as a means of reimagining, recreating, reaffirming, and expressing, sometimes complicated and contested identities for minority religious immigrant communities in highly secular contexts? (2) What impact does the context of reception, particularly the host society's unique and complex history and interaction with colonialism, immigration, secularism, and nationalism, have on these identity negotiations? To examine these questions, I conducted a comparative ethnographic study of the foodways of North African Muslim immigrants in Paris, France, and Montréal, Canada, in 2012-13.

The results presented here show that food is often the most important symbol of identity engaged by my informants. By choosing which religious/cultural food practices to continue and which ones to alter, by choosing to label them in precise ways, by relegating these practices to specific places and times, my informants reveal the complex and varied ways that Muslims negotiate their identities in transnational context. In settings such as Paris and Montréal, where outward/public signs of religiosity can be seen as problematic, and food culture is central to national identity, I argue that these kinds of actions take on particular importance for immigrants living in these cities.

In line with scholarship in religion and migration, I show how reception directly influences the practices and identities of its immigrant communities. While the fear may be that by maintaining or even increasing practices that indicate difference, that highlight the "homeland" side of one's transnational identity, immigrants may not integrate fully into the host culture, my research shows the exact opposite effect. In Canada, within multi- and inter-cultural contexts my Montréal informants felt more Canadian or had a greater desire to "be Canadian," and on the whole felt free to express and engage their individual identities, whether religious, ethnic or cultural, In France, the opposite was true. I use food as the lens to reveal that France's universalistic and assimilationist immigration policies undermine its efforts to emphasize equality.

opportunity to engage about my work with a variety of scholars from all over the world. My time at the CSRS taught me a great deal about scholarship and collegiality, and played a significant role in shaping my academic trajectory. While all of the fellows with whom I interacted at the CSRS influenced my work, I would especially like to thank Scott, Carolyn, Angela, Justine and Madeline for their many insights and their friendship. To Bonnie, Rina, and Robbyn, your administrative support was beyond helpful on so many occasions. Paul Bramadat guided, supported and advanced this project in ways I could have never anticipated and for which I am deeply thankful. Paul, you are more than an advisor, mentor, or colleague, you are a dear friend, and have had a huge impact on who I am as a scholar. I thank you from the depths of my heart for all that you did, and continue to do, for me.

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tired I feel, for giving me motivation to get things done, for providing me with balance and sanity amidst the chaos, and for bestowing me with my favourite title: maman. I dedicate this to the two of you.

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Chapter 1: Why, What and Who?

1.1 Scholarly Grounding: The Why of the Research Project[1]

It was a windy November day in 2010 and the Metro station that I was running through in Paris' Marais district was bustling with activity. People were speed walking from one train to the next in that very Parisian way that screams, "I am late for something important, don't get in my way" without ever lifting one's head or saying a word. Taking a brief reprise from my own fast paced trek across the city of lights I stopped to take it all in, smiling with utter contentment that I was once again in the city that I love. I ran onto my train just before the doors closed, spun around and was immediately faced with a clear sign that there were individuals who did not belong in Paris (according to some). In front of me was a sign for a piece of theatre contrasting pork-eating French with the "non-pork-eating other." I had read about the infamous "sausage and wine party"[2] that had caused a great deal of controversy just a few months before, but I had convinced myself—wanting to see multi-religious/ethnic acceptance among the French—that such a thing was not a common occurrence. This poster, in my face, in the Metro, on just a regular work day, let me know that something bigger was going on. In that moment, and the many others that occurred over the next month of my trip, it became obvious to me just how prevalent the tension between Muslims and non-Muslims in France was, a tension often communicated through food.

I came to this project out of an obsession with all things food and all things French. On my many visits to France, like the one I describe above, I noticed that how and what the Muslim community in France ate was a point of interest for media, politicians and in everyday conversation on the street between friends and neighbours. This led me to question why people cared so much about what, and how, people ate. Why were the foodways[3] of this religious group

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[1] I follow French style and format by using numerical headings throughout this work.

[2] Sophie Taylor, "Banned Paris "sausage and wine" party goes ahead at Arc de Triomphe," last updated June 19, 2010, http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2010/06/19/banned-paris-sausage-and-wine-party-goes-ahead-at-arc-de-triomphe/.

[3] Throughout this work my use of the term "foodways" is reflective of Marie Dallam's definition of the term in her "Introduction: Religion, Food, and Eating," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America*, eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), xvii-xxxii. There she states that foodway "refers to a set of beliefs and practices that govern consumption. In other words, a foodway is an expression of our "ways" around food: how we grow or acquire it, how we prepare it, how we display or use it, and how and when we consume it. To talk about the foodways of a group, then, is to talk about

interesting to the population at large? What vested interest would media, government, and regular citizens have in talking about this so frequently and in so many contexts? Was France, the mecca of culinary identity, the only place where these issues came to light or would the food practices of Muslims be an issue in other secular, western contexts as well, such as Québec?

I went into the field with these open questions, but ultimately the main questions that emerged from my fieldwork were: How can food act as a means of reimagining, recreating, reaffirming, and expressing, sometimes complicated and contested identities for minority immigrant religious communities in highly secular contexts? Does food emerge as a more "politically/culturally correct" avenue for religious expression than other religious practices? In secular contexts, where public signs of religiosity are often seen as problematic, could subtler/more private expressions of religious identity help the minority religious immigrant to engage with and express their identities in meaningful ways. Additionally, in contexts like France and Québec, which have strong and distinct food cultures, by taking up some of the foodways of the host context, and/or leaving some of the home food practices that are seen as especially in conflict with the host context behind (i.e. the restriction on alcohol and pork), could my participants claim and demonstrate their Québécois/French side of their transnational identity? Would they even want to? Finally, what is the impact of these societies' unique and complex histories and interactions with colonialism, immigration, secularism, and nationalism on these foodways and their affiliated identities?

1.1.1 Lay of the Land in the Study of Islam in France and Canada[4]

I found support for my curiosity when I began to examine the literature on Islam in France and Canada. While this field is growing, multifaceted and rich, when I began pursuing this topic, the field was still largely in its youth.[5] Authors such as Jocelyne Cesari and John Bowen were

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what people consider food, what they do with food, what they think about the food and the eating, and their ideas about what the food means to them" (Dallam, "Introduction," xviii).

[4] I reserve discussion of the other two fields with which I am in conversation, namely religion and migration and religion and food, for Chapter 9, showing how I discovered many of my academic interlocutors after I conducted my field work and allowed my informants to direct my findings. This choice comes out of an intentional decision to structure the dissertation as a chronological reflection of my ethnographic process itself. That being said, I address many of the scholars in these four fields throughout the dissertation itself.

[5] While the English sources about Islam in France and Canada were emerging at the time I began my dissertation work, the French field was further along on this topic. There are also undoubtedly many excellent sources written in Arabic, which I did not have access to due to the language limitations I discuss in Chapter 9.

publishing important works which often highlighted the political policies, especially secularism, that influenced the integration of Muslims in France. Cesari's works, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and the United States*[6] as well as *Why the West Fears Islam: An Exploration of Islam in Western Liberal Democracies,*[7] are foundational for insight into the study of European Islam and Muslim integration in "Western" secular liberal democracies.[8] Her work was essential in my early inquiries into this topic in order to see what were the larger topics and trends in the field. As I read her work, I began to wonder, though, how the trends and issues that she was highlighting played out on the ground in France, and specifically in relation to the most "grounded" of all practices: food. For example, in *When Islam and Democracy Meet* Cesari suggests that Muslims in Europe have three modes of integration open to them: acceptance, avoidance, or resistance.[9] I wondered, in light of my observations on the ground in France, how Muslims would see their own integration, and which of Cesari's three modes of integration would be most prevalent. I posited that the food practices of Muslims in France may be one way to gain insight into the various modes of integration at work in this context. Furthermore, since Cesari's *When Islam and Democracy Meet* is a comparative project between Europe and the U.S, my project would add nuance to this North American/European comparison by focussing in on two specific locations within these broader continental settings: France and Québec, and more specifically, Paris and Montréal.

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[6] Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

[7] Jocelyne Cesari, *Why the West Fears Islam: An Exploration of Islam in Western Liberal Democracies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[8] See also, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd's *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), for an exploration of the very question of Western "secularism." Of particular note is Hurd's exploration of the relationship between secularism and Islam in Chapter 3 of her work. Hurd suggests that French secularism in particular was constructed in direct contact with Muslim society through the French colonial project, such that the "othering" of Muslims becomes foundational to the very notion of French Laïcité. I return to Hurd's understanding when I discuss laïcité in section 2.4 of Chapter 2. Joan Wallach Scott similarly argues that Islam, and in turn Muslims, are set up as the counterpart to the French Republic and consequently to its form of secularism in her work *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007). She argues that this construction of Muslims as outside the realm of what it means to "be French" inevitably has an impact on "the reaction of Western European leaders to Muslim immigrants in their midst" (Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 9).

[9] Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet*, 175.

John Bowen's work was also foundational in creating this project. The main questions of both his *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space*[10] and his *Can Islam be French?: Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secularist State*[11] piqued my interest in the study of Islam in Francophone, secular contexts. Bowen states that in *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves* his main question is "whether Muslims who wish to publicly practice their religion can make their way in French society without having to pretend to be something other than Muslims," and in *Can Islam be French* the question is "Can Islam become a workable reality for Muslims who wish to live fulfilling social and religious lives in France?"[12] In both of these works Bowen shows how the answer to both of these questions is a complicated "yes and no." He argues that while

> perhaps an Islam of faith and properly circumscribed devotions could be French, but an Islam of schools, mosques, and people whose everyday demeanor marked themselves off from others and who sought religious knowledge outside the country – that was a different story.[13]

Joan Wallach Scott in her work *The Politics of the Veil* posits questions similar to Bowen's.[14] Rather than looking at integration as assimilation, Scott suggests that the way forward is to consider the negotiation of difference. For her this means asking the following questions: "how can individuals and groups with different interests live together? Is it possible to think about difference non-hierarchically? On what common ground can differences be negotiated?"[15]

In line with these questions and conclusions, presented by both Bowen and Scott, I sought to explore how the things of "everyday demeanor" that Bowen discussed above, specifically food, could help to answer his main questions. By exploring how and what Muslim immigrants in France and Québec ate, I see this project as giving another possible viewpoint on the questions that Bowen asks in these two works, as well as the questions that Scott poses about the negotiation of difference. I wanted to examine "whether Muslims who wish to publicly practice their religion, by fasting for Ramadan, buying and eating halal meat, not drinking wine

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[10] John R. Bowen, *Why the French don't like headscarves: Islam, the state, and public space* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[11] John R. Bowen, *Can Islam be French?: Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secularist State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[12] Bowen, *Can Islam be French*, 5.

[13] Ibid, 16.

[14] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*.

[15] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 19.

with friends and colleagues, etcetera could make their way in French/Québécois society, without having to pretend to be something other than Muslims." Related to this, I wanted to examine what it meant for the identity negotiations of my informants if they thought that they did have to pretend to be something other than Muslim, and if food was one of the ways in which this "pretending" got worked out. Furthermore, taking Bowen's question from *Can Islam be French* I wondered to what extent food played a role in the "workable reality" of Islam in the French context, and whether or not it could be one piece of evidence for the ability, or restriction on, people of difference being able to live together. Could it be, in response to Scott's questions, part of the common ground on which differences could be negotiated? Ultimately, while both of these authors examine these questions around the symbol of the veil, I wanted to draw light to some of the other signs of difference between Muslim and non-Muslim French highlighted by numerous people on the ground in France.

The field of Islam in Canada, although relatively new, was also gaining significant momentum when I began this project. While there were general sources before the 21st century, it is in a post 21st-century context where there has been a significant rise in scholarship in this area.[16] This dissertation, alongside these other texts, helps to fill a gap in the scholarly literature in providing an insight into the daily lived religious practices of one group of Muslim immigrants in one Canadian city.[17] Since undertaking this study an important book was

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[16] Howard Adelman and Pierre Anctil, eds., *Religion, Culture, and the State: Reflections on the Bouchard-Taylor Report* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011); Natasha Bakht, ed., *Belonging and banishment: being Muslim in Canada* (Toronto: TSAR, 2008); Lori Beaman, ed., *Reasonable Accommodation: Managing Religious Diversity* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012); Peter Beyer and Rubina Ramji, eds., *Growing up Canadian: Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013); Paul Eid, *Being Arab: Ethnic and Religious Identity Building Among Second Generation Youth in Montréal* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007); Karim H. Karim, "Crescent Dawn in the Great White North: Muslim Participation in the Canadian Public Sphere," in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, eds. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 262-277; Sheema Khan, *Of hockey and hijab: reflections of a Canadian Muslim woman* (Toronto: TSAR, 2009); Anna C Korteweg and Jennifer Selby, eds., *Debating Sharia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012); Haideh Moghissi, Saeed Rahnema and Mark J. Goodman, eds., *Diaspora by design: Muslims in Canada and beyond* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Meena Sharify-Funk, "Muslims and the Politics of "Reasonable Accommodation": Analyzing the Bouchard-Taylor Report and its Impact on the Canadian Province of Québec," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* vol. 30, no 4 (2010): 535-553; Jasmin Zine, *Canadian Islamic Schools: Unravelling the Politics of Faith, Gender, Knowledge and Identity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008). Jasmin Zine, ed., *Islam in the Hinterlands: Exploring Muslim Cultural Politics in Canada* (Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, 2012).

[17] As I was finishing up my data collection in Montréal, Beyer and Ramji's essential edited work *Growing up Canadian: Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists* was published. My dissertation research supports many of their findings and in fact fills an essential gap in their work as their sample contained absolutely no Francophone Muslims and mine is focussed on this group.

published on the so-called "Muslim Question" in Canada.[18] Abdolmohammad Kazemipur examines both Canadian and Muslim exceptionalism in regards to multiculturalism and immigrant integration in his impressive work *The Muslim Question in Canada*: *A Story of Segmented Integration*.[19] He suggest that

> in the global debates on multiculturalism, special places are occupied by Canada and by Muslims: Canada is used as evidence that multiculturalism works; Muslims are used as evidence that it does not. Given this, it is important to examine the experiences of Muslim immigrants in Canada.[20]

Like Kazemipur's work, this dissertation is an effort to "examine the experiences of Muslim immigrants in Canada," specifically in Québec, and even more specifically in Montréal. Kazemipur goes on to suggest that there is poor awareness of Muslims' lived experiences in Canada,[21] and that scholars must go beyond the voices that appear in the media and in organizational Islam, as this often leads to a "politically correct image that may or may not reflect the realities of the lives of Canadian Muslims."[22] My research helps to fill these two gaps in the literature on Islam in Canada by focussing on the lived experiences of Muslims and by giving voice to some members of the Muslim population outside of the media/Muslim organizations.

Finally, in his effort to complicate the notions of Canadian and Muslim exceptionalism Kazemipur highlights the experiences of Muslims in Québec to show how these exceptionalisms may not capture the whole picture. He shows that, statistically speaking, the "responses of Muslim in Québec in regards to the various indicators of attachment to and comfort in Canada present a more negative picture than the rest of Canada."[23] This statistical finding, among the others that Kazemipur highlights in his work, supports the idea that the experience of Muslims in Québec are potentially more similar to those in France than to the Rest of Canada (ROC). My

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[18] Very recently (April 2016) a special issue of the journal *Critical Research on Religion* came out addressing the very idea of a "Muslim question" in Canada. See *Critical Research on Religion*, vol. 4, no. 1 (April 2016): "The Muslim Question."

[19] Abdolmohammad Kazemipur, *The Muslim Question in Canada*: *A Story of Segmented Integration* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).

[20] Kazemipur, *The Muslim Question*, 7.

[21] Ibid., 83.

[22] Ibid., 90.

[23] Ibid., 112.

work questions these statistical findings, and provides insight into the way that attachment to, and comfort in, Canada gets worked out in the everyday practices of Muslims in Montréal.

While quantitative work abounds, exploring trends and statistics and overarching themes present in work on Islam in France and Canada, as we see in Kazemipur's book, qualitative ethnographic work is still fairly new. Concerning France, qualitative ethnographies have increased and are prevalent, they tend to focus on what I call the three Ss: scarves, schools and suburbs. John Bowen's work on the headscarf,[24] Tricia Danielle Keaton's important work on young Muslim women in the Parisian suburbs,[25] Jennifer Selby's work on gender politics and Islam in France,[26] Mayanthi Fernando's work on the contradiction of secularism,[27] are all examples of impressive ethnographic accounts of Muslims lives in France and their negotiations of identity in light of French secularism. My work expands on these foundational works by showing how these negotiations happen around food instead of scarves, in all settings of the community's life instead of just in the school system (or other organizational structures), and in central Paris instead of the suburbs.

Taking the study of Muslims in France out of the suburbs and locating it firmly within the twenty districts of central Paris is one of the most significant contributions of this present work.[28] Jennifer Selby describes the "tremendous juxtaposition in sights, smells, language, ethnicities, and social services between the two spaces" (i.e. Paris and the banlieues, or suburbs).[29] In fact, most work done on North African Muslims in France focusses on the banlieues, in these tremendously juxtaposed spaces. Unlike Selby's experience of travelling from her apartment in central Paris to her field site in Petit Nanterre, going from my apartment in the Marais to my field work site, or to any of my 33 interview sites, did not lead to an experience of juxtaposition. Considering that most work had been done in the suburban setting of Islam in France, I set out to explore how the kinds of negotiations that my informants undertook might be different from or similar to those presented in the works from Bowen, Keaton, Fernando and Selby. How might

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[24] Bowen, *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves*.

[25] Tricia Danielle Keaton, *Muslim Girls and the Other France: Race, Identity Politics & Social Exclusion* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).

[26] Jennifer Selby, *Questioning French Secularism: Gender Politics and Islam in a Parisian Suburb* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

[27] Mayanthi L. Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014).

[28] I discuss the decision to conduct my fieldwork in central Paris below.

[29] Selby, *Questioning French Secularism*, 14.

the position of my informants in central Paris lead to more or less conflict? How much would the juxtaposition between cultural and religious frames of references be more or less prevalent in central Paris? Without the juxtaposition of physical space would my informants' own bodies and experiences become the exemplars of juxtaposition in Paris?

These contrasts of space and experience often lead to feelings of conflicting identities. All of the above-mentioned studies on Muslims in France consequently address

> the dilemma of how to be Muslim French in a world in which Muslim means not French and French means not Muslim—that is, how to inhabit an identity that is unintelligible in the terms of dominant discourse, and how to be recognized as oneself when one is unrecognizable as what one is.[30]

While these other ethnographic accounts examine this dilemma often in relationship to the broad political movements and moments that influence this experience, I look at how this dilemma is worked out in my informants' every day, mundane lives and practices.

The women of Jennifer Selby's project confound expectations regarding this dilemma, showing how some Muslim women in France interact with secular institutions and policies while at the same time publicly demonstrating their religious faith, i.e. they show how Muslim can mean French and French can mean Muslim. Over six chapters, Selby shows how articulations of secularism in France as well as articulations of feminism "affect the lives of visibly religious *banlieuesarde* Muslim women in France."[31] She highlights the three main themes, and consequently conclusions, of her work by showing that, (1) in commissions and feminist activism, "French secularism is justified and articulated as paramount to ensuring Muslim women's equal access and full rights in France," and at the same time leads to these very women being excluded from public debate;[32] (2) "national identity concerns emerge through discussions of the appropriateness of women's bodies in the public sphere;"[33] and (3) the "polarizing focus on women's bodies (by men and women) establishes a fetishism of the hijab that masks broader questions and issues."[34] Directly related to this third theme/conclusion is Selby's example of the *Affaire du Porc* which she discusses in Chapter 3 of her work. In this chapter she shows how her informants are not particularly concerned with the 2004 law banning conspicuous religious

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[30] Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled*, 37.
[31] Selby, *Question French Secularism*, 170.
[32] Ibid., 170.
[33] Ibid., 171.
[34] Ibid., 172-173.

symbols (i.e. the hijab) in public schools, something that both she, and her readers, would have expected. This does not mean that Muslim women in Petit Nanterre are not invested in discussions of secularism; they just invest in other ways, e.g. in the *Affaire du Porc*. In this discussion Selby shows how the women in her study are concerned not solely with the offence to their religious practices in this event, but in the affront to secular neutrality: "the teacher transgressed the students' right to choose *not* to eat religiously inappropriate foods."[35] In this Selby positions the real lived experiences of her informants in opposition to the picture that one may get from the commissions she discusses in her work, namely, the Stasi and Debré commission. She shows how the women of her study live publicly religious lives while being politically involved in the secular Republic. Selby argues that, in fact, the

> *Affaire du Porc* reminds us that sometimes these commissions fail to consider the way they pejoratively and uniformly position visibly religious women, and how they may overemphasize headscarves at the expense of noting other kinds of political engagement, which might refute portrayals of the same women as overtly "oppressed."[36]

It is my hope to add to the picture that Selby paints in her work, providing further nuance to the ways that Muslims in highly secular contexts interact with, and sometimes profess, both secularity and religiosity.[37]

My project also adds to the new and growing ethnographic work being done in the field of qualitative ethnography of Muslims in Canada. Paul Eid's impressive work on Arab youth in Montréal provided me with a solid understanding of how ethnic and religious identity negotiations happen on everyday levels for Arab Muslim immigrants in Montréal.[38] In this work Eid shows the importance of ethno-religious identity for second generation Arabs in Montréal, and how this identity is often less contested than in a place such as France. In fact, in his conclusion he suggests that "further comparative research is needed to get a better understanding

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[35] Selby, *Questioning French Secularism*, 94.

[36] Ibid., 97.

[37] Although Selby does use a food example to show how these negotiations take place, i.e. in her exploration of the 2005 Pork Affair (showing how her informants were invested in the discussion around non-halal food in public schools as a means of protecting secular neutrality), in this, and in her other examples, she concentrates on the interaction of Muslim women with various secular organizations. There is consequently a gap in the picture of how religion, gender, identity, secularism, etcetera in the suburbs is played out in more everyday contexts. My work is generally outside of the secular organizational realm and located more firmly in the everyday, lived, mundane moments of my informants' lives. It fills this gap and uses food as its principal means of illustration and investigation.

[38] Eid, *Being Arab*.

of how France's and Canada's respective approaches to integration and diversity affect their Arab minorities' responses to discrimination and stereotyping."[39] I see the present work as an answer to this call by Eid, showing how Arab, in this case, Maghrébine, minorities respond to discrimination and stereotyping (or lack thereof) through the ways that they interact with, alter and redefine their foodways in both Paris and Montréal. It also offers new insight into how these negotiations take place not only in the second generation, but also for first generation immigrants in both locations.

Another ethnographic study of Muslims in the "West" which influenced my construction of this project is Rima Berns McGown's *Muslims in the Diaspora: The Somali Communities of London and Toronto*.[40] Like McGown, who compares London and Toronto in her work, I believe that the "opportunity to understand the process of integration" is "enriched by the comparative perspective."[41] McGown's work highlights the two levels of integration possible for any immigrant: external and internal, and emphasizes the fact that because neither Islam nor the West are monolithic entities, the way that any given individual engages these two integration processes is not monolithic either. Because of this, McGown states that it is her intention "to illustrate the complexities of the process of individuals' renegotiating identity as Muslims in the West."[42] My work expands this illustration by demonstrating how these complex negotiations happen in two other Western contexts, namely, Paris and Montréal.

1.1.2 Religious Studies Research Philosophy

So there were gaps to be filled, questions to be answered and conclusions to be expanded upon in the field of Islam in France and Canada. As I hinted at above, the more that I thought about the kind of project that might help to achieve some of these goals, the more it became clear that I would take a lived religion approach.

Coming out of an early academic background in textual studies, I have studied religion in drastically different ways over the years. I have paid close attention to the "institutional representation" of a religious tradition as it is presented in that tradition's scriptures and in recent

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[39] Eid, *Being Arab*, 188.
[40] Rima Berns McGown, *Muslims in the Diaspora: The Somali Communities of London and Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).
[41] McGown, *Muslims in the Diaspora*, x.
[42] Ibid., 8.

years I have paid close attention to the lived experiences of religious individuals who are in daily conversation with their various institutional beliefs and practices.[43] In my work, I have taken seriously both the so-often-labelled "institutional, normative, authoritative, great" side of religion as well as the "everyday, popular, mundane, little" side of religion. The idea that religions "have a strongly normative character, offering compelling ways to act, to live, to be and to perceive the world—and yet how people actually live religious lives appears to be a very different business"[44] sets up a clear dichotomy between text and lived experience, institutional and popular, grand schemes and daily practice. This is a false dichotomy, though, as religion is all of the above; it is located "exactly in that moment where daily practice and grand schemes come together."[45] Samuli Schielke and Liza Debevec suggest that in fact grand schemes are not separate from daily life, but are in constant communication with it, and are therefore continuously under construction.[46] Peter Beyer similarly states that

> we cannot appreciate what is happening religiously if we concentrate only on the systemic or lived manifestation, because the systemic if most often an integral aspect of the lived and because the lived is most often more than a simple manifestation of the systemic.[47]

Work that examines the daily lived practice of religious individuals and communities can consequently give insight into the grand schemes, or the systemic manifestations, of religion.

1.1.2.1 Lived Religion and the Dissolution of Dichotomies

Lived religion shows how these two facets of religion are not dichotomous but are in fact congruous. Orsi suggests that everyday religion calls into question three other dichotomies on which the study of religion has been historically shaped: (1) sacred/profane, (2) us/them

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[43] I address my academic background further in section 1.1.3 below.

[44] Samuli Schielke and Liza Debevec, "Introduction," in *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, eds. Samuli Schielke and Liza Debevec (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 1-2.

[45] Schielke and Debevec, "Introduction," 2.

[46] Ibid., 5. When using food as a means to explore religion, Martha L Finch similarly suggests that it becomes obvious that sacred beliefs about food cannot be separated from what people actually do with food, the two go hand in hand. Martha L. Finch, "Foreward," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America*, eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), xi.

[47] Peter Beyer, "Growing up in Canada, the United States, and Western Europe," in *Growing up Canadian: Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists*, eds. Peter Beyer and Rubina Ramji (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 306.

(insider/outsider), and (3) presence/absence.[48] Lived religion challenges the sacred/profane dichotomy by showing that the two are "never distinct in an absolute way, but are braided in people's everyday experience."[49] It challenges the us/them dichotomy by showing that the scholar of religion is not all that different from those religious practitioners whom he/she studies. In fact, according to Orsi lived religion reveals that both "us" and "them" "are contending with similar life challenges and that all of us equally must deal with the inevitable doubleness of being both agents of our own lives and experiencing ourselves as powerless, determined, of having chosen and of having no choice."[50] Finally, every day/lived religion dissolves the long-held dichotomy of presence/absence of the gods in people's lives. Orsi explains that historically the practices that were oriented toward engaging the "presence of the gods in particular things or particular times and places...were taken by modern religious theorists as evidence of the most 'primitive' and 'savage' level of religiosity...'good' modern religion did not include real presences."[51] Everyday religion challenges the notion that "good religion" must exclude real presence.

Throughout this dissertation I will show how food is a perfect emblem of lived religion as it serves to break down these dichotomies in tangible ways. Eating, one of the most profane and mundane activities, can also take on sacred meanings; it breaks apart the dichotomy between sacred and profane. As a common experience to almost every living being, our consumption of food serves to break down the distinction between "us" and "them," which Orsi suggests is essential in a lived religion approach. Finally, food helps to disband the dichotomy between the presence and absence of the gods in people's lives as it often serves as a symbol of the god(s)' presence in a given situation, or even within a given practitioner. One only needs to look to the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist to appreciate how food can make the idea of the absence of the gods in one's life an absurdity. The Eucharist is the Christian sacrament/ritual which involves the consumption of bread and wine. While this ritual is understood and symbolized by Christians in various ways, Catholics hold the doctrine of transubstantiation, which means that the bread and the wine consumed in the Eucharist are transformed into the actual body and blood

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[48] Robert A. Orsi, "Everyday Religion and the Contemporary World: The Un-Modern, of What Was Supposed to Have Disappeared but Did Not," in *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion,* eds. Samuli Schielke and Liza Debevec (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 154-155.
[49] Orsi, "Everyday Religion," 154.
[50] Ibid., 155.
[51] Ibid., 156.

of Christ, which the practitioner then takes into him/herself through consumption. As Michel Desjardins and Ellen Desjardins state, this gives "believers direct corporal access to God through food."[52] You do not get much more "present" than that. According to scholars of lived religion, religion must be taken as a sum of all these dichotomies: institutional and popular, sacred and profane, us and them, presence and absence, grand schemes and daily practice.

One problem is that when one examines lived religion in the hopes of gaining some insight into the grand schemes of religion, or vice versa, one is often confronted with ambivalence and inconsistency. Individual religious practitioners may act in completely contradictory ways to the commonly understood, and even personally understood, "institutional, authoritative," grand schemes. For example, an informant may tell me that he/she eats only halal meat but then may order chicken from a restaurant without checking if it is halal certified or not.[53] A lived religion approach allows the anthropologist to take this sort of inconsistency seriously, rather than just trying to solve it.[54] In fact, by focusing on the daily lived practices of religious individuals we can see how the stuff of the everyday can serve as intentional space, things that people use to "make sense of their often confusing and troubled experiences and expectations."[55] Schielke and Debevec suggest that

> if we ask people about their specific concerns, experiences and trajectories, and if we look at the way people live their lives of which religious beliefs and practices constitute a part, we gain an image in which religion is a highly immediate practice of making sense of one's life, coming to terms with fear and ambivalence, all-present at times and absent at other times, very sincere in some moments, and contradictory in other moments.[56]

Believing that one can gain insight into all sides of the religious equation by examining daily religious practice—daily lived practice is not as apparent in the study of grand schemes alone – I focus on lived religion.

Before I continue I must pause to describe what I mean by religion, and relatedly lived religion. I agree with Meredith McGuire's definition of these two concepts, namely that religion

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[52] Michel Desjardins and Ellen Desjardins, "The Role of Food in Canadian Expressions of Christianity," in *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*, eds. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, and Marlene Epp (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 71.

[53] I describe such a situation in Chapter 5 and discuss the implications of such an event in Chapter 6.

[54] Schielke and Debevec, "Introduction," 11.

[55] Ibid., 12. My informants use food as an intentional space to make sense of their confusing and troubled experiences as Muslim immigrants in highly secular, often hostile, contexts.

[56] Ibid., 1.

"consists of how people make sense of their world—the stories out of which they live."[57] If religion is about making sense and living out of stories, then, according to McGuire, lived religion is "*constituted by the practices* people use to remember, share, enact, adapt, create, and combine the stories out of which they live. And it comes into being through the often-mundane practices people use to transform these meaningful interpretations into everyday action."[58] I argue that food is one of those "often-mundane practices" that people can use in the process of transforming the invisible to the visible.[59] Food acts as a means of crossing and dwelling[60] within and between all these realms. According to Graham Harvey food may in fact define religion.[61]

1.1.2.2 Making Homes and Crossing Boundaries: Food in Tweed's Theory of Religion

The other orienting philosophy of religion and religious studies with which I entered into the field revolves around Thomas Tweed's theory of religion as found in his work *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*,[62] specifically as this theory applies to food practice. While Tweed's entire theory can be applicable to a project such as mine, I am going to focus primarily on the last five words of his definition of religion, namely, that religions "make homes and cross boundaries,"[63] as this part of his theory was influential in constructing my dissertation project.

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[57] Meredith B. McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 97-98. This is in line with the definition of religion presented in the quotation from Schielke and Debevec above: religion is about "making sense" of one's life/the world.

[58] McGuire, *Lived Religion,* 98.

[59] Similar to McGuire's definition of religion found above, Robert Orsi, a famous proponent of lived religion, argues in his *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars who Study them* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) that religion is the "practice of making the invisible visible, of concretizing the order of the universe, the nature of human life and its destiny, and the various dimensions and possibilities of human interiority itself, as these are understood in various cultures at different times, in order to render them visible and tangible, present to the senses in the circumstances of everyday life" (73-74).

[60] Thomas A Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[61] Graham Harvey, "Respectfully eating or not eating: putting food at the centre of Religious Studies," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, Vol 26 (2015): 32-46, http://ojs.abo.fi/index.php/scripta/issue/view/74/showToc. Harvey suggests that "foodways are so frequently central to religious acts (even if they are insufficiently recognised as such) that they may 'define' religion as much as they differentiate between religions" (32). He argues that religions are generally about "the continuous relational interactions of social beings" (33) and food is the realm within which many of these interactions happen. Moreover, because taboo and religion are practically synonyms, and foodways are usually at the heart of taboo systems, then food too should be a synonym for religion (40-43).

[62] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*.

[63] Ibid., 54.

Tweed tells the reader that religions are about situating people in time and place, about creating boundaries and then showing people how to cross those very boundaries. He breaks this part of his definition of religion into two parts and theorizes that religions are about dwelling and crossing. In relation to dwelling practices, people attempt to situate themselves in four different areas, which he calls chronotopes: the body, the home, the homeland and the cosmos[64] (food practices can be tools to situate in all these areas). Dallam suggests that Tweed's concept of dwelling is "helpful for discerning ways that people understand their physical and spiritual world(s) and position themselves within it/them. By extension, these concepts help us conceive of foodways as expressions of identity within a constructed sacred cosmos."[65] Tweed suggests that religions and religious practices, of which foodways are a part, I would add, act as watch and compass, they situate people in time and place.[66] In his work Tweed uses the example of the mural and the cornerstone in the temple of Our Lady of the Exile in Miami to show how artifacts can be used to situate people. By looking at the mural people can see where they sit in relation to the larger community and can be transported back to the Cuba of memory and desire simply by looking at it.[67] I understand food as serving a similar purpose, it can aide in people's transtemporal and translocative practices. By eating a particular home food, the religious immigrant taps into times and places where he/she ate that food before, and imagines him/herself in line with those who ate/eat that food as well.

My placement of food within Tweed's understanding of religion as a means of "crossing" and "dwelling" finds support in the work *Remembrance of Repasts: an Anthropology of Food and Memory* by David E. Sutton.[68] Sutton suggests that food can "hide powerful meanings and structures under the cloak of the mundane and the quotidian."[69] His work dissects exactly how food acts as a powerful tool for those trying to cross borders of time and space, specifically through food's relationship to memory. He suggests that food "has the effect of placing one in time," that it "evokes wholeness," creates links with imagined communities, and most importantly it "does not simply symbolize social bonds and divisions; it participates in their

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[64] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 97.
[65] Dallam, "Introduction," xxiii.
[66] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 85-98.
[67] Ibid., 87-89.
[68] David E Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory* (Oxford & New York: Berg, 2001).
[69] Sutton, *Remembrance*, 3.

creation and re-creation."[70] Food acts as a tool in an individual's transtemporal and translocative efforts; something that becomes especially important for immigrants.

In Lynne Christy Anderson's work *Breaking Bread: Recipes and Stories from Immigrant Kitchens* there are many examples of immigrants who see food as the way to situate themselves within a community with a past, both temporally and geographically.[71] Many of Anderson's informants speak of feeling like they are in their homeland again simply by eating the food of the homeland. On the transtemporal side of things, other examples from Anderson's work show how it is through food practice that people feel connected to those who ate the same food in the past and those who will eat the food in the future. A Moroccan subject in her study stated that it is by eating Moroccan food that she remembers that she is Moroccan, and it is also how she teaches her children that they will be welcomed by other Moroccans when they return; if they all eat the same food.[72] Sarah Sussman similarly states that, no matter whether her informants are in Paris or Montréal, as long as they continue to cook their food they remain connected to a long history, and place themselves within that history and ensure its survival.[73] Food connects these practitioners to the past and moves that past into the future. I show throughout my work how my informants, like those mentioned in Tweed, Sutton, Anderson, and Sussman, use food and foodways as transtemporal and translocative symbols in their everyday religious lives to make homes for themselves in their immigrant contexts.

But Tweed states that religions are not just about dwelling, they are also about crossing. In this he deals with terrestrial, corporeal and celestial crossings.[74] He shows how religions help followers to cross the ever-present boundaries that are in our lives. Two of the important crossings that often involve food are the life cycle transitions that are often dealt with in religious traditions, and the mapping of the celestial crossing. First, as we human bodies age and change religions address and regulate how these changes happen. Food is representative of these crossings. For example, Tweed explains that when a baby is born into a Muslim family the

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[70] Ibid.*,* 28, 82-84, 102.

[71] Lynne Christy Anderson, *Breaking Bread: Recipes and Stories from Immigrant Kitchens* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

[72] Anderson, *Breaking Bread*, 85.

[73] Sarah Sussman, "Jews from Algeria and French Jewish Identity," in *Transnational spaces and identities in the francophone world,* eds. Hafid Gafaiti, Patricia M.E. Lorcin and David G. Troyansky (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 228.

[74] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 76.

Shahadah is whispered in his/her ear and then a chewed-up date is placed in his/her mouth.[75] The Muslim life, in this case, begins with God and food and the transition, the crossing, from spirit to human, from fetus to child, is represented through food. Furthermore, as was made evident throughout my time in the field, major life cycle events, such as marriage, were heavily entwined with food. Food was a means of highlighting the transition from one stage to the next.

Tweed goes on in his exploration of religion's ability to help the practitioner "cross" by discussing transporting and transforming teleographies. Transporting teleographies result in a movement in location, a crossing of the various outside boundaries in our lives, whereas transforming teleographies are more about a movement in inner orientation or condition.[76] One can see how food aides in the crossing of celestial boundaries. In many religious communities, food not only situates and connect people with the broader living community, but it can also cross the celestial boundaries and connect the living community to those who have passed from this realm of existence. As I explained above, Orsi suggests that everyday religion highlights the possibility for real presence of the supernatural in the lives of religious practitioners, and food is one means of crossing the boundary between presence and absence.

Going in to the field, I wondered how much of Tweed's theory would hold up when examining the "real lives of real people." I wondered how much my informants would use their religious and cultural food practices in tangible ways to "create homes and cross boundaries." While I was not seeking direct answers to this question in my project, this theory/philosophy of religion oriented my early thinking about what was happening and what I was observing.

1.1.3 About the Author

My interest in addressing these questions, issues and scholarly gaps emerges from my academic background in the study of religion. My undergraduate degree in religious studies at the University of Waterloo provided me with my foundation in the study of religion; through this experience I not only gained an important knowledge base in numerous religious traditions, but I also learned of the various approaches to studying those traditions. After completing an honour's undergraduate thesis in textual studies, I pursued a Master's degree in Early Christianity and

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[75] Ibid., 145.
[76] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 152.

Early Judaism, where I continued to focus on scriptural analysis and the consequent textual representation of Christianity in the context of the McMaster University program.

As I finished my Master's degree I began to question how religious individuals may interact with these texts that I was studying in their everyday lives. I knew what the texts said about a given topic, but I wanted to know what religious individuals thought about those texts, and how they enacted what was presented in those texts in their "real lives." Having studied the complex relationship between the "law" of the Hebrew Bible and the "law" as presented in the Christian New Testament I was acutely aware of how individuals across traditions might interact around shared (and often conflicting) religious perspectives. Because of this, and because of my various interests in my undergraduate degree, I applied to a doctoral program at Wilfrid Laurier University with the intention of examining a topic in interreligious dialogue. I was curious to explore the ways in which religious individuals interacted with, and informed, various "others" about their religious lives, and how religious "others" came together to pursue mutual understanding within small, local organizations for interreligious dialogue. The doctoral program in which I enrolled focused on "religious diversity in North America," thus providing an ideal educational background in which to study how individuals located within the diverse North American context, and specifically within Canada, come together in conversation and collaboration.

As I entered in to coursework in religion in North America, I saw that these kinds of negotiations between and amidst various religious (and irreligious) actors and communities happen on more mundane levels and in more everyday contexts than the interreligious organizations I was hoping to study. People were meeting the "other," and moreover, presenting themselves through their everyday religious practices, and food was one such practice that seemed to be utilized in this process. Although many of the texts that I was reading in those early days of my doctoral work did not explicitly mention food as part of this process, I could see examples of it abounding in the literature, yet very few people were seeming to take it seriously as a means of access to larger questions of how people live out their religious lives in highly diverse North American societies. Leaving a concentrated study of interreligious dialogue behind, I began to pursue how people negotiated their religious identity through food in religiously diverse, and highly secular contexts.

This academic trajectory provides a position within which to study a topic which explores Islam in the "French" "West," religion and migration and lived religion, specifically food and religion. Having pursued early graduate studies in textual analysis I have taken seriously the position of religious texts not only within religious organizations but also for the individual religious actor. When my informants interact with, profess, and reimagine the textual grounding for their food practices, I can understand the complexities that are present within those texts as well as the transmission and utilization of them by a given religious community. My interest, openness to, and knowledge of interreligious dialogue provides me with the necessary tools to effectively engage with my informants in those everyday moments of encounter that would inevitably occur in the field. Finally, my doctoral studies in religious diversity in North America provides me with extensive preparation not only in the reality of diversity in various Western, secular nation states, but also relevant histories, policies and experiences which govern or influence the everyday lived religion of minorities in those contexts.

1.1.4 Scholarly Grounding: Summary

In this section I have highlighted the scholarly context out of which my dissertation project grew and the many reasons for taking on this research. I began with an overview of key works in the field of Islam in the West, specifically Islam in France and Canada, and showed how the work that is to follow is my attempt at answering some of the questions which arose for me out of my reading of these sources. I discuss how my work aims to fill some of the gaps present in the literature on Islam in France and Canada and to provide a qualitative view of some of the quantitative trends that have been underscored in past work. Furthermore, I argued that this work is an effort to expand on the qualitative work which already exists, by showing how negotiations of religious, national, secular, etcetera, identities for Muslims in France and Canada happen outside of the context of the three Ss: scarves, schools, and suburbs.

Next I turned to what I call my "philosophy of religion/studying religion" and gave a brief overview of lived religion. I argued that lived religion allows the researcher to see religion as a sum of all possible dichotomies, including institutional and popular, sacred and profane, us and them, presence and absence, grand schemes and daily practice. Furthermore, religion is about making sense of these dichotomies and constructing stories out of the experiences of living within them. I showed how I see religion, in agreement with McGuire, as a means of making

sense and living out of stories. More importantly I showed how my work is situated within the understanding of lived religion as the "*the practices* people use to remember, share, enact, adapt, create, and combine the stories out of which they live. And it comes into being through the often-mundane practices people use to transform these meaningful interpretations into everyday action."[77] Food is one of these mundane, everyday practices/actions that transforms the invisible to the visible.

More than just transforming the invisible to the visible, food plays a significant role in the religious process of crossing and dwelling. Because of this, I outlined Tweed's theory of religion as found in his work *Crossing and Dwelling* and situated my research project within that frame. I focused on the last five words of Tweed's definition of religion, namely that religion, "makes homes and crosses boundaries," to show how food might be a tangible means of enacting this home making and boundary crossing.

Finally, I closed this section with an overview of my own personal scholarly background that led me to this study. My diverse experiences in the study of religion have provided me with familiarity with a wide variety of approaches to, and understandings of, religion that proved particularly helpful in this project.

Before I describe the methods which I engaged to try to fill these gaps, expand on these fields, and address these questions/hypotheses, I must address a "gap" in this introduction itself. While I hinted at the fields of food and religion and religion and migration throughout this "scholarly grounding" section I did not directly address those two fields here, but instead reserve that discussion for my concluding chapter. This was a conscious decision that I made for two reasons. First, placing this discussion at the end of the dissertation allows me to bring my research, after I have presented it, in conversation with key studies and research areas. It allows me to "bring it home," so to speak, by showing exactly how my findings fit with these two key areas of research. Second, I have purposefully constructed the writing of my ethnography as a reflection of the ethnographic experience itself. The fields that I engage in this introductory chapter are the fields out of which my study emerged; they were the works that were on my radar before I went in to the field. I then present the "stuff" of my research in the main body chapters, illuminating the work that I conducted during my ethnographic research experience itself, hinting at the important works in the relevant fields throughout. Finally, I spend some dedicated time

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[77] McGuire, *Lived Religion,* 98.

situating my work within the most relevant fields at the end of this dissertation because this is when I did this situating effort. Once I had finished my data collection, analysis and writing, I then examined the fields of religion and migration and food and religion to see where my work fit. While this is an unconventional structure, it is the natural outworking of my attempt to give voice to my informants without imposing overly restrictive theories or ideas about religion and food and religion and migration on to their daily lived experiences. It was an effort to stay true to my methodology, and the structure of the dissertation reflects that.

1.2 Context/Methodology/Method: The What and How of the Research Project

My philosophy of studying religion as lived religion and the idea that lived religion is about the various ways in which people "make homes and cross boundaries" inevitably affects the kind of methodology, as well as the specific methods, I utilized in this project. In line with Birks and Mills, I see methodology and methods as two separate, although often related, things. According to Birks and Mills, methodology is "a set of principles and ideas that inform the design of a research study," while methods are "practical procedures used to generate and analyse data."[78] I address my specific methods below, but first a word on my chosen methodology: ethnography.

As I mentioned above, Schielke and Debevec suggest that "if we look at the way people live their lives of which religious beliefs and practices constitute a part, we gain an image in which religion is a highly immediate practice of making sense of one's life."[79] To understand how this "practice of making sense" gets worked out it is essential to learn from the people doing the living. Ethnography is an effective approach to gaining insight into the ways in which people live their lives, in the case of this ethnography their religious and cultural lives, and consequently into the resultant "practice of making sense" that occurs. According to James Spradley, ethnography is the methodology that "aims to understand another way of life from the native point of view."[80] Ways of life, ways of knowing, are the focus of ethnographic research, whether

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[78] Melanie Birks and Jane Mills, *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide* (London: SAGE Publications, 2011), 4.

[79] Schielke and Debevec, "Introduction," 1.

[80] James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1979), 3. What "another way of life" and "native" mean can vary drastically in ethnographies. At the time that Spradley wrote his work, in 1979, "anthropology at home" was not yet a known, or practiced form of ethnography. Now, while it is often still the case that ethnographers study "another way of life" from their own, whether in a shared cultural context or not, there are increasing numbers of ethnographies from "native ethnographers," people who share this way of life

the ethnographer shares those ways of life/knowing with his/her informants or not. Spradley goes on to suggest that ethnography is not about studying people, but instead about "learning from people"; the researcher becomes a student and his/her informants become teachers, instructing the research either directly or indirectly in the meanings of actions and events.[81] This understanding of my informants as teachers was essential to my project. As I discuss in detail below, I came in to the field with few preconceived notions about the religious and cultural lives of my informants. This context allowed me to easily take on the necessary role of student in my interactions with the community.

Spradley emphasises the importance of learning culture by living culture with one's informants. Just as a child learns "culture by observing other people, listening to them, and then making inferences," the ethnographer engages in the same process in the field, "going beyond what is seen and heard to *infer* what people know."[82] The ethnographer makes his/her "inferences from three sources: (1) from what people say; (2) from the way people act; and (3) from the artifacts people use."[83] Spradley suggests that one can evaluate the adequacy and authenticity of the description that one gains from these inferences if one considers the ethnography as a set of instructions for how to act appropriately in that cultural context.[84] This idea becomes complicated in a study of a community that has various understandings of their cultural context; in a community that has many different teachers teaching the researcher different things. For example, in a study such as mine, where diversity of experience is the overwhelming norm, especially in Paris, I imagine that someone picking up my work would have a hard time reading it as instructions on how to behave if celebrating Ramadan with any given Maghrébine Muslim immigrant in Paris; the Montréal side of things may fall more in line with practice. Regardless, because the ethnographer makes his/her inferences from people's words,

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with their informants. In Spradley's work, he places these sorts of studies in the category of "Ethnographic Novels" in which native authors describe the insider's point of view (24). For a discussion about the emergence of "anthropology at home" and some examples of it, see Peter Collins and Anselma Gallinat, eds. *The Ethnographic Self as Resource: Writing Memory and Experience into Ethnography* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), especially the chapters in Part 1: Being Self and Other: Anthropologists at Home.

[81] Spradley, *Ethnographic Interview*, 3-5. While being the student and learning from one's informants as teachers is the ideal, this does not mean that the influence of the researcher is not still prevalent. One cannot remove one's biases completely and the researcher inevitably influences what s/he learns, what s/he includes or excludes, and how s/he interprets what s/he does include.

[82] Ibid., 8.

[83] Ibid., 8.

[84] Ibid., 8.

actions and artifacts, ethnography does not just equal participant observation; there are many methods used, all employed alongside the pure "challenge of just getting by from day to day."[85] I address some of my challenges of "getting by from day to day" in section 1.4.2 below, but for now I turn to the methods that I employed in my ethnographic study.

1.2.1 Grounded Theory Methods

While I did not use a classic Grounded Theory (GT) approach/methodology I did apply GT to my ethnography. GT goes beyond mere description and exploration. According to Birks and Mills, grounded theory

> differs from other approaches to research in that it serves to explain the phenomenon being studied…. [It] explicates a phenomenon from the perspective and in the context of those who experience it. Theory as the product of the investigative processes is the hallmark of grounded theory research.[86]

My study is thus a modified and selective GT approach. I was interested in explicating the phenomenon from the perspective and in the context of those who experience it, so I came into the field with few preconceived notions or theories to do so, but I did not create a theory per se to explain the phenomenon I was studying. I figured out which theoretical frames, bodies of work, or areas of study it fit once I was home from the field.[87] Because I selectively employ GT methods, rather than specifically generate a grounded theory, Birks and Mills suggest that my work is more descriptive and exploratory research, more in line with qualitative data analysis (QDA) by Glaser (2004) or the generic inductive qualitative model (GIQM) by Hood (2007).[88] While I use many of the elements of GT, I do not use them all, a necessity for pure GT according to Birks and Mills; GT is a methodology that requires using specific methods to a specific end.

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[85] Peter Collins, "The Ethnographic Self as Resource," in *The Ethnographic Self as Resource: Writing Memory and Experience into Ethnography,* eds. Peter Collins and Anselma Gallinat (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 229. The methods that Collins lists are: direct and indirect participant observation, interviews, mapping, diaries, quantitative strategies, collection of visual material, plans and diagrams, and learning of native skills. Of these, I used direct and indirect participant observation, interviews, diaries, and learning of native skills: language and cooking. Which I discuss below.

[86] Birks and Mills, *Grounded Theory*, 16.

[87] While it is common practice to include a literature review or to situate my study within a theoretical framework in an introductory chapter, I do not do that here. Instead, in line with the way that my project came to be and was enacted, I discuss where my work is situated, to what fields it applies, in Chapter 9 of this dissertation.

[88] Birks and Mills, *Grounded Theory*, 16. The authors refer to Barney G. Glaser and Judith Holton, "Remodelling grounded theory," *Forum: Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol. 5, no. 2 (2004), and Jane C. Hood, "Orthodoxy vs. Power: The Defining Traits of Grounded Theory," in *Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*, eds. Antony Bryant and Kathy Charmaz (London: Sage, 2007): 151-164.

My end goal was not to generate theory, but to describe and explore the possibilities of what might be happening for my informants who were living out their religious and cultural lives amidst a seemingly hostile backdrop.

Some of the philosophies present in GT did in fact inform my approach in the field. For example, and as I mentioned above, I tried to enter the field with relatively little orienting theory. Although I entered my fieldwork right out of my comprehensive examinations, and thus inevitably had some orienting theoretical principles in my mind, I was not trying to impose the data that I found on the ground into a theoretical framework.[89] I allowed my informants to direct how I viewed their experience, rather than trying to direct them into distinct categories or boxes. In this way, I fell in line with another of the principles of GT, unlike studies where the "research question directs how the study proceeds. In grounded theory, it is the research process that generates the question."[90] While I had curiosities that led me into the field, and "broad" research questions, as I described above, the overarching question that I was seeking came out after the fact. For example, it was not until February 2016, two and a half years after I left the field, that I wrote down the ultimate "questions" that my work addresses. Overall, I utilized "the value of grounded theory methods" for my research design.[91]

I engaged several of the essential methods for a GT study around which Birks and Mills write their work. I used an adaptation of the initial coding process they outline.[92] This helped me to identify important words or groups of words and concepts while I went along. While I did not transcribe and analyze my interviews as I conducted my fieldwork, I did write memos (another of Birks and Mills essential methods)[93] and journals which helped me to do this initial coding work. This brought up thought-provoking and unexpected themes as I was conducting my work and led me to engage in one of the essential GT methods, namely, theoretical sampling.[94] While I did not select specific people to interview, or drastically change the kinds of questions I was asking my informants, I did make some subtle strategic decisions to access topics that were emerging in the field. For example, while in Paris, my informants spoke a great deal about the

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[89] Birks and Mills suggest that a formal literature review is delayed in a GT project in order "to prevent the researcher from imposing existing theories or approaches on the study." Birks and Mills, *Grounded Theory*, 22.
[90] Ibid., 20.
[91] Ibid., 31.
[92] Ibid., 9-10, 93-100.
[93] Ibid., 10, 40-47.
[94] Ibid., 10-11, 69-73.

difference in "goût" (taste) between home food and host food.[95] While I did not have a fixed question on this in my original list of questions, I ended up adding this to the questions that I would use to further probe my informants when the opportunity arose. When I finished my data collection, I engaged in "constant comparative analysis," comparing incident to incident, incident to codes, codes to codes, codes to categories, and categories to categories, to bring things together that had never been associated before.[96] While normally this method would be used as data is generated, I used it to help me analyze my data once it was all collected and transcribed. Finally, the last method that I used in my study was "theoretical sensitivity."[97] Theoretical sensitivity according to Birks and Mills is the "ability to recognize and extract from data elements that have relevance for your emerging theory,"[98] or in my case, my emerging description. One's theoretical sensitivity grows the longer one is engaged in the research, and is highly dependent on the researcher's own history and knowledge. This theoretical sensitivity is reflected in section 1.4 below.

1.2.2 Spradley's The Ethnographic Interview

Alongside, and in conjunction with, these GT methods, I also leaned on James Spradley's classic method for ethnographic interviews (step two in his twelve step developmental research sequence).[99] Spradley shows how this interviewing method is different from simple friendly conversation in four key ways.[100] First of all, "turn taking is less balanced."[101] While in a friendly conversation the two people involved take turns asking and responding to questions, in the ethnographic interview model the ethnographer asks almost all of the questions and the informant does almost all of the responding. Furthermore, the turn taking is asymmetrical as well, because the informants' responses take up most of the time in the conversation. The second difference that Spradley highlights is the role of repetition. While in a friendly conversation

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[95] I explore this argument in Chapter 4 in section 4.4.2.1.

[96] Birks and Mills, *Grounded Theory*, 11, 94.

[97] Ibid., 11, 58-63.

[98] Ibid., 59.

[99] For an overview of the twelve elements in the ethnographic interview see Appendix A.

[100] While it is important to note that the ethnographic interview is different from friendly conversation, both kinds of conversations were important elements of my work. While I conducted semi-structured interviews that generally followed Spradley's pattern of ethnographic interviews, I also engaged in hundreds of friendly conversations that make up an important part of my data.

[101] Spradley, *Ethnographic Interview*, 67.

repetition is used infrequently, it is a hallmark of the ethnographic interview. The ethnographer not only repeats things the informant has said but also restates and repeats questions over and over again.[102] The third difference between the ethnographic interview and friendly conversation is another one that highlights the asymmetry of the ethnographic interview. Unlike friendly conversation where both parties may express interest and ignorance in what the other person is saying, in the ethnographic interview it is primarily the ethnographer who engages in these efforts.[103] Finally, while it is common in the context of friendly conversation to abbreviate one's stories or responses to questions, in the ethnographic interview "the ethnographer encourages expanding on what each person says."[104] The questions which I asked, and the way in which I asked them, in my semi-structured interviews were much more specific and elicited a great deal more detail than the kinds of questions that would arise in a given conversation on the street, in the mosque or in the living room of my informants' homes.

1.2.3 Methods Applied

What did all this look like on the ground in the field, though? To try and understand how my informants addressed their immigrant religious experiences, specifically through foodways, I engaged in extensive participant observation. I also conducted semi-structured interviews, interviews that have a fixed set of questions with enough flexibility in the question to take the conversation where the informant leads.

First, I would like to briefly situate the two fields in which I conducted this work as they relate to this project. Both Paris and Montréal are large urban centres, and as such have high concentrations of immigrant populations. As I will describe in more detail in Chapters 2 and 6, both Paris and Montréal are home to many Maghrébine Muslim immigrants. While it is difficult to know the exact numbers of Muslims in both locations, especially thanks to the fact that France does not document religion in its census information, there are some helpful estimates on which we can draw to start to paint a picture of the demographics present in both locations. According to some estimates, 40 percent of France's Muslim population lives in and around Paris.[105] This

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[102] Spradley, *Ethnographic Interview*, 68.
[103] Ibid., 68.
[104] Ibid., 68.
[105] Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaisse, *Integrating Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2006), 22.

means that, of the estimated 6 million Muslims who live in France, approximately 2.4 million Muslims live in the greater Paris area. This equates to roughly 24 percent of the total population of that region. In Montréal, according to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), 9.6 percent of the population of Montréal reported themselves as Muslim.[106] While there is a greater concentration of Muslims in Montréal than in the Canadian population overall (sitting at 2.8 percent according to the 2011 NHS data),[107] this percentage is still less than half of the proportion of Muslims living in Paris.

Before heading in to these fields, I successfully applied for research ethics approval from Wilfrid Laurier University's Research Ethics Board (REB).[108] To be granted ethics approval I created, submitted and subsequently revised a set of preliminary interview questions which became the outline for my semi-structured interviews.[109] Considering my informants' safety and comfort to be of utmost importance I also created an informed consent form which each of my 65 informants signed.[110]

The results from my fieldwork in Paris are based on the data that I collected from July 8 until December 20, 2012, in Paris, France, much of it centered at the Grande Mosquée de Paris, the most well-known, central mosque in Paris, and in France. Like Selby, I began in the field by undertaking what she calls "extreme volunteerism,"[111] principally by volunteering in the Mosque kitchen each day during the month of Ramadan, helping to prepare the iftar (the breaking of the fast meal during Ramadan). Through these volunteer activities I made myself and my project known, which provided me with the necessary credibility and trust within the community to conduct my fieldwork. For over five and a half months I spent over 800 hours interacting with people at the mosque and elsewhere, talking with people about food, helping the women in the mosque kitchen, eating meals at restaurants, drinking many cups of mint tea, attending a

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[106] Statistics Canada. 2013. *Québec (Code 24)* (table). *National Household Survey (NHS) Profile*. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E (accessed February 4, 2016).
[107] "National Household Survey Profile, Canada, 2011." *Statistics Canada*. Accessed March 7, 2016. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=01&Data=Count&SearchText=Canada&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1.
[108] REB approval #3257.
[109] See Appendix B for the list of interview questions that were approved by the REB.
[110] To protect the anonymity of my informants I gave each interview a code number. I use the unique code number for a given interview when quoting from it throughout this dissertation.
[111] Selby, *Questioning French Secularism*, 16.

wedding, sitting in the park outside of the mosque, celebrating the major religious festivals, etcetera. The participant observations were recorded in extensive field journal entries. This early engagement with the community at the Grande Mosquée provided me with initial contacts whom I began interviewing and who in turn provided other contacts for me to interview; this led to a snowball method of generating interviews.

I conducted 33 semi-structured interviews over this period. My interview subjects ranged in age from 18 to 64 and were relatively evenly split between males (14) and females (19). All 33 of the informants were either born in one of the three countries of the Maghreb that are the focus of this study (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) or as second generation Maghrébines in France. The largest group of informants was born in Algeria (20) followed by French-born informants (6), Moroccan informants (4) and finally, Tunisian informants (3). Eighty-one percent of my interview data comes from first generation Maghrébine Muslims in France. Furthermore, all but one of my 33 informants live and/or work within the 20 districts of central Paris, not in the banlieues, and all my interviews were conducted within the city centre.[112] This is an important difference from many previous ethnographic studies conducted on Muslims in France, most of which are conducted in the suburban context.[113]

The results from my fieldwork in Montréal are based on the data that I collected there from February 8 until August 11, 2013, with a brief return trip to Montréal for the Eid Al-Adha celebration on October 15, 2013. In Montréal I took a similar approach to that of Paris, starting with a well-known mosque and proceeding from there, although most of my participant observation was done in people's homes. Unlike in Paris, where I was kept firmly on the outside and given close but restricted access to the community and to individuals, in Montréal I was quickly invited in to the inner circles of the community and spent most of my time researching in the home context.[114] Over those six principal months I spent over eight hundred hours partaking in participant observation, talking about food with people in the mosque, their homes and on the

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[112] This was an essential limiting factor which I purposefully imposed on my Paris informants. Because of the kind of immigration policies in place in Canada, in contrast to France, I knew that the informants I would meet in Montréal would come from generally high socioeconomic status groups and would likely be highly educated; usually not the demographic makeup of Maghrébine immigrants living in the Parisian banlieues. A comparison of Maghrébine immigrants in the banlieues of Paris with Maghrébine immigrants in Montréal would be too different to make any useful comparative conclusions.

[113] I discussed many of these works in section 1.1.1 above.

[114] I further address this important difference in fieldwork experience in Chapter 9.

streets, preparing food and eating meals at my informants' homes, volunteering at the mosque during Ramadan for one of the iftar meals, discussing food with a group of women at another mosque, drinking many cups of mint tea and eating many North African sweets, having long conversations about the nature of Islam and Christianity on my informants' couches, etcetera. My initial contacts in Montréal came from my early visit to the mosque, as well as a contact of one of my informants in Paris who lives in Montréal.

I conducted 32 semi-structured interviews in Montréal. My 32 informants ranged in age from 22 to 73 and were made up of two-thirds female informants (22) and one-third male informants (10). Almost all my informants were first generation Maghrébines with 31 of the informants being born in one of the three countries of the Maghreb that are the focus of this study (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia). Only one informant was a second generation Maghrébine (Tunisian) born in Canada. Of the first-generation informants, the largest group was born in Algeria (20), followed by Morocco (9), and finally, Tunisia (2). All my informants lived either directly on the island of Montréal or in one of its adjacent neighbourhoods, namely Laval.

Once my year of fieldwork was completed, all 65 interviews were individually transcribed and the field journals were compiled into electronic format. Using the GT methods that I describe above, I then used the data analysis program NVivo to code and perform analysis on all my data. The results of all that data gathering and analyzing are what I present throughout this dissertation, especially in chapters 3 through 8.

1.2.4 Important Terminology

Before I continue, I would like to clarify some of the terms that I use throughout the work. Let me first make some preliminary comments about my choice of the word "informant" in my work. Spradley suggests that informants are (1) native speakers and (2) a source of information, i.e. teachers for the ethnographer.[115] Furthermore, work with informants is categorically different from work with subjects and respondents. Informants are different from subjects, as, according to Spradley, "work with subjects begins with preconceived ideas; work with informants begins with a naïve ignorance."[116] Since my relationship with the individuals in the community that I was studying began from relative ignorance, as I discuss throughout this chapter, subjects would not

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[115] Spradley, *Ethnographic Interview*, 25.
[116] Ibid*.,* 29.

be the right term to use. Informants are also different from respondents, according to Spradley. Respondents tend to answer surveys or queries using the ethnographer's language and culture, while research with informants depends more fully on the language of the informant.[117] While I did not conduct my research in Arabic, the maternal language of most of my informants, I did not conduct it in English either (my maternal language) but in French, which is the secondary, often used, and sometimes maternal language of my informants.

In searching out my informants I had two criteria for their self-identification: they had to claim first or second generation Maghrébine identity and they had to claim Muslim identity in some way. Let me describe how I approached both these terms/identities in turn. First, it is essential to address what I mean by the term(s) Maghreb(ine). When referring to the Maghreb I generally follow the Oxford Dictionary of English definition of the Maghreb as "a region of North and NW Africa between the Atlantic Ocean and Egypt, comprising the coastal plain and Atlas Mountains of Morocco, together with Algeria, Tunisia, and sometimes Tripolitania."[118] For the purposes of my project, Tripolitania is not included and only the three countries of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia comprise what I refer to as the Maghreb. I limit the Maghrébine region to these three countries since they were all either protectorates or colonies of France and consequently provide the largest numbers of Muslim immigrants to both France and Québec. Furthermore, when discussing the Maghreb with my informants these three countries were the ones that they mentioned. My informants never included Libya in their definitions or understandings of the Maghreb, but always mentioned one/all of the three which I include in my definition. In fact, regional identity was quite important to my informants and was often used interchangeably with their homeland national identity.

My informants would sometimes talk about being "Algerian" or "Moroccan" or "Tunisian" and sometimes talk about being "Maghrébine." They would say things like "coming from the Maghreb" as a blanket statement, knowing that I was aware of which specific country in the Maghreb that they were from. The only times that the distinction became important were in brief moments when my informants would speak about the specific recipes that varied across the Maghreb. For example, they would make a distinction between Moroccan harira and

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[117] Ibid., 31.

[118] "Maghreb," in *Oxford Dictionary of English (3rd Ed.)*, ed. Angus Stevenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Some definitions of the Maghreb include not just Tripolitania but all of Libya.

Algerian chorba (soups commonly made for the iftar during Ramadan). Other than these specific differences in national dishes, my informants did not seem to see any problem with using their regional and specific national identities interchangeably.

My use of Maghrébine throughout the text refers to an individual who comes from one of the three countries I include in my definition above (Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia), either as a first or second generation immigrant, and someone who continues to identify with their homeland national identity, regional identity or both. Throughout the text when I refer to "Maghrébine identity" I mean either (1) one of the three national identities that make up the term Maghrébine (rather than listing all three I use Maghrébine as a blanket term to cover the possibility of all three national identities, as my informants did in their interviews), or (2) regional identity, which my informants often use interchangeably with their national identities.

Finally, it is important to address what I mean when I use the term "Muslim" throughout. Falling firmly in line with Spradley's category of "standard ethnography" I attempted as often as possible to allow for the concepts and meanings, and definitions for that matter, of my informants to permeate the ethnographic description.[119] Therefore, I did not impose a specific definition of Muslim on to my informants, nor did I ask about, or restrict, the sectarian background of my informants.[120] In agreement with Baumann, that "by stereotyping informants as 'belonging to' or even 'speaking for' a pre-defined 'community', one runs the risk of tribalizing people, instead of listening to them, and might end up studying communities of the researcher's own making,"[121] I did not look for a specific "kind of Muslim" to interview but allowed my informants to define what being a Muslim meant to them.[122]

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[119] Spradley, *Ethnographic Interview*, 23.

[120] I acknowledge that there are many different philosophical, political and sectarian approaches to Islam. I was not concerned with which sect my informants fell into, or what philosophical or theological tradition they were descended from, and therefore I did not ask them about these identities nor did we speak about them in our interviews.

[121] Gerd Baumann, *Contesting Culture: Discourses of Identity in Multi-ethnic London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8.

[122] Talal Asad takes issue with this kind of definition of Islam in his "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Qui Parle*, vol. 17, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2009): 3, stating that the idea "that Islam is simply what Muslims everywhere say it is - will not do, if only because there are everywhere Muslims who say that what *other* people take to be Islam is not really Islam at all." Shabab Ahmed, in his *What is Islam?: The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), interprets Asad and suggests that by Asad's logic, "if Islam is simply what Muslims everywhere say it is, and if Muslims disagree in what they say Islam is, then there is no coherent concept or entity "Islam"" (269). Ahmed goes on to suggest that the anthropological definition which I use here, i.e. "whatever-Muslims-say-it-is," may be useful as "*description* but it is an inadequate *concept* in that it simply does not help us to understand any better; indeed, it proceeds on the basis that we cannot understand any better since

The definitions of what is meant to "be Muslim" were vast and varied.[123] Natash Bakht states that "many Muslims would be outraged by the contention that one is not a Muslim if one does not pray five times a day. They would rightly argue that what it means to be a Muslim depends on numerous personal, cultural, and religious choices."[124] As a result, I had informants who suggested that being a Muslim meant practicing the five pillars of Islam. Some posited that the five pillars were not enough, and one must do more to "be a Muslim," i.e. fast on other days of the year than just Ramadan, pray more than five times a day, study and read the Quran often, restrict even more foods than just the commonly understood food restrictions, etcetera. Others proposed that it was a born identity, something someone did not *choose* but simply *was*, based on the circumstances of one's birth. Others still stated that being Muslim was a cultural identity, one that one absorbed from one's surroundings and enacted as it related to one's cultural preferences and practices. My informants addressed the ideas of "good Muslim" versus "bad Muslim,"[125] and

there is no-*thing* there—which means: no coherent thing there—to be understood" (Ahmed, *What is Islam?*, 269). By allowing my informants to define themselves as Muslim in whatever way was true them, it does not mean that I take these definitions as the basis of defining what Islam is as a concept. Instead, by including all people who labelled themselves as "Muslim," no matter what sectarian background, ethnic variation, or theological understanding of that identity they posited, provides insight into the many ways that one can "be Muslim." Because of this the definitions of what it meant to "be Muslim" that my informants held were vast and varied which will become obvious throughout this work.

[123] For an excellent exploration of the many ways scholars and individuals alike have tried to define what is "Islam" and consequently "Muslim" see Shabab Ahmed's work, which I mention in the previous footnote: *What is Islam?: The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016). In this work Ahmed presents the various "conceptualizations of Islam—whether as religion, as culture, as civilization, as discursive tradition, as core beliefs, as whatever-Muslims-say-it-is, as a law-centered phenomenon, as so plural and various as to be "islams-not-Islam," etcetera" which he suggests have all "failed to convey the fullness of the reality of what it is that has actually been (and is) going on in historical societies of Muslims living *as Muslims*" (542). He offers his own conceptualization of Islam "in terms that map only the human and historical reality wherein Muslims have authored and lived with contradictions *as Islam*," and he seeks "to locate the logic of difference and contradiction as coherent with and internal to Islam" (542). He also suggests that there is a "mutually constitutive relationship between Islam and Muslims: on how Islam makes Muslims as Muslims make Islam" (543). He offers a definition of "Islam as meaning-making for the Self in terms of Pre-Text, Text, and Con-Text of Revelation," which "enables us to recognize that *all* acts and statements of meaning-making for the Self by Muslims and non-Muslims that are carried out in terms of Islam—that is, in terms of any Pre-Text, Text, or Con-Text—should properly be understood as *Islamic*" (544).

[124] Natasha Bakht, "Veiled Objections: Facing Public Opposition to the Niqab," in *Reasonable Accommodation: Managing Religious Diversity,* ed. Lori Beaman (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 97.

[125] For a discussion of how these terms are sometimes used see Alexandre Caeiro, "Religious Authorities or Political actors? The Muslim leaders of the French representative body of Islam," in *European Muslims and the Secular State*, eds. Jocelyne Cesari and Sean McLoughlin (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 71-84; Jocelyne Cesari, "Islam, Secularism and Multiculturalism after 9/11: A Transatlantic Comparison" in *European Muslims and the Secular State*, eds. Jocelyne Cesari and Sean McLoughlin (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 39-51.

"practicing Muslim" versus "non-practicing/believing Muslim,"[126] but there was no consensus as to what any of these terms meant. Remarkably, my informants were engaged in various "meaning-making" endeavors that had some relationship to the "Pre-Text, Text, or Con-Text" of Islam.[127] I interviewed any "Muslim" who understood him/herself as "Muslim" within this context.

Furthermore, speaking of "context," there is one last term I would like to address here: "the West." The "West" is a highly-contested term, with many scholars arguing against the binary understanding of "the West" versus any variety of other terms that are so often placed in opposition to it. With the advent of Samuel P. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*, these binaries and essentialisms have become problematic. My use of the term throughout the work is mostly about a particular orienting location. When speaking of "Islam in the West," I am referring primarily to any manifestation of Islam outside of majority Muslim contexts and within generally European, North American or Australian Muslim minority contexts. It has nothing to do with the long-held understanding by some that "West" and thus "Westernization" equals "modern" and thus "modernization."

1.3 Subjectivity: The Researcher's Ethnographic Self

There are some key components to myself as a researcher that inevitably influenced the data that I was able to gather during my fieldwork (ethnographic discovery) and on the way that I present that data here (ethnographic description).[128] Someone with a different background, both personal and academic, with a different set of strengths and weaknesses, most likely would have wound up with an entirely different set of findings. These personal idiosyncrasies affected how I gathered my data, what I paid attention to, what I probed further on, what I missed, etcetera, and

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[126] This distinction can sometimes refer to the distinction between those who practice AND believe, versus those who don't practice but still believe, OR between those who practice but don't believe and those who don't practice but still believe (or don't, but still see themselves as Muslim), etcetera. Bowen briefly addresses the first distinction in his article "Does French Islam have Borders? Dilemmas of Domestication in a Global Religious Field," *American Anthropologist*, vol. 106, no. 1 (March 2004): 45, suggesting that how often one prays is the indicator of which side of this dichotomy one falls on and that labelling someone as "'pratiquant' often carries with it an implication of fanaticism."

[127] See Ahmad's conceptualization of Islam as found especially in the conclusion to his, *What is Islam*, 542-546, which I describe in the footnote above.

[128] Spradley describes the difference between ethnographic discovery and ethnographic description in Chapter 2 of his *The Ethnographic Interview* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1979).

they affected how I understood that data and consequently communicated it in this ethnographic account. It is important to note these identities that I carried with me into the field shaped, and were shaped by, my informants throughout this ethnographic endeavour.

1.3.1 Ethnographic self as resource

Prior to the 1970s the "person or self of the anthropologist remained unseen and mostly unheard."[129] The ethnographer was meant to keep him/herself out of the equation as much as possible with the hope of maintaining as close to absolute objectivity as possible; this was the positivist model. According to Peter Collins and Anselma Gallinat, a paradigm shift occurred within the field in the mid-1980s. This shift was from complete separation and consequent denial of the role of the researcher self, to a "new self-conscious and critical anthropology."[130] Since the time of this paradigm shift, which Collins and Gallinat largely attribute to *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*,[131] any ethnographer is quick to note the ways that his/her history, background and personality affects his/her research. Still, this transparent self-consciousness is often relegated to the introduction of the work, and in many cases the ethnographic self is left there. The ethnographer acknowledges his or her own particularities, stressing the importance of reflexivity, but then the reader never sees him/her again. While I address my "self" and its influences on my study in-depth below, I try to incorporate my own voice throughout the whole dissertation. I present insights into my life in the field to show how my own set of experiences inevitably affected my field work, the collection of my data and ultimately the writing up of my ethnography.[132]

Before I address those specific elements of my ethnographic self that most strongly influenced my work, I would like to make a quick note about memory. Our memories and our

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[129] Peter Collins and Anselma Gallinat, "The Ethnographic Self as Resource: An Introduction," in *The Ethnographic Self as Resource: Writing Memory and Experience into Ethnography,* eds. Peter Collins and Anselma Gallinat (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 1.

[130] Collins and Gallinat, "Ethnographic Self: Introduction," 3.

[131] The original work to which Collins and Gallinat refer is James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986). A new edition was published in 2010 with a foreword by Kim Furton which addresses the ways that this book has influenced the field over the previous 25 years.

[132] Collins and Gallinat suggest that the experiences of the anthropologist are highly relevant for all stages of the ethnographic endeavor. In fact, they see the ethnographic self as "the incubator of ethnography" (Collins and Gallinat, "Ethnographic Self: Introduction," 11).

ability to remember, or lack thereof, influence our fieldwork experience. As stated by Simon Coleman,

> recalling the field and not just fieldwork itself, involves a combination of the serendipitous and the structured. The mediations of memory can act as ghosts in the ethnographic machine, and these can affect both ethnography as data-gathering process (writing down) and ethnography as authorship (writing up).[133]

In terms of the influence of memory on data-gathering, one's memories can change one's approach to a given situation. The experience or recall of one site or one ritual can activate memories from another. For example, after weeks of preparing the iftar meal with the women at the Grande Mosquée in Paris, the memories of these experiences may have clouded my later experiences of the iftar preparation. I may not have paid close attention to the intricacies of that specific day, acting almost on autopilot fueled by my memory of what the preparation process was supposed to look like. Secondly, and more importantly, memory offers some semblance of insider status. Coleman suggest that re-entry into a familiar field "implies a movement across this threshold from outsider's to insider's view as memory of past involvement is engaged."[134] For example, he describes how going back to a service of the community that he studied flooded him with memories of his time in the field and as a result provided him with some comfort and familiarity with the situation that he would not normally have had. His memories provided him with instructions on what to do and how to behave, making him feel and appear much more like an insider than an outsider.

While I do not have multiple field sites of which to remember, a similar situation arose for me when entering the field in Montréal. Having spent six months in a Maghrébine Muslim community in Paris, I was familiar with the sights, sounds, tastes and daily rituals of life. These memories travelled with me to Montréal and inevitably affected my approach to the community I met there. Entering an informant's home and smelling mint tea, as I discuss in the introduction to the Montréal case study, put me at ease and made me feel like an insider from the beginning of my time in the field in Montréal; a feeling I did not really experience at all during my time in the field in Paris, as I discuss below. I went through the process which Coleman calls "embodied forgetting," in that this "sense of being at home" within the ritual lay latent until it was

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[133] Coleman, "On Remembering," 216.
[134] Ibid., 220.

"reinvoked, with a jolt, by re-entry into the field."[135] Memory has a real effect on the fieldwork experience.

The other influence that memory can have on an ethnography is in the writing up of that project. While ethnographers are often "concerned with how to translate an 'authentic' sense of 'being there' to the reader, we can also add that ethnographies also contain tensions linked to how 'being *then*' can be worked into a text that may be written many years later."[136] How does one effectively communicate what it was like to be in the field, what the informants' lives were actually like, etcetera, when the fluid process of memory making and recall is constantly changing? Collins suggests that "narrative memory" is essential in the writing up of ethnography. Narrative memory, according to Collins, is the idea that "memory is largely a matter of being able to tell the right story at the right time."[137] In fact, he goes on to say that what we hold on to in our memories is merely a skeleton of a story that we then tell in the way we want, often manipulating our own experiences to fulfil our needs.[138]

Given these realities, it is my hope that I have told, not only the "right story," but the story that best reflects my informants' understanding of their experiences. I do acknowledge, though, that my storytelling is inevitably affected by the things that I "remembered," that seemed interesting to me. These memories, the making and recalling of them, were clearly influenced by who I am as a person.

1.3.2 Reflexivity/My Ethnographic Self

First, while no one comes into the field as a completely blank slate, we all bring distinct philosophies and theories about life and our work with us, I entered the field with a great deal of openness and a general lack of preconceived notions about my subject. I was a new ethnographer. Coming from graduate studies in biblical studies, not only was this my first time in the field, but the social scientific study of religion and the ethnographic methods that I described above were new territory for me. This methodological novelty proved to be both helpful and difficult. My newness to the world of fieldwork led to a great deal of insecurity in my early days in the field. I struggled with questions of "where do I start? What approach do I take? Will

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[135] Coleman, "On Remembering," 220.
[136] Ibid., 215.
[137] Collins, "The Ethnographic Self," 237.
[138] Ibid., 238.

people think I am not a serious researcher? How do I prove to the communities that I want to study that I know what I am doing when I am feeling so lost?" These overwhelming feelings left me almost depressed in my first weeks in the field, unable to convince myself to get out and start taking the necessary first steps to building rapport with my informants. I am sure that this early self-consciousness led to missed opportunities and inevitably shortened my already limited time in the field in Paris.

Despite this self-consciousness, and thanks to helpful conversations with my colleagues, I realized that, no matter what you know (or do not know) ahead of time, nothing can fully prepare you for the fieldwork experience. Context is key. Every community is different. Every underlying history, every cultural context, every researcher adds nuance to the fieldwork experience that makes it impossible to fully prepare for what one will experience in the field. Reading about a fellow scholar's study, listening to a conference presentation on the topic, taking the best ethnographic fieldwork class in the world, while all valuable for tips and tricks of fieldwork, cannot possibly provide a framework and expectation for a specific study in a specific context. For example, a study on evangelical youth in a southwestern Ontario university, such as Paul Bramadat's *The Church on the World's Turf*,[139] is going to look completely different from a study on Maghrébine Muslims in Paris and Montréal. So many influencing factors are different, and so, while stories of conversion attempts may be familiar and thus encouraging, my response to such conversion attempts was going to have to be different than Bramadat's. I think the realization that fieldwork is something that one cannot fully be prepared for, because of the absolute unexpected nature of fieldwork, was a helpful one for me to make early on in my research in France. No matter what level of training I would have had, it could not have possibly prepared me for what I would actually meet on the "ground" so to speak. Once I realized this, I could relax into the process a bit more and the daily unexpected events that arose in the field provided me comfort in the fact that there really was no preparing for such an experience.

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[139] Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: An Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). Bramadat's work was influential for me in my early days of learning about ethnography. His clear explanation of his methods and personal experiences in the field gave me an essential insight into what fieldwork can look like. Furthermore, Courtney Bender's *Heaven's Kitchen: Living Religion at God's Love We Deliver* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) was another ethnographic work from which I took many cues when learning about what fieldwork looks like and how to write up an effective ethnographic account.

If my experience is any indication, being good at fieldwork is not necessarily about how much you know about a particular topic or the training you have to conduct a particular kind of research, but about how good you are at relating to people. Furthermore, in line with grounded theory methods, I had a blank canvas on which to paint not only my experiences but my method. I was not coming in to the field with preconceived notions of how the fieldwork process would work, and honestly this worked out in my favour on several occasions. I could build rapport much faster with my informants since I was not limiting myself to a particular way of doing things. Not knowing how fieldwork was supposed to work allowed me to learn what fieldwork is—like not having a definition of religion that we impose on a religious group but allowing them to define what religion is for them—and being in the field defined what fieldwork is for me.

The second area in which I approached my research topic with very few preconceived notions was in relation to Islam. I am not a classically trained scholar of Islam. While I am trained in the tradition, having completed course work on the subject in my undergraduate and graduate studies, I was not an expert in the topic when I began my fieldwork. This relative unfamiliarity with the religious tradition of my informants provided a fertile ground for learning *from them* exactly what Islam was to them; Spradley suggests this unfamiliarity is beneficial to a good ethnographic study. He suggests that isolated societies with which we have absolutely no prior contact, knowledge or shared cultural understandings are the ideal setting for ethnographic studies because they are settings where "all the assumptions we often share with those we study are absent."[140] This lack of expert grounding can allow the researcher to learn more fully from the informant. While my informants and I had much in common, including a common secondary language that we spoke together,[141] my general naïveté about Islam allowed me to function in some ways as an ethnographer in a semi-isolated society. I had no detailed, fixed notions about what Islam was, or should be, about which food practices were "essentially religious" and which were cultural, and therefore my informants could fully teach me about what these things were to them in their own terms.

Similarly, because I am not a scholar of Islam, my informants did not get thrown off by my repetition of simple questions about their daily religious lives and practices. My efforts to

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[140] Spradley, *Ethnographic Interview*, 20.
[141] I address the limitations of using French as a research language in Chapter 9.

understand their lives on a simple, everyday basis made sense to them. This also meant that they tended to express every little detail about their lives and traditions, knowing that I had not heard it before. Just as much as I would not feel the need to explain my understanding of the religious reasons behind my Christian practices to a scholar of Christianity, if I had been a scholar of Islam my informants may not have felt like they needed to explain things in any real depth to me, assuming that I already knew why they would do or believe such and such a thing. Because I did not have this scholarly knowledge, and asked questions accordingly, my informants gave rich explanations in their own terms about what they understood Islam to be, and what they understood Muslim or Maghrébine food practices to be.

My identity as a religious outsider, then eventually a semi-spiritual-insider, were essential aspects of myself that influenced my study as well. I knew going into the field that I was going to be seen as an outsider, I am not Muslim after all. What I was not expecting was 1) how much I would feel like an outsider, 2) the benefits of being made to feel like a complete outsider, and 3) the surprising things that provided me with what I call semi-spiritual-insider status. First, there is a difference between telling yourself that you are an outsider because you do not share all of a group's convictions, and actually *feeling* the fact that you are an outsider. Like I said, I knew I was not going to have complete insider status, that I would not understand some of the things that happened at the mosque because I am not a follower of Islam, but what I did not know was how isolating of an experience it was to be an outsider. I can handle not understanding certain rites and rituals. I can handle not following certain conversations. I can handle not experiencing things on the same level as an insider might. What was difficult to handle, in Paris in particular, was the feeling that my outsider status made me bad, made me on some level not trustworthy, made me someone of whom to be suspicious. I had never felt that way in my life. I was not prepared to feel that way. This experience constantly led me to question my own morals and values. Maybe if I was being treated like an outsider and all the suspicion that goes along side that, I might actually be a bad person. It took me a while to acknowledge what was my own emotional baggage and what was being put on me because I was not "one of them."[142]

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[142] Collins and Gallinat suggest that it is in the moments where we are most uncomfortable, where we feel at fault, or we struggle with ourselves and others that provide the fodder for our most important insights. These moments usually occur when we straddle cultural conventions. Collins and Gallinat, "Ethnographic Self," 15.

This othering was happening for very particular reasons and it is important to note that I did not feel at all like an outsider when I was in Montréal. Paris was a different story. Despite making up a far more significant percentage of the overall population than they do in Canada, Muslims in France are seen as an ultimate "other." Whether it be from the difficult colonial history that is made evident by their presence in France, or the challenge that many of their practices and beliefs pose to the principle of laïcité that is mentioned daily in media and conversation on the street, they are a "they."[143] I heard many stories from friends and informants about being made to feel like an outsider by those "non-Muslims" around them. I witnessed with my own eyes French women being told to go back to their country simply because they were wearing Islamic dress. I saw dear friends of mine being asked if they were disguising themselves, being looked upon with looks of disgust simply because you could only see their faces. I felt peering eyes and looks of judgement when I wore my veil out of the mosque and on the subway on my way home. I had non-Muslim friends look at me with frustration when I would arrive to meet up with them in my veil from the mosque and tell me "enlève ça!"[144] and friends who would be frustrated with me because I was wearing "too much clothing" for the season. It was not just women who experienced this prejudice, although their stories were more frequent. I also met men who decided to shave their beards because if they kept them people would immediately think that they were "dangerous salafists."[145] I had informants tell me that it was just easier to shave than to deal with one more thing that made them feel like an outsider. I saw constant news reports about the problem of immigration from Muslim countries, about the halal food market taking over France and French people having "no other choice" but to eat halal and thus support the industry. I heard friends talk about how inappropriate it was to have a permanent exhibit on the "art of Islam" open at the Louvre, because it "did not fit with the principles of France." I heard, saw, and read politicians claim that Islam was taking over France

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[143] I address both France's colonial history and its approach to secularism, laïcité, in Chapter 2.

[144] "Take that off!"

[145] Jennifer Selby explains, in her article "Islam in France Reconfigured: Republican Islam in the 2010 Gerin Report" *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 31, no. 3 (2011): 383-398, how the term "Salafism" has been employed in France, particularly in French politics and policy, as a synonym for fundamentalist, extreme, radical Islam. Once set up in this way, it is then used as the ultimate representation of "otherness" or difference from French values. This term plays an important role in discussions around, and legal projects involving, the banning of the niqab. She goes on to explain that while Salafism is not widespread in France, reports such as the Gerin Report paint this tradition as one that "must be feared and contained" (389). The description above shows how my informants interact with and are impacted by this kind of rhetoric.

as was made obvious by the "fact" that Muslim children were stealing chocolate croissants from their non-Muslim school mates during Ramadan. Unfortunately, the list of examples of Muslims being "othered" in France can go on and on and on.

I did not witness many of these things right away, though. I did not have conversations with Muslims about the prejudice they were experiencing, about how journalists would want to talk to them just to get a good story, about how hard or easy it felt to "integrate" into French culture, simply because all of this prejudice, the history of feeling on the margins of the French society, of not quite fitting in, led most Muslims in France to mistrust anyone who was not a Muslim. I had a hard time getting people to talk to me. I struggled with gaining acceptance from the people I was meeting. As I started to make inroads people started to use the verb "se méfier" to describe Muslim responses to anyone outside of the community. I would hear this word multiple times a day, every single day, early on in my work in France, and by the end of my time there found myself using it to explain what was going on in the interactions of Muslims with non-Muslims in France. I had no idea what the verb viscerally meant at first and people were throwing it at me all the time. People would tell me this is why I was having a hard time really getting into my work, because Muslims have learned, through many hurtful experiences, to "se méfier" of others. I learned that this word meant more than simply "to mistrust" or "to be wary of"; it has a gut-wrenching edge to it. This was clearly the lens that I was being viewed through. While I understood why, especially after viewing all of the above-mentioned examples, Muslims had developed this approach to outsiders, it was sad to see. It was sad, I thought, that people's initial response to someone who wanted to talk to them would be one of suspicion. It was sad that no matter how many times I said "je ne suis pas une journaliste" I still sensed that that was exactly what many people thought I was.[146] It was sad that even after months in a community, building up friendships, offering help, and gaining trust and trusting others, that people still mistrusted me. While building trust is a hard enough task for any fieldworker, breaking into the circle of trust in a community that has "mistrust first" as its motto made for exceptionally difficult work.

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[146] Spradley suggests that the informant-ethnographer relationship is frequently confused with other relationships (Spradley, *Ethnographic Interview*, 26). While some may have to convince their informants that they do not work for a government agency, or the police force, or any such thing, I had to convince my informants in France on an almost daily basis that I was not a journalist.

Despite how uncomfortable of an experience my religious outsider status continued to be for me throughout my six months in Paris, it was an exceptionally beneficial fieldwork experience to have. As someone who studies an "othered" group, a group that is viewed as "outsiders" and feels like "outsiders" in their current setting, it was a valuable experience to feel that myself. To feel the confusion of not being able to follow a conversation, to feel like my outsider/other status made me not as good from the get-go, to feel like even after putting a lot of effort forward I was still not quite "one of them" was all eye opening for me. It helped me to gain even the slightest bit of empathy for the daily experiences that immigrants and especially marginalized immigrants have in their host countries. In the moments when I wanted to cry, when I did cry, I tried to hold on to those feelings and use them to understand my informants better. Once I got to the interview stage of my research these experiences helped to add a depth of understanding to my informants' responses about integration and accommodation, identity and need for community that I would not have been able to really grasp had I not struggled through similar issues in my attempt to get into the community in Paris. Empathy is key to understanding, and while I could not empathize with the actual details of the tradition, this experience of being "othered" allowed me to empathize at least on some level.[147]

Since I was not a Muslim, I could not participate in some of the rituals, and thus missed out on some opportunities to observe and listen to what people had to say about their food practice in the early days in the field. Slowly but surely, though, I was able to break down some of those barriers and be brought into the community on a deeper level. I found fairly early that there were things that helped me to gain access to the community in ways that others probably could not. While I was technically a religious outsider, there were things that gave me semi-spiritual-insider status in the community. The most significant of my identities which seemed to have the greatest effect on bringing down the "outsider" persona was my Christian identity. Upon meeting me people would ask if I was a Muslim. I anticipated that this would happen and wondered how best to respond to this inquiry. I knew ahead of time that my religious identity would most likely help rather than hinder my position in the community, so I would say no and explain that I was a Christian. My preconceived notion proved to be correct: my Christianity

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[147] I do not want to equate my brief experiences of feeling like an outsider to the real struggle that many of my informants go through on a daily basis in their lives in France and Québec. For some the experience is mild, much like mine, while for others their experiences of being "othered" are pervasive, overwhelming and sometimes even violent (both emotionally and physically).

gave me some level of spiritual street credibility. I belonged to the people of the book, I was not that far off from truth, there was hope for my soul, and there was a conversion possibility.[148] I discovered quickly that if I had not been a "person of the book" I probably would not have been given the same initial access, or the depth of access that I was granted. Sharing the basic understanding of one God, sharing the same basic spiritual history, gave me an immediate boost in trust points. I was not fully an insider but I was also not completely an outsider.

I wonder if some of the importance placed on my Christian identity came from the fact that we were in France, in a country where people were either not religious or would at least not talk about their own faith convictions with strangers. My openness to talk about this made me more like my Muslim informants who tended to be quite open about their religious identity, often wearing symbols of it on their heads, in a culture which is generally not open about such things. It was always interesting to me to see how people, usually in the mosque, would respond to me when I was being introduced to them and how my introducer would respond in turn. After answering that I was not a Muslim, and getting a somewhat negative look in return, my introducer would often retort on my behalf with "but she is a *practicing Christian*" and the tone would immediately change. Shoulders would relax, conversation would continue normally, and I would be "allowed" to stay. Throughout my fieldwork I struggled with how much to use my own spirituality as a way in to the community. I ended up not thinking about it too much and allowing myself to answer naturally, not lying at any point—and if that helped me, then so be it.

To this point in the discussion, in relation to my identity as a religious outsider/semi-spiritual-insider I have primarily addressed the Paris side of my fieldwork. The noteworthy point to be made here is that these aspects of my own religious life/identity had a different effect on my work in Montréal. While I had to struggle with my outsider identity in the community in Paris, even while gaining some "spiritual street cred" by being Christian, my different religious identity was never an issue for the community in Montréal. I was granted full access to people and rituals right from the beginning of my time in the field in Montréal. While the door was open for me from the beginning, my Christian identity granted me semi-spiritual-insider status in this community as well.

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[148] These were various responses that informants professed when hearing about my Christianity, or responses that became obvious over time spent in the field.

Again, in a context like Québec where religion is sometimes presented as problematic and often presented as fully private, my willingness to talk about my own faith provided a rapport between myself and my informants from the beginning. They too would ask if I was Muslim, and they too were pleased when I responded with my Christian identity. While in France my religious identity simply provided the ground for some level of trust to be present, in Montréal my Christianity not only helped to build trust, but also allowed me to engage in much deeper strains of theological conversation with my informants. My informants were interested in learning about Christianity and thus would spend hours with me discussing the similarities and differences between the two traditions. These moments of interfaith dialogue between my informants and me inevitably led to me getting a longer, and deeper glance into their daily lives, not to mention many more dinner invitations.

The final identity that influenced my data collection and writing is my identity as a woman. There are two aspects of this identity that I feel are important to present here. First, because this study is a study of food, and food is often the domain of women, I, as a woman, was able to gain access to places and events that a male researcher would not have been able to access. While men came in and out of the kitchen at the Grande Mosquée in Paris, the preparation and cooking of the iftar meal during Ramadan was understood as women's work. I easily fit in to this setting. In Montréal, during my many visits to informants' homes, I was invited in to the kitchen to see the food preparation in action, something that my male colleagues would not have been able to do given the cultural constraints placed on gender interactions in this community. Furthermore, because of some understandings of, and approaches to, gender and sexuality among some of my informants, I was able to conduct interviews with both women and men, again an option that would not necessarily have been open to a male ethnographer.

Conversely, because I was a woman, I did not necessarily have equal access to men's experiences. For example, at various iftars during the month of Ramadan (not all) and at the celebration of the Eid al-adha that I attended in Montréal, the men celebrated/ate in another room in the home. Since I am a woman, it was expected that I would stay with the women, so I do not know what kind of experience the men were having during these celebrations. I was told it would have followed a similar pattern to the women, but I missed out on the conversations that were

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had around the table; consequently, my participant observations of these moments are highly skewed to the female perspective.[149]

The other aspect of my identity as a woman that influenced my ethnographic experience is the role of sexuality in the ethnographic process. I knew that gender issues would come up in my fieldwork, that being a woman was going to affect my work in specific ways, as I discussed above, but I did not expect sexuality to play such a large role in my work. I even expected, given what others had told me, that I would receive some marriage proposals but did not think that I would receive the kind and number of proposals I did. Unfortunately, my Paris fieldwork experience was not the first time I came across the issue of having to let someone down gently and carefully to not affect my future research. When I was in Paris earlier, in 2010, to lay the groundwork for what would become my dissertation fieldwork, an Algerian journalist took quite the liking to me and took advantage of my vulnerable position and my eagerness to get to know the community in order to attempt to grow closer to me. He knew people of influence in the community, and just as easy as he could open those doors for me he could also close them off. I can remember feeling off, feeling like I may be in a dangerous situation, but having to tread carefully with how I refused his advances because I was afraid he would destroy my chances of researching in the community before they even began. I hated that I had to deal with that. I hated that I felt like I had to almost take the abuse because I did not want to lose out on data and connections. I hated that I was in a position that made me feel beyond uncomfortable, even violated. As seen in Gwen Sharp and Emily Kremer's article "The Safety Dance: Confronting Harassment, Intimidation, and Violence in the Field," this problem is especially prevalent for novice researchers who are "often more concerned with their methodology and response rate than ensuring their own safety."[150] I can remember hearing the voices of imagined fellow academics and professors in my head convincing me that getting the data was the most important thing—more important than my gut telling me to get out of there.

Those feelings of unease arose again during my fieldwork in Paris when I received a marriage proposal from someone who held a very important role within the community I was studying. Although I was not afraid for my safety like the first time, I still felt like I needed to be

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[149] I was able to attend a couple of iftars in Montréal where the men and women ate and celebrated together as a family, which provided me with some insight and access to the men's experiences of these important events.

[150] Gwen Sharp and Emily Kremer, "The Safety Dance: Confronting Harassment, Intimidation, and Violence in the Field," *Sociological Methodology*, vol. 36 (2006): 321.

especially careful with how I would turn down this proposal in order to protect all of the work that I had put into my fieldwork over the preceding month. I wanted to respond with a laugh and a "are you serious? You cannot propose to someone after only knowing them for a month!" But instead I had to watch my words, and feign interest. If I offended this person I could very well lose everything that I had built towards. He could turn the entire community against me, could make it impossible for me to continue there and need to start over somewhere else. Having already spent a great deal of time in the community building rapport and connections, starting over was simply not an option for me. His proposal made me appreciate that I had not fully realized that the sexuality and relational impulses of my interviewees could affect my work in such a way. It is quite possible that because this man was interested in me I was able to gain access that I would not normally get. It would have also been possible that, if I had offended him in my refusal, all my access would go away. A broken heart is bad in any circumstance and can lead the broken hearted to react in harsh ways. I remember being frustrated that I had to deal with such a thing. Of course I was flattered, flattered that someone of such status, who could propose to any one, would ask me, an outsider, but I was upset that I had to be so careful with my response. I was aggravated that I had to think hard about how to express honestly my refusal without offending. I was discouraged by the idea that my male colleagues most likely never had to deal with such problems. I was annoyed that the idea of possible marriage proposals was a joke to many people, something funny and not to be taken too seriously. I remember hearing comments from colleagues and friends alike "it might not have been a serious proposal," "he was probably just trying to compliment you," "I'm sure he wasn't trying to make you uncomfortable," etcetera. I was irritated that people seemed to think that it was his intentions that seemed to matter, not how they made me feel. I was frustrated that they presumed to tell me that I got it wrong, that I was being too sensitive, that it could not possibly have been that tough. I was bothered that in my academic career I was dealing with what felt like a version of the slut/prude paradox that many young women face. If I was harsh and closed off I may not have gained access to certain experiences, but at the same time, if I had used my sexuality to my advantage there would be another ethical dilemma at hand.

I do wonder how much of this issue of sexuality and the slut/prude paradox relates to my specific situation though. I was a young, seemingly unattached, Western woman researching highly male dominant communities where marriage is exceptionally important. If I were a man I

probably would not face the same level of advances. If I were an older woman, or a woman whose husband was always with her, would it have been the same? Regardless, even though I can reason why this may have been the case, it still led to complicated situations that I had to navigate in the field. Not only were marriage proposals an uncomfortable situation that arose within my fieldwork, but the feeling of being flirted with, and in some circumstances harassed were also present. At first I wondered why I was getting a better response rate from men than from women, whom I or my previous interviewees approached for an interview. Topics that would not come up for others in the field came up often in my work, especially with men. My relationship status, my thoughts on marriage, my physical appearance, etcetera, were constantly questioned and commented on.

A significant problem in our field, and many others for that matter, is that there is no upfront training in how to be safe in the field. Sexual and emotional safety is a topic we seem to ignore, or are too afraid, or perhaps too embarrassed, to talk about. I remember many instances of feeling exceptionally uncomfortable but pushing myself through the interview any way to get the "much needed data," because I thought that was the most important thing. That was what was emphasized in my dissertation proposal defense, that is what is emphasized in conversations about our research process. I was able to find some suggestions of how to avoid such danger, but not until *after* the fact, once I knew that my safety had already been compromised and I wanted to figure out if I was the only one that had experienced such a thing. That being said, the suggestions that are out there of how to avoid said danger are not always helpful either way.[151] The suggestion to dress conservatively not only reinforces the "blame the victim" attitude, but in my case it made no difference at all. Dressing conservatively, even veiling, did not help me. This often led to more comments being made about "how beautiful" I was. Other suggestions about making sure other researchers know where you are, that you are in contact with members of the research team, etcetera, do not help those field workers who are alone in the field, quite possibly in another country.

It is fascinating to me that our ethics forms ask what are the risks to our informants but not to us as researchers. Furthermore, we tell our interviewees that they can end the interview at any time, but we do not necessarily know this to be true for ourselves as well. I did not know this

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[151] To see a summary of some of the various suggestions that have been made for staying safe in the field, including a list of realistic strategies that the authors present, see Sharp and Kremer, "Safety Dance," 324-326.

was really an option for me until I got home and read Sharp and Kremer's work. Trusting your gut in the field is essential. When I was with the Algerian journalist I knew it was wrong. His physical advances were wrong, but my fear of losing out won over my gut feeling that I was in danger. This is problematic.

Not only did the sexuality and relational desires of my informants have an influence on my work, but my own sexuality did as well. While my own interests seemed to be generally kept at bay, I could not help but notice how my tone and approach changed a bit when interviewing men versus women. Almost innately, in the presence of a strong male character or an attractive one, I would somewhat revert to a slightly meek, more giggling version of myself. I did not notice this in the moment, but could hear it when I listened back to my recorded interviews. Why did this happen? Did that affect my data? Did I ever allow myself to be distracted by attraction and subsequently not probe into responses to my questions enough? Or did I ask more questions and extend the interview out of sheer interest to keep talking to the attractive person on the other side of the cafe table? When dealing with other humans, when placed in close quarters over long periods of time with them, when experiencing highly emotional and personal moments with them, when talking about important and stimulating topics with them, closeness and attraction seems almost inevitable. The question becomes how to address this inevitability and to create healthy and safe environments in which to do our work. Sometimes I feel like we think that as researchers we can check our humanity at the door and not have such things affect us, but the truth of the matter is that we cannot. We cannot leave our identities at the door, but we must be aware of them, and acknowledge the potential effect that these identities might have on the outcome of our work.[152]

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[152] For matters of space I cannot fully address some of the other identities that influenced my work in the field. Another interesting one that I will mention briefly here was my Canadian/non-Québécois identity. In France, my identity as a Canadian helped to separate me from the what my informants saw as the unaccepting, racist, and judgemental French majority population. Not only that, but it placed me outside of the realm of laïcité, and in my informants' eyes firmly within the multicultural camp; being Canadian was a beneficial identity claim. Similarly, being a non-Québécois Canadian was also beneficial for me in my Montréal fieldwork. My informants saw me as a fellow "outsider," as someone trying to figure out how to function within intercultural Québec.

1.4 Summary of the Dissertation

In the chapters that follow I attempt to answer the questions: How can food act as a means of reimagining, recreating, reaffirming, and expressing, sometimes complicated and contested identities for minority immigrant communities in highly secular contexts? Does food emerge as a more "politically/culturally correct" avenue for religious expression than other religious practices? In secular contexts, where public signs of religiosity are often seen as problematic, could subtler/more private expressions of religious identity help the minority religious immigrant to engage with and express their identities in meaningful ways? Additionally, in contexts like France and Québec, which have strong and distinct food cultures, by taking up some of the foodways of the host context, and/or leaving some of the home food practices that are seen as especially in conflict with the host context behind (i.e. the restriction on alcohol and pork), could minority immigrants claim and demonstrate their Québécois/French side of their transnational identity? Would they even want to? If they did, how would "French/Québécois Maghrébine Muslim immigrants" create and maintain their hybrid transnational identities in contexts that are seemingly hostile toward them because of those societies' unique and complex histories and interactions with colonialism, immigration, secularism, and nationalism?

My study shows not only that the host contexts have unique histories and interactions with "the other" but that "the others" also have unique responses to these contexts. Québec is *not* a mini-France, as some may assume, and there is no unified way that Muslims across or even within cultures and contexts respond to the challenges to identity that they face.

While the way my informants negotiated these identities was remarkably diverse, I demonstrate how food played a significant role in all of their negotiations; food was often the most important symbol of those identities, whatever those identities were. By highlighting food and foodways I show the importance of lived, everyday religious practice as a means of creating and maintaining transnational identity for minority immigrant communities in highly secular contexts. Food is often a more "politically/culturally correct" avenue for religious expression because of the malleability of categorizing a foodway as cultural rather than religious, and the general private (versus public) nature of foodways. In contexts such as Paris and Montréal,

where outward/public signs of religiosity are often seen as problematic,[153] and food culture is central to national identity, these kinds of actions may take on importance for the minority immigrant individuals living in these cities.

In this chapter I addressed the why, what and who of this project. I began with a brief overview of the foundational works on Muslims in France and Canada which oriented the development of this project. I presented the kinds of questions, gaps and calls for research in this field which my work directly addresses. I then discussed what I am calling my philosophy of religion and religious studies. I see religion as a means of making sense of the world/one's life and I believe that people engage in this sense-making in their everyday lived practices which help them to both "make homes and cross boundaries." Because of this, I believe that one can gain significant insight into how people make sense of their worlds, their often conflicting, uncomfortable, difficult worlds, by examining the "stuff" of people's lives, specifically food. In this I showed how this dissertation expands upon the field of lived religion and Tweed's definition of religion to explore religion and movement specifically through the lens of food. Next I turned to a brief explanation of my academic background in the study of religion to show how I was uniquely situated to undertake this work. Throughout this dissertation it will become clear how my training in religious studies, textual studies, interreligious dialogue and religious diversity in North America helped me to understand the religious lives of my informants and even helped me in my field work. I then described my broad methodology, and the methods I employed to enact this methodology. In this I presented my approach to and understanding of ethnography as a means of *learning from* one's informants in their own words, and outlined the Grounded Theory methods that I used in my field work and analysis. I also briefly addressed

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[153] Both France and Québec have, in the recent past, proposed or implemented various laws to ban the wearing of religious symbols in public spaces. In France there was the 2004 ban of the headscarf, along with crosses and turbans and other symbols of religious identification in state schools in France, as well as the 2011 ban on the niqab in all public places. Recently, the French Prime Minister suggested that the headscarf should also be banned in universities (it is not, at the time of this writing, banned in university settings). In Québec, in 2013 the then PQ government, under the leadership of Premier Pauline Marois, proposed the now infamous "Charter of Québec Values" (Bill 60). This Charter would ban the wearing of overly conspicuous religious symbols, i.e. the kippah, turban, hijab, or large crosses, for public-sector employees, such as teachers, nurses, doctors, civil servants and police officers. Bill 60 was never implemented in the province, as Marois called an election and lost, but its ripple effects are evident in the province. In 2015, Liberal leader Philippe Couillard proposed a new religious neutrality legislation in Bill 62. In this Bill, reminiscent of Bill 94 which was tabled in 2010, people giving *and receiving* public services would need to have their faces uncovered, making the niqab and burka banned in these contexts. Overall, overt symbols of religious identification are problematic in both of these contexts.

James P. Spradley's ethnographic interview structure, with which my interviews fell in line. After presenting the specific details of my ethnographic study in Paris and Montréal, I addressed three important terms that I use throughout this work: informant, Maghreb(ine) and Muslim. I finished this chapter by describing my ethnographic self which was, and continues to be, in constant communication with my informants and data.

I break the body of the dissertation into two parts: 1) the Parisian case study, and 2) the Montréal case study. Comparative studies which are situated in two, or more, distinct cultural settings inevitably provide insight into the ways that context affects individuals and communities living therein. While I was expecting minor differences between the experiences of my Paris informants and my Montréal informants because of this fact, I could not have predicted how different their experiences would be. Because of this, it is essential to describe the cultural and historical contexts within which my informants were living their transnational lives. Chapters 2 and 6 directly address this issue by presenting the unique histories of both France and Québec in relation to four essential topics that influence a study such as this, namely, colonialism, immigration, secularism and nationalism.

In Chapter 2 I present France's colonial history in the Maghreb and show how that history leads to a wide variety of "colonial memories," or lack thereof, present in France today. These colonial memories have both negative and positive effects on the relationship between Maghrébine Muslim immigrant communities and the non-immigrant, non-Muslim majority French population (which can be worked out in the realm of food). I then go on to explore the immigration history of Maghrébines to France showing how this history sets the stage for a variety of conflations of terms in France, i.e. "immigrant" with "Muslim," "Muslim" with "Maghrébine," and vice versa. These conflations often lead to the immigrant individual feeling a great deal of pressure to show how he/she is different from these identities and falls in line with the secular national identity in France.

These two terms, secular and national, orient the second half of Chapter 2. I present France's understanding of secularism, namely, laïcité, and describe both the strict and soft forms of laïcité. I argue that, because of France's approach to secularism, the Muslim immigrant in France may find him/herself under more pressure to label religious food practices as cultural food practices in order to not offend the secularist sentiments that rule the nation. Finally, I close this chapter by investigating what it means to "be French" as well as who is seen as having

access to this national identity. I suggest that food and drink, specifically wine drinking, are particularly important aspects of the unified culture that is essential to the Republican national tradition. I question if individuals or communities who do not engage in these essential national identity practices can really claim that identity, e.g. can a Muslim who does not drink wine *really* "be French?" Thus, I conclude this chapter with an exploration of the concept "French Islam." I posit that ultimately having a "French Islam" leads to hyphenated identities for those who claim membership in this group. This hyphenation often leads to conflict arising out of the pressure from both sides to prioritize each side over the other.

In the next three chapters I present the results from my ethnographic case study in Paris. Each chapter explores one significant theme that arose out of my Parisian data. In Chapter 3, I address the spectrum of approaches to identity consolidation taken by the Maghrébine Muslim community in Paris, and the role that food plays in these negotiations. Chapter 4 investigates the presence and influence of transnationalism on my informants. I argue that food can serve as the symbol par excellence of both similarity and difference between "us" and "them," and can consequently be used by the immigrant to aid in or detract from their "integration" into the French culture. Finally, Chapter 5 presents an overview of the ways that my informants practice their religion every day in a relatively secular France, and address how they justify these seemingly problematic practices in light of French laïcité. In this chapter I show how my informants' attitudes toward their food practice change depending on whether they understand and label a given practice as cultural or religious.

Overall, in these three case study chapters I show a glimpse into the varied and complex approaches to daily life that are present in the Maghrébine community in Paris and how their approach to their food practices changes or remains consistent with what they did in the homeland. I challenge simplistic notions of Muslim identity formation in France. This case study shows how my informants' food practices reveal that categories of "good and bad Muslim," "practicing or believing," simply do not cover the diverse identities present in this immigrant location.

Part 2 takes a similar structure to Part 1, with one historical/contextual chapter, followed this time by two case study chapters. Chapter 6 takes the identical structure to Chapter 2, providing an overview of the impact of colonialism, immigration, secularism and nationalism on the Québécois context within which my Montréal informants live. While Québec did not play a

colonizing role in North Africa, as France did, its own identity as a "colonized nation" imparts essential characteristics to the Québécois context; characteristics that lead to symbols of Québécois identity taking root, namely, religion (and eventually secularism) and the French language. Because of this history, any individual or community which differs from either of these identities is seen as threatening and unwelcome in the eyes of the majority Québécois population. I then go on to present the immigration patterns and history of Muslims to Canada, and then specifically to Québec. I address the reasons that Maghrébine Muslims have immigrated to Québec, alongside the distinct immigration policies in the province that have clear consequences for this community, specifically the emphasis on the French language.

In my attempt to address Québécois secularism I present what church/state relations looked like in the province before 1960 (Catholicism had a prominent role in Québec politics and culture), the Quiet Revolution, the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, rigid versus open secularism and Québec's unique approach to multiculturalism, which is called interculturalism. Because of Québec's intercultural approach to laïcité I argue that while the province is seen as a highly "secular" setting, religious minorities in the province do maintain a great deal of freedom to practice their religious traditions and live out their religious identities, leading to less pressure to alter such practices. In this context, specific foodways take on added cultural and religious importance.

I close this chapter with an examination of Québécois nationalism and national identity. The fact that there is a common national culture with which any immigrant is expected to interact, and be changed by, à la interculturalisme, makes the situation in Québec distinctive in Canada. I argue that that common national culture is based on the French language and a secular mindset. Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Québec, who are by and large French-speaking thanks to the immigration policies present in the province, feed into one aspect of the Québec common culture; but they are also seen as a threat to the secular characteristic of that common culture. I respond "both yes and no" to the question: Can a Maghrébine Muslim living in Québec claim both sides of a potential "Québécois(e) Muslim" identity?

The following two chapters examine the experiences of my informants through the exploration of three themes: identity, transnationalism and practice. Chapter 7 reviews the various ways that my informants identify themselves, interact with, and present those identities through their food practice in Montréal. I show how, in line with the idea that "everyone is an

immigrant in Canada" and it is the origins that make you different that ultimately make you fit with the national identity, my informants would stress their Maghrébine identity in word and action. Food plays an important role in defining and presenting my informants' Maghrébine identity; it is part of the communal identity that must be protected. Religious identity is also essential for my Montréal informants; it was an actively chosen identity made up of the things of everyday. Food played a vital role in one's religious identity; in fact, in this chapter, I show how in Montréal my informants often felt the need to "go further" in their practice, to go beyond the traditional Muslim food practices in order to demonstrate their Muslim identity in this context. After discussing all these various identities that my informants claim, I then address how my informants see themselves as holding different identities from the non-Maghrébine/Muslim Québécois(es) that surrounded them: there is a distinct "us" and "them," and food is the realm within which my informants demonstrated these identity differences. I show how food can also act as a powerful means of bridging the gap, often perceived as being larger than it actually is, between these different communities.

In the second section of Chapter 7 I investigate the many ways in which my informants attempt to bridge the transnational gap between homeland and host land. I show how my informants use specific foods and food practice to help gain access to both sides of their transnational identity. They use food to access memory and consequently recreate "home" in the host land. They also engaged in food practices that allow them to tap into the host land side of their transnational identity; they prepare and consume "Québécois" food. I then present the idea that food can be a tool that both sides use to aide in the process of immigrant integration.

Chapter 8 addresses how my informants defined, and consequently interacted with, culture and religion through their food practices. When considering food practice the lines between these two categories often become quite blurry. By examining the specific foodways that make up the four categories of food practice that I explore in both Chapter 5 and Chapter 8, I show how an individual's understanding of a practice as cultural or religious will alter his/her interaction with it. My informants would not shy away from labelling a practice religious, but would almost always give another, more scientific, or logical reason for why they engaged in such exercises. True to Québec interculturalism, my informants kept their religious identities but also adjusted them, and their reasoning and understanding of them, to fit into the common culture of Québec.

I return to some of the overarching themes of this dissertation in Chapter 9, the conclusion. After briefly outlining those themes, I compare the data that I collected in Paris and Montréal, to show the effect of context, which I outlined in Chapters 2 and 6, on the immigrant experience of my informants. I show how differences in the host land's approach to nationalism leads to significant differences in the desire/ability of my informants to claim French/Québécois national identity. Consequently, often as a direct result of this national contextual disparity, I show how my informants interact differently with the concepts of religion and culture in Paris and Montréal. I then explore the real practical impact of these differences on some of the everyday lived religious/cultural practices of my informants. I close this section of Chapter 9 by examining one of the similarities that are found in both my Paris and Montréal data set, namely the use of logic to support one's religious food practices.

After this I acknowledge some of the limitations of my study: access to the communities and time in the field, not knowing the home context of my informants, using a research language that is not my native language (as well as the second language of many of my informants), and limitations in method such as the snowball method of sampling.

I then take an unusual turn and discuss the scholarly context within which I situate my work. This situating work came at the end of my dissertation process, after I had collected, analysed and written my ethnography, and as I noted earlier, I therefore place it at the end of the dissertation itself. In this section I critique and commune with significant players in the fields of religion and migration, and food and religion.

I close Chapter 9, and the dissertation, with the proposal of possible future avenues of research which largely emerge from the time and contextual limitations of my ethnographic fieldwork. The contexts in which my research takes place ultimately influence the kind of lived Islam which I encountered on the ground in both Paris and Montréal. By comparing these two distinct contexts through the lens of food practice I present the colourful and complicated picture of the everyday lives of Muslims in "Multicultural Montréal" and the "Secular City of Lights" (Paris).

PART 1: Everyday Islam in the City of Lights

Chapter 2: Colonialism, Immigration, Secularism and Nationalism: The Four Influential Factors of the Parisian Context of Reception[154]

2.1 Introduction

It was the first week of my fieldwork in France and I was settling in to the city and situating myself as a young ethnographer in a foreign land. Within the first few days I had already had multiple conversations with my French friends, and their friends, about my research. Everywhere I looked, every conversation I had, I was reminded why I was there; there was clearly something complicated and notable happening in France in regards to the Muslim population living there. Within the first four days I had experienced both blatant and subtle expressions of racism and prejudice against people of Arab, and particularly Maghrébine, background. I had witnessed an uncomfortable situation in a cell phone shop where a man came in and made a scene, only for the people around me to quickly label him as an Arab, understood Muslim, before any other descriptive word, once he was out of the store. I had conversations with my non-Muslim French friends who spoke clearly about the "problem" of third generation Maghrébine youth in France. I had seen multiple posters in the Metro system imploring Muslims to "go home," alongside more subtle posters promoting pieces of theatre which explored the Muslim "problem," or propaganda against *halal*.[155] I overheard multiple conversations on the train or in restaurants over dinner about "them" trying to take over France. Within four days it became clear to me that something was happening in France that was different than other places I had been, that caused a setting that would inevitably affect my potential informants. It was clear—on the ground, and not just from

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[154] I use the term "context of reception" in line with other scholars of religion and migration to refer to destination societies, or host societies/communities. Specifically, Wendy Cadge et al., "Religious Dimensions of Contexts of Reception: Comparing Two New England Cities," *International Migration* vol. 51, no. 3 (2013): 84-98; Philip Connor, "Introduction," *International Migration* vol. 51, no. 3 (2013): 1-7; Philip Connor, *Immigrant Faith: Patterns of Immigrant Religion in the United States, Canada and Western Europe* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2014); Margarita Mooney, "Religion as A Context of Reception: The Case of Haitian Immigrants in Miami, Montréal and Paris," *International Migration* vol. 51, no. 3 (2013): 99-112.

[155] *Halal* is an Arabic term meaning "permissible." While in the case of Islamic food practice *halal* can refer to all permissible foods, it is often understood by outsiders to refer solely to permissible meat, i.e. meat that has been slaughtered according to the rules and rituals of the Islamic tradition. In my interviews with my informants we often made the distinction between *halal* and *halal meat* to be clear which meaning of the term we were referring to.

my previous readings—that something, or some things, in France's history had led to this type of outworking of prejudice that seemed to be present.

Before I can present the findings from my ethnographic study it is important to situate my research in specific histories and contexts, which will inevitably influence how my data is presented and viewed. More importantly, it is essential to know the background context with which my informants are interacting in their daily lives. To understand what food practice may reveal about individual identities and integration efforts one must understand the historical and cultural contexts that set the stage for these negotiations for any immigrant community. The focus of this chapter is the specific history and context of France as it relates to the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study.[156] France's unique history and interaction with colonization, immigration, secularism and nationalism all have a significant impact on any French citizen living in the Republic today, but even more so on the country's immigrant population, especially people arriving from North Africa.[157] The French context is a particularly remarkable one in regards to Islam in the West. As argued by Laurence and Vaisse,

> Because of the size of France's Muslim population—the largest in Western Europe—and because of France's secular sensibility and its all encompassing definition of citizenship, which aims to subsume other racial, ethnic, or previous national identities, the French experience with Islam is a particularly noteworthy example of the encounter of Islam and the West.[158]

Because of these reasons, and the ones that I mentioned above, the French context provides a certain type of setting for life as an immigrant Muslim in the so-called "West."[159]

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[156] Since this is a qualitative ethnography I am not trying to situate the experience of all Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Paris (and Montréal), but only those who are represented in my data set. As I addressed in Chapter 1, by Maghrébine I mean anyone who claims national identity from any of the following countries: Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, whether first or second generation. By Muslim, I include anyone who claims this identity for themselves in whatever definition they understand (although all my informants followed Ahmed's definition of a Muslim as someone who engages with the revelation of God given through the Prophet Mohammad). By immigrant, I mean anyone who was either born in another country than their current country of residence (first generation) or the children of such individuals (second generation) who continue to identify with their home land identity.

[157] A presentation of the entirety of France's immigration history and policy, France's colonization efforts and effects, France's form of secularism, and France's type of nationalism all require books in and of themselves. The focus in this chapter is on how each of those four things relate specifically to the Muslim population and experience in France. More specifically, I focus on the parts of these four topics that relate directly to the Maghrébine Muslim experience in France.

[158] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 1.

[159] As I briefly addressed in Chapter 1, my use of "the West," and specifically "Islam in the West," here is in reference to a particular orientating location, namely the manifestation of Islam outside majority Muslim contexts

To "set the scene" for the France with which my informants interact I explore the four influential factors of French colonialism, immigration, secularism and nationalism. First, I briefly address the history of colonization undertaken by France, specifically as it relates to the colonization of North Africa, and the effects of this history on the attitudes towards and within the Muslim communities located there. Second, I outline the immigration history of Muslims to France, with a specific focus on the immigration history of Maghrébine Muslims to France. I answer questions such as, "Under what circumstances did Muslim communities come to France?" What are the specific orienting immigration policies present and how do they affect the Muslim immigrant experience? Third, I provide an outline of the historical relations between church and state in France and how these act as a base for France's approach to secularism, i.e. laïcité. Finally, I discuss the notion of French nationalism that arises from all these other factors and that consequently affects the idea of "who can be French." In this I explore whether it is possible to have a "French Islam." All these historical and contextual considerations will lay the groundwork for understanding how my informants live their North African, Muslim and French lives out in France, a topic I address specifically through the lens of food practice in chapters 3, 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

2.2 France's Colonial Presence in the Maghreb and its Affect on Maghrébine Muslims[160]

and within generally European, North American or Australian Muslim minority contexts. Furthermore, in line with Abdolmohammad Kazemipur's exploration of "Muslims and/in the West" in his work *The Muslim Question in Canada,* it is my goal to show throughout this work that neither "Muslims/Islam" or the "West," for that matter, are monolithic entities. Instead, each is composed of vast and various ethnic, cultural, religious, and political entities. Kazemipur suggests, at the very least, both "Islam" and "the West" can be divided into three identifiable variations. For "Islam"—Arab, Turkish and Persian. For the "West"—Southwestern Europe, east-central Europe, and North America (to which I would add Australia). My work examines one of these variations of Islam, namely the Arab, and more specifically the Maghrébine version of Islam, and two of the variations of the "West," namely Southwestern Europe and North America.

[160] For general overview of the French colonial effort and its effects on Maghrébine immigrants in France see: Bowen, *Can Islam be French?*; Bowen, *Why the French don't like headscarves*; Mary Dewhurst Lewis, *The Boundaries of the Republic: Migrant Rights and the Limits of Universalism in France, 1918-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007); Eid, *Being Arab;* Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the* Earth (New York: Grove Press, 2004); Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Jacques Frémeaux, "Les ambiguïtés de l'idéologie colonial" in *Histoire de l'Islam et des musulmans en France du moyen-age à nos jours,* ed. Muhammed Arkoun (Paris: Albin Michel, 2006); Shahnaz Khan, *Muslim Women: Crafting a North American Identity* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000); Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam;* Todd Shepard, "Excluding the Harkis from Repatriate Status, Excluding Muslim Algerians from French Identity," in *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race and Nation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Jamel Stambouli and Sonia Ben Soltane, "Muslim immigrants in

The colonial history of France in the Maghreb has a direct impact on the lives of Maghrébine Muslims in France today. When examining food, one begins to get a glimpse into the ripple effects of this history. The French colonizers did not just bring "civilization" with them to North Africa, but they also brought baguettes. While regional styles of bread continue to be an important element to Maghrébine meals, baguettes are also found all over Maghrébine tables. For many of my informants, they could not eat couscous without baguette. It was an essential element to any meal experience, acting particularly well as a utensil to pick up morsels of meat or vegetable from the communal plate. I noticed baguettes on every plate that I helped to prepare at the mosque and on every plate that I ate with my informants in their homes or in Maghrébine restaurants in the city. Most people would acknowledge that this was a French colonial influence on traditional food practices, but was one that was thoroughly engrained in their understanding of their own religious and cultural meals.[161]

Furthermore, the colonial influence on familiarity with, and ownership over, different food practices is obvious when one examines couscous itself. Not only did the French colonizers bring baguette to the colonized, but they were also introduced to the main food of the colonized. France's role in colonizing Algeria meant that not only were Algerians French citizens, a notion I complicate below, but Algerian food practices were colonized and adopted into the French national food culture as well; one only has to consider the second place ranking of couscous among French nationals' favourite foods. This leads to a potential for understanding and solidarity arising from shared food practice between the former colonizer and former colonized subjects in France. Unfortunately, the impact of colonization on relations between Maghrébine Muslims and non-Muslims in France has not always been so positive.

France: Religious Markets and New Mechanisms of Integration," in *Gender, Religion and Migration: Pathways of integration*, eds. Glenda Tibe Bonifacio and Vivienne S. M. Angeles (Plymouth, UK: Lexington books, 2010); Elaine R. Thomas, *Immigration, Islam, and the Politics of Belonging in France: A Comparative Framework* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

[161] One would be hard pressed to find support for the words of Frantz Fanon when examining this practice. Fanon states: "To destroy the colonial world means nothing less than demolishing the colonist's sector, burying it deep within the earth or banishing it from the territory. Challenging the colonial world is not a rational confrontation of viewpoints. It is not a discourse on the universal, but the impassioned claim by the colonized that their world is fundamentally different" (Frantz Fanon, *Wretched,* 6). The continued place of baguette in the lives, and on the plates of Maghrébines challenges the idea that the colonist's sector is buried or banished in the Maghreb. I will further address the ways my informants do NOT reflect a Fanonian approach to decolonization below.

France's colonial empire spanned from the seventeenth century until roughly the 1960s. Two aspects of France's colonization efforts affect a study such as this: France's colonization in North America (which I return to in my discussion of colonization in Canada/Québec in Chapter 6) and France's colonization of North and West Africa. After focussing its colonization efforts in North America and the Caribbean, France began its second colonial empire with its conquest of North Africa in the mid-nineteenth century. In becoming a "protector," or colonizer, of Algeria between 1830 and 1847, Tunisia by 1881, French West Africa between the early 1880s and 1912, and Morocco in 1912 (among many others), France had secured a stronghold in North Africa by the early twentieth century.[162] By 1962, with the independence of Algeria being secured, the colonial era of France ended. Bowen states that it was the "histories of French rule in three North African States—Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria—that most sharply marked French Muslim policies and attitudes."[163] One then must take these histories into account if one hopes to understand these policies.

France's colonization of North Africa took on an air of moral crusade. As argued by Laurence and Vaisse,

> in the nineteenth century, the European powers considered Muslim countries as places to be 'civilized'—especially Algeria, which was colonized after harsh military campaigns in the 1830s and 1840s and thereafter was periodically prone to violent uprisings and repression.[164]

Colonial efforts in North Africa were then seen as a way to enlighten the Islamic world; it was seen as a humanitarian or civilizing mission.[165] The French colonizers did not venture forth as explorers, as they may have done in their colonial efforts in North America, but as "liberators," mostly of women who were seen as being oppressed in these contexts.[166] The vision that North Africans were "both dirty and violent" was heightened when members of the protectorates and colonies began migrating to the metropole in the early twentieth century and local reports began to emerge of their behaviour in the cities and towns to which they were immigrating.[167] Although the French saw their colonization work as a liberating, humanitarian and civilizing mission,

[162] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 35; Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 16; Neal Robinson, "France" in *Islam outside the Arab world,* ed. David Westerlund and Ingvar Svanberg (Surrey, GB: Curzon Press, 1999), 338.
[163] Bowen, *Headscarves*, 35.
[164] Laurence & Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 50.
[165] Frémeaux, "Les ambiguïtés," 529-531; Hurd, "Politics of Secularism," 54; Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 46.
[166] Khan, *Muslim women*, 4; Scott, *Politics*, 61-67.
[167] Dewhurst Lewis, *Boundaries,* 196; Scott, *Politics*, 50-52.

Frantz Fanon, one of the most important voices representing the colonized, states that this is in fact not possible. He suggests that "colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking, a body endowed with reason. It is naked violence and only gives in when confronted with greater violence."[168] This greater violence, as represented in the Algerian war, only increased the negative stereotypes that many French held of North Africans (and vice versa).

The French Algerian war began in 1954 and ended in 1962.[169] Not only was this a war of decolonization between France and Algeria but it was also a civil war between Algerian loyalists, who wanted to maintain a French Algeria, and Algerian Muslims who did not. Fetzer and Soper suggest that "one cannot overemphasize the searing effects of the Algerian War of Independence on the psyches of both ethnic European and ethnic Arab or Berber residents of France and Algeria."[170] It was a bloody and lengthy war, which led to "Arab" being viewed by the majority of the French population as a "cowardly, blood-thirsty brute, the throat-slitter or the terrorist."[171] Furthermore, according to Fetzer and Soper, because the "Front de liberation nationale (FLN) drew much of its rhetoric and at least some of its motivation from Islam," French colonizers and citizens alike linked Islam with violence, and consequently "developed a tremendous fear of this religion."[172]

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[168] Frantz Fanon, *Wretched,* 23.

[169] For further reading on France's colonization of Algeria and the Algerian War see: Martin Evans, *Algeria: France's Undeclared War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)—explores the history of France's colonization of Algeria, the Algerian War, and the "legacy" of it all; Jo McCormack, *Collective Memory: France and the Algerian War* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007)—general failure of France to "remember" the war and to transmit that memory to future generations, leads to racism and exclusion; Patricia M.E. Lorkin, ed., *Algeria & France, 1800-2000: Identity, Memory, Nostalgia* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006)—collection of essays that looks at the formation of Franco-Algerian identity, how the past is remembered, or not, and the use of nostalgia to come to terms with that past—especially relevant is Jo McCormack, "Memory in History, Nation Building, and Identity: Teaching about the Algerian War in France," Alec G. Hargreaves, "Generating Migrant Memories," and Richard L Derderian, "Confronting the Past: the Memory Work of Second-Generation Algerians in France"; Jennifer E. Sessions, *By Sword and Plow: France and the Conquest of Algeria* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 2011)—explores why France conquered Algeria and discusses policies that continue to have an influence on multivalent tensions in France and Algeria; Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: the Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006); John Talbott, *The War Without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954-1962* (New York: Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1980).

[170] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 63-64.

[171] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 50.

[172] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 64. The effect of the decolonization process is also mentioned in Jane Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 127 Fn1.

In Algeria, Muslims were given the opportunity to apply for full French citizenship on the condition that they give up their right to be governed by sharia (Islamic law).[173] Todd Shepard explains that

> the Senatus-Consulte of 14 July 1865 asserted that every "indigenous Muslim is French" (thus recognizing their French nationality) and extended French citizenship to a small number of "indigenous" men and their descendants. In exchange for full citizenship, these men abandoned their "local civil status": the right, in personal or civil matters, to be governed by local laws, what the text termed "Muslim law" for "Muslim natives" and "personal status" for "Israelite natives.[174]

While this offer was made to a few men in 1865, in 1919 a law was passed that extended naturalization to Arab men who were willing to relinquish this "indigenous" status, including their right to follow Islamic law.[175] Because "some Islamic authorities in Algeria declared that crossing this legal line was tantamount to abandoning Islam," many did not take this offer.[176] As a result, Muslims in the French colony, in these early years, had what Shepard calls a "*nationalité denaturé* (denatured—or meaningless—nationality)."[177] It was only in the mid-twentieth century, in 1944, when all subjects of French colonies were granted full citizenship without having to renounce their religious identities/local civil status.[178] With the end of the Second World War, "the Republic broke with the post-1789 insistence that citizenship be one and indivisible," and as a result introduced "for what began to be called 'Muslim French from Algeria' the possibility of both full political rights and the maintenance of local civil status."[179]

Even with the political acceptance of Maghrébines, specifically Algerians, as full-fledged citizens[180] of the French Republic they were still considered irreducibly "other," and were held to the periphery of the labour market and other French social structures.[181] Algerian French nationals in France in particular were often subjected to "summary arrests, lengthy detentions, repatriations" and other discriminatory actions that revealed "the formal nationality held by Algerians often came with fewer benefits than the foreign status of many Europeans."[182] This

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[173] See Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization,* 26.
[174] Ibid., 26.
[175] Scott, *Politics*, 49.
[176] Bowen, *Can Islam be French,* 174.
[177] Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 32.
[178] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 36; Laurence & Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 269; Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 39.
[179] Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 39.
[180] See the parameters of and the breaking of the Evian Accord in Shepard's "Excluding the Harkis," 94-110.
[181] Eid, *Being Arab*, 175.
[182] Dewhurst Lewis, *Boundaries of the Republic,* 194.

could be further viewed by the fact that French Algerians were given citizenship cards that labelled them as "Français musulman(e)" (French Muslims), not simply "French."[183] This label of "Muslim" was more of a legal than a religious category but still had a significant impact.[184] In fact, after the Algerian war of independence "French military personnel were ordered to discriminate ethnically between Muslim and other "French" refugees seeking passage to France."[185] By placing a label on their very citizenship documents that was different from the "European French" they were immediately othered.[186] Because of the length and intensity of France's colonial presence in North Africa, especially Algeria, and because it is historically recent, many North African immigrants express "contempt for France as represented by its symbols (its flag, its representatives, and its national anthem)."[187] Many North Africans in France remember the colonial presence and the war of independence from personal experience (or from stories of the experience of their parents) and as a result still feel emotionally connected to that history. Symbols such as the flag, national anthem, citizenship cards, etcetera, consequently draw out raw emotions and responses from many in the country.[188]

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[183] Personal correspondence with the Researcher, Field Journal, Feb 8, 2013. This idea is supported by Shepard, in his *Invention of Decolonization*, where he states that "most people from Algeria who had French citizenship in March 1962 (some nine million) had it taken away by 1963: those who were "Muslims" became Algerians (official documents refer to "Algerians of Muslim origin")" (Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization,* 2).

[184] Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 12.

[185] Thomas, *Immigration,* 48.

[186] Shepard, in his *Invention of Decolonization*, explains the progression of nationality and citizenship for Algerian subjects over the course of France's colonization. He shows how there were always two categories of people in Algeria, "Muslims" and "Europeans;" those who could not be French and those who could. Although the Algerian/French Muslims were granted full citizenship in the mid-20th, they were still known as "Muslim French from Algeria" (39).

[187] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 46.

[188] For further reading on French post-colonialism and its impact on contemporary relations between France and former colonies see: Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel and Sandrine Lemaire, *La Fracture coloniale: la société française au prisme de l'héritage colonial* (Paris: La Decouverte, 2005)—the first real exploration of postcolonial France, first 11 essays under the heading "Histoire coloniale et enjeux de memoire" cover historical events and processes from a post-colonial light, second 11 essays under the heading "Republique, integrisme et postcolonialisme" look at contemporary France and colonization's effect on France's multiple identity groups, calls for more exploration of postcolonialism in France, and a move away from "us" versus "them" mentality that is pervasive in the literature; Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney, eds., *Post-colonial cultures in France* (London; New York: Routledge, 1997)—cultures of post-colonial minorities from France's former colonies becoming increasingly visible in France and the new negotiations between post-colonial minorities and majority French society; Jo McCormack, "Social Memories in (Post)Colonial France: Remembering the Franco-Algerian War," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 44, issue 4 (2011): 1129-1138—a case study of one (post)colonial "memory battle" around the Algerian War.

The war itself was not recognized as a war until well after the bloody and brutal conclusion. For years it remained "the war without a name"[189] and it was only in 1997 where "an *official* recognition of a state of 'war' in Algeria between 1954 and 1962" began to take shape.[190] This "official recognition" culminated on the 10 of June 1999 when a law was passed by the French Parliament to make the term "Algerian War" official in legal texts.[191] The silence around this war for over 30 years understandably led to a mis-remembering of the events by many on an official level. Because there was a general failure by France to "remember" the Algerian War, this memory was not transmitted to younger generations.[192] Thus a conflict of memory could be established on the ground in France between those who remembered their own experiences in this "war" and those for whom this "war" was non-existent in memory.[193]

In addition, "signs of a colonial mind-set are abundant, from the headscarf ban of 2004...to the social situation in the *cités*, especially housing discrimination and zoning, and the persistence of racial discrimination."[194] According to Stambouli and Soltane, the notion of colonial memory has a large effect on current immigrant integration issues. This debate "not only heightens individual memory for those who lived this epoch" but brings forth "issues loaded with memories" for many others as well.[195] One particularly strong colonial memory is that of Islam as a force of resistance. Fremeaux, suggests that Islam has preserved a military role in North Africa and this is one of the major characteristics that the French remember of Islam out of their colonial interactions.[196] North Africans could also remember Islam in this context, but with positive rather than negative connotations. Islam could be seen as a liberating force for the colonized North African people rather than a force of barbarism. Frantz Fanon, in his work *The Wretched of the Earth*, suggests that the equation of Islam with barbarism was the work of the colonizer to "convince the indigenous population it would save them from darkness."[197] He calls

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[189] See Talbott, *War Without a Name*.
[190] McCormack, "Social Memories," 1132.
[191] Ibid., 1132.
[192] See McCormack, *Collective Memory.*
[193] McCormack, along with other memory activists with whom the author converses in the article "Social Memories in (Post)Colonial France: Remembering the Franco-Algerian War" suggests that by working through memories of the Algerian War, the integration of ethnic minorities in France becomes a possibility (McCormack, "Social Memories," 1136).
[194] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 53.
[195] Stambouli and Soltane, "Muslim Immigrants," 147-148.
[196] Fremeaux, "Les ambiguïtés," 533.
[197] Fanon, *Wretched*, 149.

for an awakening of Islam, a pointing to "the great chapters of Arab history" as a "response to the lies of the occupier"[198] and as a means of claiming a separate identity from the colonizer.[199]

One cannot help but assume that the projection of Islam, and thus of the North African people, as barbaric and militant negatively affects the image of Muslims in France, leading to the image of people who fight rather than integrate. An excellent example of this tension can be found in the "friendly" soccer match between France and Algeria that took place on October 6, 2001. This match was the first between France and Algeria since Algeria gained independence from France in 1962 and while it was meant to show solidarity between France and Algeria, it ended with the opposite effect.[200] Some soccer fans "booed the national anthem, threw objects at two government ministers and—once the French lead had reached 4-to-1—ran onto the field, forcing the game's cancellation."[201] This event led to questions of whether or not Muslims from former colonies had successfully integrated into French culture or not, and who was responsible for the outcome. Moreover, the colonial history of France has a current effect on notions of

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[198] Ibid., 151.

[199] Fanon is a representative voice of the colonized and of the process of decolonization that occurred, and continues to occur in the Maghreb and in France. It was my goal to incorporate Fanon as representative of the voices of my informants, but informants really didn't reflect a Fanonian-type response. Perhaps it's because most of my informants fall into a post-colonial generation, perhaps it's because of the "type" of informants that I had, perhaps they just didn't reflect that response to *me*. Whatever the case, I find it hard to locate my informants within the pages of Fanon. I'm not denying that the kinds of attitudes and experiences of history that he describes are relevant. They are incredibly important for understanding the tense relationship between the "French French" and members of the former colonies on the whole. Colonialism is key in understanding some of the nuances of current relationships and interactions. What does seem applicable from Fanon is the everyday inner violence that colonialism may lead to. It's this idea of rooting out imperialism "from our land and from our minds" (*Wretched*, 181) that continues to impact my informants, whether they express it that way or not. Yet, my informants don't use the same kind of language as Fanon, as will be made evident in the following three chapters. They mention the effects of colonialism, and one can see the effects of the separation of individuals who are descended from colonizers from those who are descended from the colonized, but they don't respond with the same "violence" that Fanon presents. I would have expected this going in to the field. I would have expected a much more violent, outward manifestation of anger/hurt but it surprised me that it just really wasn't there. Paul Bramadat addresses this kind of unexpected positive response in former colonized peoples in his article "Religion, Race and Remembering: Indo-Caribbean Christians in Canada," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 79, no. 2 (June 2011): 315-345. He argues that his informants may "de-emphasize the narratives of colonial subjectivity and the religious conversion directly associated with this subaltern identity to integrate themselves as quickly as possible into the mainstream of multicultural (and yet de facto white and Christian) Canada" (Bramadat, "Religion, Race and Remembering," 335). Perhaps my informants reflect a similar process, whereby they de-emphasize narratives of colonial subjectivity to integrate into the Parisian and Montréal contexts.

[200] Andrew Hussey, "Why French Algerians' Football Celebrations Turned into a Battle," *The Observer*, November 22, 2009, accessed March 15, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/nov/22/france-algeria-paris-riots-football.

[201] Jonathan Laurence, "Islam in France," *Brookings*, December 2001, accessed March 15, 2012, www.brookings.edu/articles/2001/12france_laurence.aspx.

"French Islam." Because of France's colonization of much of Muslim North Africa it "found itself 'a great Muslim power,' aiming to encourage 'moderate' forms of Islam overseas and, as part of that effort, at home."[202] By colonizing large parts of the North African Muslim world, France had to interact with Muslims on a level that it had not done before; Muslims were now French citizens, often second rate citizens, but citizens none the less, in large numbers. With the colonization of Algeria in particular the notion of "French Islam," or better yet, of "French Muslims," became a reality that could not be ignored.

2.3 The Immigration of Maghrébine Muslims to France: Migratory Movements and Demographics

The colonial history outlined above has a significant effect on the immigration history of Muslims to France. While immigration from Muslim inhabited countries is not a recent phenomenon, the Muslim population that is present in France today "traces its direct or indirect origins to former French colonies in North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa and to Turkey" and most immigrated "in the wake of the colonial wars of independence."[203] Although there were other phases of Muslim immigration in France, the focus of this section is on immigration in the twentieth century. Moreover, this is not primarily a work on French immigration patterns and policy in general. Instead, in this section, I focus principally on the immigration of Maghrébine and Muslim communities to France in the twentieth century.

2.3.1 Cesari's Three Migratory Movements of Muslims to France

Cesari outlines the three migratory movements of Maghrébine Muslims to France in the twentieth century in her article in Bramadat and Koenig's *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity*.[204] The first wave which she describes began during the First

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[202] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 34; See also, Bowen, *Can Islam be French,* 15.

[203] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 1, 16.

[204] Jocelyne Cesari, "Islam, immigration and France," in *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity,* eds. Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig (Kingston, ON: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 2009). Cesari provides a clear and concise exploration of specifically Maghrébine Muslim immigration to France in the 20th Century. For other effective overviews of Muslim and Maghrébine immigration and the policies that influence that immigration see: Azzam Amin, "L'Intégration des jeunes français issus de l'immigration: Le cas des jeunes issus d'immigration arabo-musulman et turque: Maghreb, Moyen-Orient et Turquie," *Connexions*, 83 (2005): 131-147. For comparative study of immigration and integration between Maghrébine, Middle Eastern and

World War and continued through the interwar period. It was during this time that Maghrébine immigrants started coming to France in large numbers, to serve in the army[205] and "fill a labour gap in the post-war reconstruction boom."[206] Factors in the home countries of these immigrants, such as political repression and economic hardship, also increased migration to France.[207] Cesari points out that these "immigrants" were in fact not immigrants at all, but French nationals coming mostly from Algeria, which was part of France at the time.[208] These immigrants were mostly male and both they and the French society thought that their stay in France would only be temporary.

The second wave that Cesari mentions took place from the 1950s to 1974. Cesari suggests that this wave is similar to the first wave, merely an intensification of it, but with "one crucial difference: the workers were now nationals of newly independent states."[209] There was a severe labour shortage in the post-World War II era and French industries recruited or "regularized" workers from the highly Muslim populated and former French colonies or protectorates of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.[210] In fact, a conscious policy of immigration was drawn up between industry and the state in order to supply the country with a sufficient labour force. France "signed agreements with Algeria in 1968 in addition to agreements with Morocco and Tunisia in 1963."[211] Because of this, between 1950 and 1974 the foreign population of France doubled; more specifically, according to Jo McCormack, in 1946 Maghrébines

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Turkish immigrants see David Blatt, "Immigrant Politics in a Republican Nation," in *Post-colonial Cultures in France*, eds. Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney (London; New York: Routledge, 1997), 160-164; Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and democracy meet;* Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State;* Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity;* Alec G. Hargreaves, *Immigration, "Race" and Ethnicity in Contemporary France* (London: New York: Routledge, 1995)— particularly Chapter 1 "Overview," 1-36; Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating* Islam; Martin A. Schain, *The Politics of Immigration in France, Britain, and the United States: A Comparative Study*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Stambouli and Soltane, "Muslim Immigrants."

For a perspective on gender specific, namely female, Maghrébine immigration to France see: Jane Freedman and Carrie Tarr, eds., *Women, Immigration, and Identities in* France (Oxford; New York: Berg Publishing, 2001); Henriette Dahan Kalev and Shoshana-Rose Marzel, "Liberté, Egalité, Islamité: Coping Strategies of Female Immigrants from the Maghreb in France," *Women's Studies International Forum,* Vol. 35, Issue 5 (Sept 2012): 354-361; Caitlin Killian, *North African Women in France: Gender Culture and Identity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

[205] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 63.
[206] Cesari, "Islam," 195.
[207] Bowen, *Can Islam be French,* 16.
[208] Cesari, "Islam," 195.
[209] Ibid., 195.
[210] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 63.
[211] Cesari, *Islam and Democracy,* 13.

"constituted 3 percent of the foreign population, but by 1990 they represent 45 percent."[212] Like in the first phase of migration from North Africa, these immigrants did not intend to stay in France. Rather, their goal was to "earn as much money as possible and then return home."[213] As a result, these migratory movements were seen by both the French host and the Muslim immigrant as temporary. As presented by Stambouli and Soltane, "these men were not recruited to engage the French public space, or to hold a place within it as social actors. Rather, there were only supposed to be workers in French industries."[214] Because these immigrants were seen as temporary, there was no real need to develop policies of integration. The French saw them as outsiders and the Muslim immigrants viewed themselves as separate as well, creating their own communities in the cités[215] of Paris. Notions of French national identity are consequently not seen as threatened by the influx of immigrants during these first two phases. Consequently, the systemic segregation of these communities was started at this time; the foundation for separation between "us" and "them" was firmly established in physical and psychological ways, even if it was not labelled as such at this point in time.

The third and final phase outlined by Cesari began after the oil crisis of 1973. It was with this phase that France closed the door to unskilled workers, and family reunification policies took over the immigrant dynamic.[216] In fact, in 1974 France officially closed its doors to immigration. This did not mean that immigration halted completely, but "it did mean a movement toward selection and selective exclusion" in France's immigration policies.[217] While formal immigration stopped, family members of the unskilled workers that made up the second wave of immigration constituted the largest number of immigrants in France during this third phase. While the state wanted to limit family reunification as well at this time, in 1978 the Council of the State blocked the right of the state to control this process and thus this decision "enabled a constant number of North African family members to enter the country each year."[218]

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[212] McCormack, "Social Memories," 1137, n14.
[213] Cesari, "Islam," 195.
[214] Stambouli and Soltane, "Muslim Immigrants," 147.
[215] These cités were originally created for the temporary workers and thus were not built to house families for long periods of time. They were meant to be temporary housing for a temporary community. They have thus fallen into disrepair with the continued immigration of North Africans to the Paris suburbs.
[216] Cesari, "Islam," 196; Stambouli & Soltane, "Muslim Immigrants," 148.
[217] Schain, *Politics of Immigration,* 61.
[218] Schain, *Politics of Immigration*, 67.

Formerly split up families were now being reunited and the Muslim population in France grew exponentially. In fact,

> the reunification of families became a continuing source of immigrants during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Family reunification from all countries grew from 55,000 a year in the late 1960s to 81,000 in 1973, before decreasing over time to about 25,000 in 2004. The arrival of foreign spouses, meanwhile, increased from 23,000 in 1990 to more than 60,000 in 2004.[219]

This change in immigration dynamic also altered the Maghrébine Muslim community presence on the ground level in France. The community transformed from a generally separated, primarily single male populated community to one consisting of families that now interacted more readily with French public life. They moved from the "segregated environment of the workers' dormitory to the integrated world of the public housing project, and they increasingly encountered representatives of the school system, members of the bureaucracy, and social workers."[220] It was with this third migratory phase that Muslims became much more visible in France. This visibility led to French society suddenly needing to interact with a group who had competing and sometimes contradictory "social, moral and religious values" to their own.[221] In reaction to this, the subsequent French governments tried repeatedly to not only reduce immigration but "encourage" immigrants to return to their home countries. These efforts were largely unsuccessful and have thus left France as "one of the most multi-ethnic societies on the continent."[222] Moreover, due to this new ethnically diverse setting in France, questions of ethnic, religious and national identities, and conflicts between them, came to the fore.

Immigration remains high in France with 8.9 percent of the total population in France being immigrants as of January 1, 2014.[223] The family reunification process continues to supply large numbers of immigrants from the Maghreb in contemporary France. Furthermore, many of these immigrants continue to come from the countries of the Maghreb. In fact, according to the INSEE, France's national statistic body, in the year 2012 43.2 percent of immigrants had African birth countries (13.1 percent from Algeria, 12.1 percent from Morocco, 4.4 percent from Tunisia,

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[219] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 17.
[220] Cesari, "Islam," 196.
[221] Stambouli and Soltane, "Muslim Immigrants," 148.
[222] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 65.
[223] Chantel Brutel, "French, Foreign and Immigrant Populations in France since 2006," *Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques*, accessed 30 March 2016, http://www.insee.fr/en/themes/document.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=if38.

and 13.6 percent from "other countries in Africa").[224] In spite of policies that help to restrict immigration to France, there are still on average 200,000 immigrants arriving each year on French soil (roughly 59,200 Maghrébine immigrants in 2012).

2.3.2 Demographics of Maghrébine Muslims in France Today

Ultimately, the immigration pattern and history of Maghrébines to mainland France has led to a distinct view of this community on the ground today. Muslims in France represent 123 different nationalities, yet, nearly three quarters are from the countries of the Maghreb: Algeria, Morocco, or Tunisia.[225] While it is difficult to evaluate the number of Muslims living in France due to the fact that the "French Republic considers ethnic and religious affiliation a private matter and therefore keeps no such official statistics on citizens of immigrant origin,"[226] estimates range between 4.7 and 6 million Muslims living in mainland France.[227] This equates to anywhere between 7.5 to 10 percent of the total population of France. As a result, Islam has a significant presence in France. Considering the fact that of the potentially six million Muslims living in France, approximately 40 percent live in and around Paris,[228] the region of Paris is consequently home to approximately 2.4 million Muslims. This is significant because, while the population of Greater Paris is approximately ten million, the population of the city of Paris itself is roughly 2.2 million.[229] There are, as a result, as many Muslims living in the Greater Paris region as the general population of Paris itself. Taking into account that 75 percent of immigrants in France are Muslims,[230] one can see how "Muslim" and "immigré(e)" become conflated terms in France.

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[224] "Étrangers—Immigrés," *Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques*, accessed 30 March 2016, http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=T16F037.

[225] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 17. Nancy Foner and Richard Alba, in their "Immigrant Religion in the U.S. and Western Europe: Bridge or Barrier to Inclusion?" *International Migration*, vol. 51, no. 3 (June, 2013), suggest that "more than half of the 4 to 5 million Muslims are of Algerian or Moroccan origin, with sizable numbers of Tunisians" (375).

[226] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 17.

[227] 4.7 million according to Conrad Hackett, "5 facts about the Muslims Population in Europe," *FactTank: News in the Numbers*, November 17, 2015, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe/; 5 million (roughly 7.5 percent of the total population) according to Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 18; 6 million (roughly 9.1 percent of total population) according to Dahan Kalev and Marzel, "Liberté," 356; 6.5 million (roughly 10 percent of total population) according to Soeren Kern, "The Islamization of France in 2013," Gatestone Institute International Policy Council, January 6, 2014, http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4120/islamization-france.

[228] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 22.

[229] "Paris," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Accessed February 25, 2016, http://www.britannica.com/place/Paris/People.

[230] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 24.

In fact, Scott explains that largely due to these immigration patterns in France there is a conflation of "Muslim" with "North African" and "immigrant" with "North African," such that immigrant = North African = Muslim, or any other variation of that equation.[231] The continued use of the word "immigré(e)" to refer to second and third generation Maghrébines in France is one example of the refusal to accept this community as French.[232] One who is an "immigré(e)" is on the outside, whether or not that term technically applies to them or not. Since the 1970s many other modifications have been made to immigration policies in France but most do not have a direct effect on the experience of Maghrébine immigrants in France, other than the "Loi Mehaignerie" which I discuss later in this chapter.[233] This label is applied not only to those French nationals with what is considered "problematic" national heritage, but also to those who have "problematic" religious heritage as well. This otherness based on religious background is what I turn to next.

2.4 The History and Development of French Secularism: Laïcité

France has its own understanding of secularism, or laïcité as it is called, which significantly affects the context in which Maghrébine Muslim immigrants live. To understand the political policy of laïcité in France one must explore the history of the relationship between church and state in the country. Once one understands this history one can see how this policy, and others like it, develop and can have some understanding of how it influences the experience of those religious "others" that interact with it. The history of Church-State relations and secularization in France is especially rich and complex. The Catholic Church had a long history of ruling power over secular and sacred institutions in the country, and because of this and the subsequent rejection and relegation of the Church into the private sphere, the French context provides a complex backdrop for religious traditions to attempt to find space for themselves in the public sphere. Fetzer and Soper suggest that official and unofficial policies on Muslim integration are fully related to the church-state relations of a given country. They state, "public policy on state

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[231] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 16-17.
[232] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity*, 15; Scott, *Politics,* 16-17.
[233] For a summary of the French immigration legislation see Table 2.2 in Schain, *Politics of Immigration*, 40-41. Furthermore, former French President Sarkozy's *immigration choisie* can be seen as an effort to move away from the *immigration subie* that many French feel was forced on them through the family reunification process (Schain, *Politics of Immigration,* 107-108).

accommodation of Muslim religious practices in Britain, France and Germany varies based in part on the inherited relationship between church and state in each nation."[234] The ghosts of the past are felt in the present.

2.4.1 The Secular Republic

The history of the relationship of the state with the Catholic Church in France is indeed well known. As Fouad Douai, the manager of the Strasbourg mosque in France, observed: "France was once the 'eldest daughter of the Church.' To stop being the 'eldest daughter of the Church' it was necessary to spill blood, which made...the French allergic to everything religious."[235] The battles were many and varied between the Catholics and the anti-clerics since the time of the French Revolution and thus a strict separation between church and state is held in high regard in France. Cesari suggests that the strict separation of church and state goes beyond "political independence of religious organizations" and is in fact "accompanied by the memory of antagonism between church and state."[236] The French have a strong collective memory of the time when everything was under the control of the church and they do not wish to return to that situation. In 1905, the French government passed a law that officially separated church and state in France. This law "took public status away from organized religions but allowed them to reorganize as private associations"; it "officially and explicitly ended the regime of recognized religions begun under Napoleon."[237] Religious action or symbols that seem to threaten that separation become highly problematic in the eyes of the French.[238] It is important to note that it is not simply Islam that the French see as problematic, but religion in general is not popular in France.[239] Margarita Mooney states that this is why "immigrants to France, whether they are Christian, Muslim, or another religion, encounter a hostile context of reception regarding religion."[240]

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[234] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 15-16. See also, Paul Bramadat, "Religious Diversity and International Migration: National and Global Dimensions," in *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity,* eds. Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig, (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 1-28; Scott, *Politics*, 101.

[235] Fouad Douai as quoted in Fetzer & Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 96.

[236] Cesari, "Islam," 212.

[237] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 26.

[238] The Hijab is an excellent, and well documented, example of such a symbol. My work suggests that food may also serve as a symbol that appears to "threaten" the separation of church and state.

[239] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 63.

[240] Mooney, "Religion as a Context of Reception," 101.

In fact, freedom *from* religion was one of the founding principles of the Republic that the French hold in such high esteem.[241] Religion is a highly private affair in France. The notion of "the Republic" is especially important in this regard. Bowen explains that,

> according to the Republican way of thinking, living together in a society requires agreement on basic values...French Republicans seek to rigorously and consistently justify policies according to this idea. To do so means adhering to a certain brand of political philosophy, one that emphasizes general interest and shared values over individual interests and pluralism.[242]

This freedom *from* religion is an important distinction between the relationship between church and state in France than from that found in the United States.[243] While in the United States secularism was established to protect religion from the state, in France, the drive for secularism was one of freeing "the state from undue religious influence."[244] This distinction between protecting the state versus protecting religion is an important one to keep in mind as we explore the notion of whether or not it is possible to have a "French Islam."

If Muslim immigrants can maintain the secularist way of life, that is, keeping the public and private realms separate, not only at a state level but in the lives of individuals,[245] the issues are not as prevalent. In fact, Stambouli and Soltane argue that

> North African Muslims do not need to be integrated; they develop a sort of autarchic way of living in accordance with their faith. French public opinion accepts this situation as long as the tolerance zone instituted between discrete faith practice and secular French public space is not violated.[246]

While it is primarily the non-Muslim majority French society that argues for a strict separation of church and state based largely on its historical fight for such a thing, there are influential members of the Muslim community in France that agree on this issue. The recteur of the Grande Mosquée de Paris is one such proponent of this separation.[247] In an interview with researcher

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[241] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* 10.

[242] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 11.

[243] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 91.

[244] Thomas, "Keeping Identity at a Distance," 241; Thomas, *Immigration*, 186.

[245] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 98.

[246] Stambouli and Soltane, "Muslim Immigrants," 149.

[247] It is important to note that in France there is very little distance between the bureaucracy of religious institutions and the French government. The government has direct ties to and influence over the politics of any given institution. This is especially true of the Grande Mosquée and its leadership as represented by Dalil Boubakeur. Because of this tie, there is a clear distinction between the bureaucracy of the institution and the experience of the lay individual who worships at that institution. I became particularly aware of this when I conducted an interview with someone who works at the Grande Mosquée. The day after I conducted this

Nathalie Dollé, Dalil Boubakeur states that there should be a separation of church and state, promoting leaving the things of God to God and the things of the State to the State.[248] As an "integrated Muslim" he agrees with French Republican understanding of secularism, which creates the specific laïcité present in France.

2.4.2 Laïcité

In reading anything on the separation of church and state or secularization in France, one cannot avoid the term laïcité.[249] While North Americans are more than familiar with the notion of secularization and even with the idea that France is a highly secular country many do not know that France has its own variation of secularization known as laïcité. Any discussion of Muslims in France, "French Islam," or religion in France in general, must include some explanation of this term and its influence on French society.

According to Bowen, laïcité is a "philosophy about religion's place in politics and society" and it "can be translated as 'secularism.'"[250] One may say that laïcité is France's version of secularization but then, like in any use of the term secularization, one must go on to explain

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interview my informant called me in a panic and asked me to come back to the mosque to discuss the interview. When I arrived, he expressed to me that he had to remove his interview from my study as the leadership in the mosque had become aware of it and were not happy about it. It became clear through conversation with this informant that the mosque was to remain neutral and to keep religion in the private sphere, something that would be threatened by having someone tied to the mosque give an interview in a research project that may be presented publicly. By the end of the conversation, my informant informed me that I could in fact keep his interview, but merely had to change his preference on his consent form from transparency of identity to anonymity. This experience left me confused, having spent many months at the mosque and being clear about my research intentions all along. It became clear that it was not a problem for me to interview lay individuals at the mosque, but anyone who was officially tied to the mosque had to tow the laïcité line.

[248] Dalil Boubakeur and Nathalie Dollé, *L'Islam de France sera libéral: Entretiens, Nathalie Dollé* (Paris: Alias, 2004), 42.

[249] For overviews of laïcité and its related policies see: Jean Baubérot, *Laïcité 1905-2005, entre passion et raison* (Paris: Seuil, 2004); Jean Baubérot, "L'évolution de la *laïcité* en France: entre deux religions civiles," *Historical Reflections*, vol 34. no. 3 (2009): 9-25; Jean Baubérot and C. Dagens, *La laïcité en France* (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2005); Jean Baudoin and Philippe Portier, eds., *La laïcité, une valeur d'aujourd'hui. Contestations et renégociations du modèle* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2001); Jane Freedman, "Secularism as a Barrier to integration? The French Dilemma," *International Migration*, vol. 13, no. 42 (2004): 5-27; Janet T. Gunn, "Religious Freedom and Laïcité: A Comparison of the United States and France," *Brigham Young University Law Review*, 2 (2004): 419-506; Pierre Hayat, "La laïcité républicaine. Déterminations, implications et enjeux," *Le philosophoire*, vol. 1, no. 39, (2013): 31-44; Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism;* Karel Leyva, "Multiculturalisme et laïcité en France: les trois républicanismes du rapport Stasi," *Dialogue*, vol. 54, no. 4 (2015): 647-684; Raphael Liogier, "Laïcité on the Edge in France: Between the Theory of Church-State Separation and the Praxis of Church-State Confusion," *Macquarie Law Journal*, vol. 9, (2009): 25-45; Jocelyn Maclure and Charles Taylor, *Laïcité et liberté de conscience* (Montréal: Boreal, 2010); Scott, *Politics of the Veil*.

[250] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 2.

what that means in the French context. While at its base, like most definitions of secularism, laïcité refers to the separation of church and state, it is unlike other definitions in that it also "rests on the notion that the secular and the sacred can be divided in the lives of individuals."[251] Hurd suggests that, unlike Judeo-Christian secularism, which stops at "the functional differentiation of the secular and the religious spheres," laïcité "also adopts two corollaries to this differentiation argument, advocating the privatization and, in some cases, the decline or elimination of religious belief and practice altogether."[252]

Jean Baubérot is considered one of the main experts on laïcité, and most recent discussions of the term rely on his works for an exploration of its history and influence. In his works, Baubérot reveals a dual orientation toward religion in France. On the one hand, state religion had a long history in France. On the other hand, a withdrawal from religion to protect the right of individuals to make their own decisions on matters of faith was a well-established stance in post-Revolution France.[253] This leads to an inherent contradiction in France's approach to secularism. Like the colonial memory of France in North Africa and its influence on the stereotypes of Muslims in France, the Catholic Church's involvement in bloody Revolutionary struggles influences France's ability to gradually ease into a process of secularization.[254] The constant back and forth between Republican and Catholic monarchical states throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to a heightened tension between church and state, not found in other locales. This tension between Church and Republic came to a head during the Third Republic, and, with the series of laws that secularized the public classroom in the late nineteenth century, "laïcité became an object of struggle and emerged as a word."[255] Bowen emphasizes that although many view "laïcité as a guiding concept in French history, the word does not appear in the very law (of 1905) that is celebrated as its embodiment."[256] In fact, it was only made a "constitutional principle for the first time in 1946, and reiterated in the 1958 Constitution."[257] While the groundwork was laid for this legal-political-social concept in the late

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[251] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 98.
[252] Hurd, *Politics of Secularism.*
[253] Bowen, *Headscarves*, 22.
[254] Ibid., 23.
[255] Bowen, *Headscarves*, 25; Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 70.
[256] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 29.
[257] Cesari and Mcloughlin, *European Muslims,* 72.

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was not actually solidified in law until the middle of the twentieth century.

While laïcité is generally viewed as a strict separation of the public from the private, of the church from the state, it is possible to use the term to support a more open understanding of this relationship. According to Keaton, "la laïcité was intended to establish equal protection for all people under a 'neutral,' non-religiously influenced state, while allowing freedom of religious expression and free thinking within state institutions."[258] At its foundation, then, laïcité encourages religious freedom. Where tension arises is in the notion of what religious freedom entails. In many Western contexts, religious freedom is a matter of freedom of religious belief. Starting with the Protestant notion of "by faith alone," it often followed that one is given the freedom to believe whatever one chooses. The tension arises when people from Muslim nations immigrate to these Western, Christian-based, contexts with the equally important emphasis of freedom of religious practice alongside freedom of religious belief. For many Muslims, the two go hand in hand and freedom of religion means not only believing what one chooses, but having the right to enact those beliefs in practice, and in public.[259]

Fetzer and Soper suggest that there are two kinds of laïcité: strict laïcité and soft laïcité. While strict laïcité would advocate for the absolute rejection of all religious practice and belief from public institutions, soft laïcité allows for some indication of religious practice in the public sphere. What it does not allow is the government establishment of religion.[260] Bowen also breaks laïcité into two forms: political and social laïcité. Political laïcité refers to the state refraining "from imposing a particular religion, or from allowing any religion to impose itself through the medium of the state."[261] Social laïcité also requires the

> separation of state and churches but also a further privatization of religious affiliation, such that even nongovernmental actors, when they inhabit the public sphere, refrain from doing so religiously. According to this idea, French citizens become complete political individuals by being socialized in public institutions, and they retain their citizenship qualities by continuing to interact in such institutions qua citizens—and not as Muslims, Protestants, or, perish the thought, Scientologists.[262]

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[258] Keaton, *Muslim Girls,* 177.

[259] I return to the centrality of a relationship between faith and practice in the Muslim faith when I address the four aspects of Muslim identity as proposed by Tariq Ramadan in his work *To be a European Muslim* (Leicester, UK: The Islamic Foundation, 1999).

[260] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 156.

[261] Bowen, "Does French Islam Have Borders," 46.

[262] Bowen, "Does French Islam Have Borders," 46.

If one applied Bowen's typology of laïcité to Fetzer and Soper's, then soft laïcité is the implementation of political laïcité alone, while strict laïcité is the implementation of both political and social laïcité.

According to soft laïcité, "the state should respect all religious beliefs but also foster the free exercise of religion by, for example, funding private religious schools."[263] Proponents of soft, or open, laïcité criticize on a couple of fronts those who hold to strict laïcité. First, they criticize strict laïcité for trying to "make secularist laïcité the 'state religion' in France."[264] Ironically, they argue, the very notion of laïcité has become somewhat of a religion in and of itself in France. It becomes the focus of French identity; that thing which makes France, France. France is a secular state and if you are French you are encouraged to be publicly and privately secular.[265] Laïcité is held as central not so much because of firm legal and cultural frameworks but because of the fear over a loss of identity, a questioning of what it means to be French. As a result, any tradition that may threaten this perceived "state religion" is looked upon with caution. In fact, with the debate over religious signs in schools in 2004, the popular, mainstream media consented, with much of the French population, that "laïcité was in peril and that Islam was the cause."[266] Bowen explains that the legacy of combat between the church and the Republic helps to explain why the "contemporary presence of Islam in the schools" is seen "as threatening to turn back the clock on at least two struggles: the fight to keep religion from controlling young minds, and the struggle to forge a common French identity."[267]

A second criticism of strict laïcité by those who hold to soft laïcité is that laïcité is not necessarily hostile to faith, but instead fosters an environment where faith of every variety can flourish since there is no one tradition that has ultimate sway in French government and society. Furthermore, Fetzer and Soper argue that soft laïcité is a reaction against the sterilization of society that is a possible outcome of strict laïcité. Here they suggest that strict laïcité removes all "cultural diversity" and strips "public school students of all individuality."[268] In many of the

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[263] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State,* 74.
[264] Ibid., 74.
[265] Scott, when discussing Bernard Stasi's commission in France, explains that laïcité has become such a focus of French life that, unlike other secular democracies, "France has raised laïcité to the level of a founding value" (Bernard Stasi, as quoted in, Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 98).
[266] Bowen, *Headscarves*, 31.
[267] Ibid., 25.
[268] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 75.

examples that Keaton gives of peoples' responses to the question, what is laïcité?, we can see this stripping of cultural diversity. For teachers and students alike, laïcité can mean erasing differences and seeing everyone as the same.[269] Strict laïcité then leads to cookie cutter versions of all French people. Finally, strict laïcité is seen, by those who hold to soft laïcité, as a violation of international human rights.[270] The argument that is made is that the basic human right of freedom of conscience and religious liberty is violated by the maintenance of strict laïcité. Fetzer and Soper conclude that while soft laïcité can find support in French constitutional history, and is consistent with the integration of Muslims into French society, strict laïcité is not.[271]

What makes the debate about laïcité difficult is that "laïcité remains one of those 'essentially contested concepts' that is politically useful precisely because it has no agreed-on definition."[272] As we can see above, some hold that laïcité guarantees religious practice in the public sphere while others think it prevents it; some see it as the guarantor of religious identity, others see it as masking that identity.[273] The question becomes, is it possible to be a secular, read "French," Muslim? Both Hurd and Scott suggest that the concept of laïcité itself was built directly on a comparison to, or better, a contrast with Islam.[274]

> In the political imaginary of laicism, Islam is represented as an impediment to the rationalization and democratization of modern society. Laicism therefore reproduces itself and the national identities with which it is affiliated as legitimate, democratic, and modern by representing Islam as irrational, despotic, and antimodern…negative representations of Islam do not merely reflect the political authority of laicism. They help to constitute it.[275]

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[269] Keaton, *Muslims Girls,* 188-189.

[270] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 76.

[271] Ibid., 156.

[272] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 32.

[273] For works addressing the effect of secular French policies such as laïcité on Muslims, or the interaction of Islam with laïcité see: Soheib Bencheikh, *Marianne et le Prophète: l'Islam dans la France laïque* (Paris: Grasset, 1998); Bowen, *Headscarves;* Bowen, "Does French Islam Have Borders?"; Cesari and McLoughlin, *European Muslims;* Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State;* Myriam Hunter-Henin, "Why the French don't like the Burqa: Laïcité, National Identity and Religious Freedom," *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 3 (2012): 613-639; Hurd, *Politics of Secularism*—especially Chapter 3 on "Secularism and Islam"; Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating* Islam; Yolande Jansen, "Secularism and Security: France, Islam, and Europe," in *Comparative Secularism in a Global* Age, eds. Linell E. Cady and Elizabeth Shakman Hurd (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 69-85; Scott, *Politics of the Veil*—especially Chapter 3 on "Secularism"; Elaine R. Thomas, "Keeping Identity at a Distance: Explaining France's New Legal Restrictions on the Islamic Headscarf," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* vol. *29*, no 2 (2006): 237-259.

[274] Hurd, *Politics of Secularism*, 54-58; Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 98.

[275] Hurd, *Politics of Secularism*, 54.

If laïcité is constituted via the idea that Islam is its opposite, how could Muslims in secular France have a hope to ever claim the national identity which is dependent on that secularism?

2.5 French Nationalism: Who Can "Be French"?[276]

France and its citizens have a strong notion of nationalism. The idea of "being French" is a central topic for anyone within the boundaries of the Republic, and in fact is highly based on the notion of the "Republic" and all that it stands for. Hargreaves, in his survey of discussions of French immigration, race and ethnicity expressed that the "prevailing conceptions of nationality and citizenship in France are rooted in the revolution of 1789."[277] Notions of "Frenchness" are consequently rooted in the Republican tradition. Freedman explains that the French Republican ideals of universalism, unitarism, secularism and assimilation dictate, to a large extent, French nationalism.[278] It follows that, to "be French" is to be unified with other French people, to not be distinct.[279] According to Scott, universalism is the key to French national identity and is based on the equation that universalism equals equality. She explains that in France "equality is achieved, in French political theory, by making one's social, religious, ethnic, and other origins irrelevant in the public sphere; it is as an abstract individual that one becomes a French citizen."[280] So, anything that marks one out as distinct goes against what it means to be French. The question then arises: what universal attitude or background is the norm to which all others should assimilate? Who should have access to the title of "French national/citizen"?

In her 2012 work *Immigration, Islam, and the Politics of Belonging in France: A Comparative Framework*, Elaine R. Thomas suggests five models of political membership; five ways of understanding who is a part of the national "we." She explains that one can see citizenship in the national identity as a matter of descent, culture, belief, contract or monetized

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[276] For works that address nationalism and national identity politics see: David Avrom Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Hargreaves, *Immigration*—specifically, Chapter 4 "National Identity, Nationality and Citizenship," 149-175; Brian Jenkins, *Nationalism in France: Class and Nation since 1789* (London; New York: Routledge, 1990); Keaton, *Muslim Girls*; Schain, *The Politics of Immigration;* Thomas, "Keeping Identity at a Distance"; Thomas, *Immigration*; Robert Tombs, ed., *Nationhood and Nationalism in France* (London; New York: Harper Collins Academic, 1991).

[277] Hargreaves, *Immigration,* 160.

[278] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity*, 26.

[279] Natasha Bakht, in "Veiled Objections," states that "common republican identity must take precedence over any divergent aspect of an individual's identity" (82).

[280] Scott, *Politics*, 11.

contract.[281] All these notions of how one claims French nationality or citizenship are at play in France, but the first two have been powerful in dictating who, or who is not, "French." While in the early twentieth century the descent arguments of both *jus sanguinus* (descent) and *jus soli* (territorial birth) tended to determine who "was French," these notions came under scrutiny in the late twentieth century.[282] Instead of French nationality being determined simply based off the fact that one was born on French soil (*jus soli*) and/or to French parents (*jus sanguinus*) debate began to arise in the 1980s over a need to make French citizenship a matter of choice and not just birth.[283] This resulted in the passing of the Loi Méhaignerie in 1993 which required French born children of immigrants to request French citizenship between the ages of 16 and 21 instead of it just being granted to them automatically when they were 18 years old (the way it was before this law passed). The importance of the cultural way of understanding citizenship, as argued by Thomas, began to play a role in defining who could be "French." It was not just about being passively given French citizenship, but actively seeking it, knowing all the cultural implications that it entailed. Hence, one's national status was a matter of "express individual choice."[284]

To work out the universalism, assimilation, etcetera, of the French Republican tradition to which one was agreeing by claiming French citizenship there is often an "imposition of cultural unity in the form of a centralized and secular Republic with one language (as opposed to many regional languages) and a unified culture."[285] This unified culture is important when considering what it means to "be French." Other than the form of French secularism (laïcité) that I discussed above, there are other clear examples of cultural beliefs or practices that form the basis for this "unified culture" that Freedman mentions. The question that is foundational to this study is if the food that one might eat and the liquid that one might drink contribute to the unified culture of the nation? In the case of France, the argument is often clearly stated in the affirmative.

2.5.1 Wine and French National Identity

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[281] Thomas, *Immigration,* 34-46.
[282] Schain, *Politics of Immigration*, 76.
[283] Thomas, *Immigration*, 134.
[284] Ibid., 153.
[285] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity*, 10.

While one can look to political statements about who is "French" based on the "facts" of citizenship, these ideas often get worked out in distinct ways on the ground; how people within a nation view that nationhood is often different from the politics surrounding it. In fact, when speaking to the average French person, they may cite the Republican ideal of secularism, but shortly thereafter they may also cite the fact that they drink wine. Food and drink is in fact a foundational aspect of French nationalism, what it means to "be French" for many people on the ground in the Republic. French culinary identity in general is essential to French national identity. When considering what it means to "be French" many culinary images come to mind: wine, French cheese, the baguette, French pastries such as the croissant, the pain au chocolat, pâté, foie gras, charcuterie (cured meats, usually made from pork), cassoulet (southern French casserole of which pork is an essential ingredient), etcetera. Perhaps unlike any other country in the "West", with the possible exception of Italy, France is known for its food; therefore, to "be French" is to be a part of this great culinary tradition. In fact, Michaela DeSoucey suggests that part of the idea of national identity is "the idea of the nation as a protector of cultural patrimony," of which food is one of the most important aspects in France.[286] She goes on to suggest that "Gastronationalism[287] buttresses national identity against perceived threats from outsiders who wish to eliminate certain objects or practices."[288] While all of the above food products have been the focus of some attention in discussions around "Frenchness,"[289] and have acted as fodder for Gastronationalism, I focus on wine in this section for a couple of reasons. First, unlike some of the other products in this list, wine is one of France's top ten exported

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[286] Michaela DeSoucey, ""Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 75, no. 3 (2010): 447.

[287] Desoucey defines gastronationalism as "the use of food production, distribution, and consumption to demarcate and sustain the emotive power of national attachment, as well as the use of nationalist sentiments to produce and market food" (433).

[288] DeSoucey, "Gastronationalism," 448.

[289] For example, The Sausage and Wine Protest Party that took place in 2010: Sophie Taylor, "Banned Paris "sausage and wine" party." Or, the story of Jean Francois Copé's statements about the stolen pain au chocolat: "UMP: Copé, les pains au chocolat et le Ramadan," 6 October 2012, http://www.leparisien.fr/politique/ump-cope-les-pains-au-chocolat-et-le-ramadan-06-10-2012-2209731.php. This event is particularly interesting to explore. Copé was specific in his statement. It was not just any snack that was snatched from this boy's hands outside of the school (a problem in itself seeing as Ramadan had taken place during summer holidays that year), it was a "pain au chocolat." It begs the question, would there have been such a response if Copé had merely said "snack" or better yet "baklava?" By using a "pain au chocolat" Copé clearly marks the identity of the boy as French and the young "thugs" are seen as trying to take away just one more thing that is French. Not only are *they* threatening the strict notion of laïcité in France, but now *they* are going after *our* croissants as well. For Copé that is the final straw; the perfect representation of his "anti-white racism."

products and France is one of the world's leading producers and exporters of wine.[290] Second, the French not only export a great deal of wine, but they consume it in large quantities as well; the average resident of France drinks roughly 42.5 litres of wine each year.[291] Furthermore, while you may not find all of the products listed above on every French restaurant menu, you would be hard pressed to find an establishment that serves French cuisine without wine.[292] Wine is big business, as well as often personally important, to the French.

Marion Demossier in her 2010 work, *Wine Drinking Culture in France: A National Myth or a Modern Passion*, argues that wine is indispensable to French nationalism. In fact, she states, on the first page of her book that the

> majority of French people have little or no knowledge of wine. Yet, paradoxically, wine drinking and the culture associated with it are seen by many as an essential part of what it means to be French. For French people, wine, or more precisely the love of good wines, characterizes Frenchness in much the same way as being born in France, fighting for liberty or speaking French.[293]

Wine consumption, or simply a passion for wine, takes up an emblematic spot in the definition of what it means to be "French."[294] There are many reasons why wine has taken up such an

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[290] France Trade Statistics, accessed 14 Sept 2016, http://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/france/tradestats; Per Carlson and Britt Carlson, "Which Countries Produce and Consume the Most Wine," 16 Feb 2015, http://www.forbes.com/sites/karlsson/2015/02/16/france-is-the-biggest-wine-producer-in-2014-but-less-wine-is-made-and-drunk-in-europe/#73dcc12e27e4.

[291] Niall McCarthy, "The World's Biggest Wine Drinkers," 17 May 2016, http://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2016/05/17/the-worlds-biggest-wine-drinkers-infographic/#365112f34e43.

[292] There are two, well-known halal French cuisine restaurants in Paris: Les Enfants Terribles and Le Petit Gourmet, where French cuisine is the focus without wine on the menu.

[293] Marion Demossier, *Wine Drinking Culture in France: A National Myth or a Modern Passion* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), 1. The centrality of wine to French identity was evident to me as a young woman travelling to France for the first time in 2003. One of the first things that the father of the family I was staying with showed me after I had settled in was his wine cellar. In spite of my obvious lack of interest in wine at that time, he walked me through his cellar collection, showing me the many fine bottles he had with a great sense of pride. I got the impression, even then as a young woman who had just finished high school, that wine was essential to this man's self-understanding. I got the impression that, for him, showing me France meant showing me wine. I have had this experience many times since, whether it is someone showing me the box of wine that they keep hidden in their closet of their 100 square foot apartment, or massive collections in impressive "caves" under the streets of the Marais. Wine matters to the French.

[294] The importance of wine to the French identity was highlighted in an event that occurred during the recent (January 2016) visit of Iranian president Hassan Rouhani to France. After Rouhani insisted that no wine be served at a Presidential luncheon, French President Francois Hollande cancelled the lunch, refusing to remove this essential aspect of a French lunch from the menu. While he was willing to serve halal meat, taking wine from the table was a step too far. Hollande offered a breakfast meeting instead, which Rouhani refused. This event reveals the complexities around what one should or should not accommodate for the "other" and the related expectations of that "other" on the host. Hollande's move reveals that there are certain steps that the French nation are willing

important place in French nationalism, from it being associated with French soldiers during the First World War, or the creation of the Comité de Propagande du Vin by the French government in 1931 which "embodied official views of wine in inter-war France,"[295] or the fact that wine production is one of the most important branches of French agriculture, etcetera. Ultimately, for these and many other reasons,

> Wine has, therefore, deep historical resonances for French national culture, inspiring patriotic sentiments with its representations rooted in the essentialist concept of the nation, and it remains a powerful symbol of cultural continuity in the face of the changing relationship between global, national and regional identities in France.[296]

If drinking wine is one of the many, and some would argue essential, ways to demonstrate one's "Frenchness," what happens for those individuals who do not consume wine, or even worse, view it as haram, sinful, problematic, in their efforts to claim French national identity? Can a "French Muslim" really be "French" without consumption of one of the national symbols of this identity?

2.5.2 French Islam[297]

This idea of "French Islam" is particularly important, to this study and to a greater understanding of what is "Frenchness" in general. As a result, to understand France's notion of nationalism I explore the topic of "French Islam" here.[298] Questions to be addressed in the subsequent section

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to take, but others, ones that strike at the very nature of what it means to be French, that it is not willing to budge on. For a comprehensive perspective on this event and the nature of hospitality and national identity see Adam Gopnik, "France, Iran, and the Affair of the Lunch Wine," *The New Yorker*, January 29, 2016, accessed February 3, 2016, http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/france-iran-and-the-affair-of-the-lunch-wine.

[295] Demossier, *Wine*, 20.

[296] Ibid., 20.

[297] For an extensive history of Islam in France from the 8th Century C.E. to present (early 21st C) day see Mohammed Arkoun, *Histoire de l'Islam et des musulmans en France du moyen-âge à nos jours* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2006).

[298] For works that specifically address the possibility for a national form of Islam, an "Islam de France," see: Boubakeur and Dollé, *L'Islam de France;* Bowen, *Can Islam be French?;* Bowen, "Does French Islam Have Borders?"; Jocelyne Cesari, "Islam in France: The Shaping of a Religious Minority," in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, 36-51 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet*; S. Draille and H. Frade, *Islam en France, Islam de France*? (Paris: Mango Document, 2003); Ramadan, *To be a European Muslim;* Tariq Ramadan, *Muslims in France: the Way Towards Coexistence* (Markfield, Leicester, U.K., Islamic Foundation, 1999); Gino G. Raymond, "From Islam en France to Islam de France: Contradictions of the French Left's Responses to Islam," *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 43, issue 5 (2009): 481-496; Robinson, "France,"; Yves Charles Zarka, Sylvie Taussig and Cynthia Fleury, eds., *L'islam en France* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004).

are as follows: What does one mean by the term "French Islam?" What is the difference between "Islam de France" and "Islam en France?" How do the multiple and hyphenated identities of Muslim immigrants affect the notion of "French Islam?" Is there a spectrum of "French Muslim" identity? Should one speak of "French Islams" rather than "French Islam?"[299] What does the identity of "French Islam" reveal about "French" nationalism more broadly? If French national identity is, as I described above, based on universalism which strives for equality, an equality that is based on the principles of laïcité, which in turn was constructed in direct opposition to Islam, is "French Islam" even possible? Relatedly, what impact does the colonial construction of what it means to be French, or better, who is excluded from "being French," as we can see in the citizenship cards of the "Français musulman(es)" that I mentioned above, have on those who claim this identity? With an understanding of this essential topic, we can have a better understanding of the kinds of issues that my informants are constantly working out in their efforts to "integrate" into the French national identity, to claim both sides of a potential "French Muslim" identity.[300]

2.5.2.1 "French Islam" Definitional Issues

What exactly is "French Islam?" Is 'French Islam" about a uniform Islam in France, a seeming impossibility considering the vast diversity of Muslims in the world, or any manifestation of

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[299] Ahmed complicates the idea of using the word "Islams" to cover the diversity revealed in the interaction with Islam in any given context. He suggests that those who use this term do not adequately address the "Islam" which is the root concept in their "Islams" (Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 130-152). Always trying to get at the root term, he takes issue with those who use the concept "Islams" as a means of expressing that "there are only local phenomena/islams which are unrelated (except, perhaps, in their shared illusion that they are each Islam), or which are regulated through a medium that has nothing to do with a putative singular Islam" (Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 131). While Ahmed complicates the use of "Islam" in the plural, other scholars suggest this may be a way to come to terms with the diversity of experience present. For example, Amir Hussain in his chapter "Muslims, Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue," in *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism,* ed. Omid Safi (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003): 251-269, states that "I use 'Islams' in the plural rather than 'Islam' in the singular as there are multiple ways of being Muslim in any given context" (Amir Hussain, "Muslims, Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue," 268, note 14).

[300] The very idea of "French Islam' is problematic on many levels but is also essential to understanding how French nationalism is adopted or rejected by Muslims living in France. It is problematic as it highlights that Islam and Muslim identity are things that need to be altered, or interacted within particular ways in order to "fit" with French notions of nationality. The very fact that there is a discussion around "French Islam" and not "French Christianity" or "French Buddhism" sends a clear message about the view of Islam vis-à-vis other religious identities in the Republic. Regardless of its contested nature, many Muslims in France feel as though their interaction with this national form of Islam is important in showing their "French" nationality. My informants interacted with this notion of French Islam and saw themselves as fitting within it, while others purposefully reacted against it. Either way, the idea of a "French Islam" played a role in my informants' negotiation of national identity.

Islam in this locale that fits with French values, approach to church-state relations, etcetera? Can only a certain *kind* of Islam be "French Islam?" To have a voice in the public sphere do Muslims need to unite into a single unit? Does that unit need to mobilize in a particular way? Does it have to be "French" to have any real effect? What needs to change about "Islam," or the various ways that people enact "Islam," for it to become "French Islam?"[301]

"French Islam" often refers to manifestations of Muslim identity that are in line with traditional "French" ideals of laïcité, secularism and the modern Western nation-state. It is frequently used to refer to Muslims living in French societies who claim both a Muslim and a French identity. "French Islam" cannot insist upon a universal Muslim community in these locations; a diversity of ethnic identities is possible and inevitable. That being said, because the emphasis in France is primarily on national or "French" identity, these communities will often take on universal characteristics. This is most evident in the fact that the "French" part of the identity is stressed, mostly by the French host society, and consequently, other identities that may seem as threatening to this identity are regularly suppressed, or at least relegated to the private sphere.

Tariq Ramadan, a leading albeit controversial[302] scholar in the interaction of Islam and the West, addresses the question of what it means to be a European Muslim in his work *To be a European Muslim: A Study of Islamic Sources in the European Context*. His conclusions provide insight into specific European contexts, such as that in France. Ramadan suggests that there are four parts to Muslim identity: faith, practice and spirituality; understanding of texts and context; education and transmission; and action and participation.[303] After explaining the central importance of these four aspects of Muslim identity, Ramadan then suggests that

> the great responsibility of Muslims in the West is to give an adapted European shape to these four dimensions of their identity in light of their Islamic sources which, as to their conception of life, death and creation, remain the fundamental reference.[304]

[301] It is important to note here that there is a diversity of national, sectarian, ethnic, cultural and religious manifestations of Islam, and consequently of Muslim identity, in France. While, as I discuss below, most Muslims in France come from the Maghreb, this does not mean that they all interact with Islam in the same way, or claim Muslim identity in the same way.

[302] Ramadan is a fairly polarizing figure across the globe. While some see his work as representing the voice of modern, Western Islam, others consider his rhetoric subversive and actually purporting a fundamentalist Islamic stance. See Caroline Fourest, *Brother Tariq: The Doublespeak of Tariq Ramadan* (New York, NY: Encounter Books, 2007). Regardless, Ramadan is the most quoted scholar of Islam in Europe, and a frequent speaker, and therefore is an important voice to address when considering the question of the possibility of French Islam.

[303] Ramadan, *To be a European Muslim*, 190-195.

[304] Ibid., 196.

According to Ramadan, Muslims in European contexts should not ignore or dismiss any of these four aspects of their identities but rather alter them in the necessary ways to hold both their Muslim and European identity. Ramadan suggests that through this process an "original Muslim identity" emerges that is "neither totally diluted within the European environment nor in reaction against it, but rather based on its own foundations according to its Islamic sources."[305] This leads me to the question how much can you alter these foundational aspects of identity and still claim authenticity. While the first two aspects of Muslim identity mentioned by Ramadan are adaptable to Western contexts, matters of individual belief and practice are supported by secular, democratic nations; the other aspects are where tension may arise. How one educates one's children and lives out one's identity in other public spaces, perhaps by what they do or do not eat, are the key issues in the negotiation process between Muslims and their European host countries. In fact, in many European nations, particularly France, these last two aspects are expected to remain private. Ramadan states that "the accomplishment of Muslim identity is to express and manifest one's belief through coherent behaviour."[306] This coherent behaviour often includes things such as prayer, fasting, eating halal food, and wearing the hijab; many of which are contested in some way, shape or form in European countries. Bowen suggests that

> perhaps an Islam of faith and properly circumscribed devotions could be French, but an Islam of schools, mosques, and people whose everyday demeanor marked themselves off from others and who sought religious knowledge outside the country—that was a different story.[307]

If Muslims in France are being asked to alter this aspect of their identity to a large extent, to keep it firmly within the private realm, can they still be seen as fulfilling this part of their identity and as a result maintaining their Muslim identity? Is it possible to have "coherent behaviour" without being able to wear the veil, or eat halal food at school, or pray in public places?[308] Who decides what level of alteration is acceptable and what level is not? Can one be a part of this "original Muslim identity" if one removes her veil to attend public school, but insists on wearing it in other public spaces? Does this emphasis on behaviour in line with belief ultimately mean that

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[305] Ibid., 196.
[306] Ibid., 194.
[307] Bowen, *Can Islam be French,* 16.
[308] All these issues have made appearances in recent French media and political discourse.

Muslims can be "Muslims in France" but not "French Muslims?" What is the difference between "Islam en France" and "Islam de France?" It is to this distinction that we turn our focus now.

Cesari suggests that there is a new promotion of national forms of Islam, and "Islam de France," that is, "French Islam," is one example of such a thing.[309] She goes on to suggest in a later publication that this "Islam de France" has a form based on the interaction with the French culture (which arises out of the history of France, its colonial and Republican past). She states that "to be Muslim in France means to lose one's relationship to Islam as a cultural and social fait accompli, and instead to open it up to questioning and individual choice."[310] The question becomes whether it is possible for Muslims to live with Islam *not* being a "cultural and social fait accompli?" Based on Ramadan's proposal of the four parts to Muslim identity above, one may argue it is, in fact, not possible.

Whether it seems possible or not, according to Bowen most Muslims in France would claim that there needs to be an "Islam de France," rather than simply "Islam en France." While this may be a desire of Muslims living in France, how Muslims and non-Muslims alike understand this term varies. Bowen states,

> for some Muslims and many non-Muslims, the phrase "Islam of France" connotes an Islam of piety, without the antiquated trappings of Islamic law, and with less emphasis on the practices of prayer and sacrifice. For other Muslims it inspires an effort to rethink Islam in a European context without compromising on either its core principles or its norms and practices. For many non-Muslim French people, it means cultural "assimilation" to French language and culture or social "integration" into a "mixed" society—to be demonstrated by choosing designer headscarves over the Islamic kind, eating the same food as everyone else, or interacting regularly with non-Muslims. For many in the government, however, the phrase means an Islam regulated by the state and bounded by the state's borders, with French Islamic institutions and French-trained imams.[311]

Many different understandings of the term lead to the possibility that everything, and at the same time nothing, is "French Islam." It does appear that assimilation to French language and culture is an essential piece of creating an "Islam de France," but it is difficult to know exactly what that entails. Ultimately, the centrality of the separation of public and private and the secular foundation of French identity leads to a major conflict between the two parts of the "Islam de France" identity. The apparent lack of separation of public and private life, and the emphasis on

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[309] Cesari and McLoughlin, *European Muslims,* 71.
[310] Cesari, "Islam," 198.
[311] Bowen, "Does French Islam have Borders," 44.

coherent behaviour in line with belief in the Muslim tradition, are seen as a direct threat to the "French speaking culture." For example, Hurd states that

> up to the present, being a French supporter of laicism has generally meant *not* being Muslim, at least not openly and publicly. One could be Jewish (at times) or Christian, but within the concept of "secular Muslim European" has been lodged an assumption that the "Muslim" part is subordinate to the "secular" and "European" parts.[312]

What side of the identity one emphasizes, then, becomes a central question in the discussion of "French Islam." As I argued above, emphasizing both identities may be a difficult task when both tend to require that each remains, using Cesari's language, a "cultural and social fait accompli," and when, according to Hurd, the Muslim side tends to be "subordinate" to the other side.

2.5.2.2 "French Islam" Identity Issues

There is a complicated situation that arises in the interplay of Republicanism in France, immigration and related notions of identity. Amselle suggests that the Republican model is in fact viable "only if it rests on the prior existence of a plurality of groups that, within the context of organic solidarity, are supposed to form a harmonious synthesis."[313] There needs to be a diversity of groups present, but the expectation is that those differences, at least visible differences, would be erased in a truly Republican, secular country. France needs immigrants and different groups to be present, but the expectation is that they will integrate to such an extent that an "organic solidarity" emerges. Because of the emphasis in the Republic that all are supposed to become one, any notion of "French Islam" is problematic because it highlights a diversity that should not be present in the Republican state. This tension leads to a complicated balancing act between recognition of a "plurality of groups" and an overarching unity present in France.[314] While most would not use the term "multiculturalism" to define the situation happening in France, Amselle does just that. He suggests that the French approach to multiculturalism "culminates in the division of the population into minority 'communities' on the one hand and

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[312] Hurd, *Politics of Secularism*, 58.

[313] Amselle, *Affirmative Exclusion: Cultural Pluralism and the Rule of Custom in France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), x.

[314] This relates to the politics of recognition and the politics of difference mentioned in Charles Taylor and Amy Gutmann, *Multiculturalism and 'the Politics of Recognition': An Essay* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

the majority 'French ethnic group' on the other."[315] This would seem to indicate that having a "French Islam" is acceptable under French multiculturalism, as long as the "French" part of the identity is emphasized and the "Islam" part of it is seen as the representation of the minority community of which one is a member.

What becomes essential in French multiculturalism, and similarly in Québec interculturalism, as I present later, is the interplay between the rights of the individual and the rights of the collective; in France both are protected by Republican standards. One can hold any identity if that identity does not threaten others; when an identity does threaten others, limits are put in place. One may argue, that it is possible for a "French Islam," if the second identity, Islam, does not threaten the first identity, French. This tends to be the argument given in the literature on "French Islam" and by politicians and Muslims alike: one can be a "French Muslim" if the religious identity does not challenge or interfere with what it means to be "French." What is noteworthy is that, according to the French approach to national identity, any public expression of minority identity would innately threaten, challenge and interfere with what it means to be "French." As Susan Worbs describes it,

> France has a tradition of "assimilation policy" that is rooted in the historical process of centralization and nation building…The very idea of "minorities" or even "races" and policies referring to such categories is rejected in French politics.[316]

So even if Republican multiculturalism protects minority identities, it relegates them to a particular time and place; often in the privacy of one's home. There seems to be a privileging of the collective identity over the individual identity and the question begs to be asked, what happens if the first identity, French, threatens the second, Islam? Is this not also a violation of Republican ideals? In fact, Scott suggests that the critics of French secularism see this approach as violating the democratic principles on which the Republic is founded. In "its claims to universalism" secular nationalism has "justified the exclusion or marginalization of those from non-European cultures (often immigrants from former colonies) whose systems of belief do no

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[315] Amselle, *Affirmative Exclusion*, 1.

[316] Susan Worbs, ""Where do I Belong?: Integration Policy and Patterns of Identification among Migrant Youth in Three European Countries," in *Negotiating Transcultural Lives: Belongings and Social Capital among Youth in Comparative Perspective,* eds. Dirk Hoerder, Yvonne Hébert and Irina Schmitt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006): 42-43.

separate public and private in the same way, do not, in other words, conform to those of the dominant group."[317]

Ultimately, having a "French Islam" leads to a hyphenated identity. The creation of hyphenated identities—Muslim French, French Muslim, etcetera—inevitably lead to questions about to which side of the hyphen one belongs.[318] These questions become prevalent for second-generation Muslim immigrants. As argued by Cesari, "while first-generation immigrants often live in a state of relative harmony with the religious, social and national aspects of identity, their children face a tension, if not an outright conflict, between the layers of individual, collective, and national identity."[319] Young French Muslims who have known no other country as home other than France are often forced to question their national identity because of the strong relationship between ethnic and religious identities. Thus, conflict will often arise over which part of one's identity to emphasize. By stating that "the Republic does not recognize people based on their origin. You are French, and there are French people of all ethnic origins," past president of France, Jacques Chirac, reveals the centrality of French identity above all other identities.[320] Consequently, this centrality is represented by physical action, or inaction, by those who claim French identity. Evidence that one is French is found in outward manifestations of that identity, and when one's outward manifestations of identity (what one eats, how one dresses, etcetera) highlight a different identity, problems may arise. After all, French universalism suggests that "in theory there is no possibility of a hyphenated ethnic/national identity—one belongs either to a group or to the nation."[321] While official statements or policies may indicate that certain identities (ethnic or religious) do not matter in the French context, it becomes clear that on the ground level this is not necessarily the case. Ethnic, religious and other national identities are often highlighted and the relationship between them is often misrepresented.

It is critical to note the conflation of the term Islam, or Muslim, with many other identity labels in France. For example, as I noted earlier, immigrant and Muslim have become synonymous terms.[322] Furthermore, increased numbers of Muslim or Arab immigrants, with no

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[317] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 92.
[318] Darcy A. Zabel, *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 3.
[319] Cesari, "Islam," 199.
[320] Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam*, 76.
[321] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 11.
[322] Cesari, "Islam," 195; Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 16-17.

real increase in interaction with those immigrants, leads to a tendency to place a "one-size-fits-all" label on Arabs living in the West. The relationship between religion and ethnicity and the conflation of the two in many of these Western contexts is also important to note. Because the host society does not often separate ethnic from religious identity for the Muslim immigrants in their midst, difficulty often arises for the Muslim communities themselves to dissociate the two. The conflation of ethnic and religious identities is crucial in the discussion of "French Islam." If both the majority French culture, and the Muslim immigrant communities, have a difficult time dissociating ethnic identity from religious identity how is a "French Islam," as an overarching label, possible? If Islam in France is specifically Maghrébine Islam (Algerian Islam, Moroccan Islam, Tunisian Islam) how can there be a "*French* Islam?" More essentially if these ethnic identities are understood to be foundationally in conflict with "French" identity, how could these conflated identities fit with the French identity? If in the term "Muslim" in France the term Maghrébine is implicit is it possible to also be "French?" Is it possible to have what Zabel states of her mixed identity in Canada in France? She states: "I am an Arab. I am a Syrian. I am a Muslim. I am a Canadian. I am an Arab Muslim Canadian. I am very comfortable and proud of my identities"[323] While these identities are separated out for Zabel, is it possible to do the same in France where the ethnic and religious aspects of identity are fused? Perhaps part of the fear of establishing a "French Islam" is that these two terms will become conflated as well.

The fact that ethnic and religious identities are merged, or more specifically, immigrant and Muslim, or Muslim and other,[324] leads one to the idea that this conflated identity is inherently different from one's national identity. In France "people are increasingly concerned with their collective identities as either 'Maghrebi'/'Muslim' or 'French.'"[325] In this quotation we can see the fusing of ethnic and religious identity (Maghrébine/Muslim) and the fact that this conflated identity is separate from national identity (French). Even if Muslim immigrants are acknowledged as being from France, they are often labeled as coming from the "'other France.' Rarely are they seen for what they are: French nationals."[326] If Muslim immigrants, no matter what their ethnic background, feel inherently foreign based on that identity, two possibilities

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[323] Zabel, *Arabs,* 187.
[324] Barbara Daly, Metcalfe, *Making Muslim space in North America and Europe* (University of California Press, 1996), 74.
[325] Metcalfe, *Making Muslim space,* 234.
[326] Keaton, *Muslim Girls*, 33.

arise for French Islam: first, they hold onto their "foreign" identity and inherently remain outside of what it means to be "French," and *French* Islam" is not really a possibility. Or second, they sacrifice that "foreign" identity to become "French," and "French *Islam*" is not really a possibility. Furthermore, this tie between ethnic and religious identity often leads to reluctance to take up French national identity on the part of many Muslims (particularly Algerian Muslims) in France. Cesari states that "they were reluctant to acquire French nationality, viewing that acquisition as a betrayal of their nation's prior struggle against colonialism," and "adherence to Islam is still one of their primary bulwarks against assimilation."[327] Holding on to identities that distinguish rather than integrate does not bode well for a "French Islam."

Overall, notions of conflated identities and religious and ethnic identities that are seen as in conflict with modern Western notions of the secular state make the idea of "French Islam" seem more like an ideal than a reality. The strength of this statement varies from location to location with the situation in Canada/Québec, as we'll see, appearing more welcoming for Muslim immigrants to adopt such a hybrid identity, than for those same immigrants in France. In fact, Fetzer and Soper ask the question, "the situation for Muslims in some parts of France appears so bleak that one wonders why more do not emigrate to a more hospitable country such as Britain or Canada."[328] Regardless of which situation may be more welcoming it seems evident from the exploration above that the emphasis on "French" identity in France prejudices the debate of the possibility of "French Islam."

Perhaps the best way to describe Muslims in France, then, is as French and of Muslim faith.[329] Ramadan actually suggests that it is in fact pointless to dispute over the "terminological choice between 'a French Muslim' or 'a Muslim Frenchman.'"[330] Instead, Bowen suggests that, rather than asking if one identity should be highlighted over another, the better question may be "Can Islam become a generally accepted part of French social landscape?...quick off the mark there are signs that suggest yes, perhaps, and others that indicate no, maybe not."[331] Whether or not there is, or can be, a "French Islam" does not take away from the fact that in the current globalized world, these two strong identities must be in negotiation to an extent that was not

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[327] Jocelyne Cesari, "Islam in France," 38.
[328] Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State*, 97.
[329] In discussing these questions with non-Muslim French, they would often break down the identities thusly: French, Algerian, of Muslim faith.
[330] Ramadan, *European Muslim*, 163.
[331] Bowen, *Can Islam be French*, 3.

needed before. Those who hold to both sides of this identity are in an especially problematic place, holding two identities that each requires absolute adherence and dedication; after all, how can one be both "French first" and "Muslim first"? These conflicts of identity are consequently worked out in the hybrid-identifier's daily life.

2.6 Conclusion

How Maghrébine Muslims live out their daily lives in France, especially as it relates to food practice, is the focus of this dissertation. To fully understand the experience of my informants, to understand how and why they may or may not change their food practice, and to understand the contextual pressures that they face in their daily lives, it is essential to understand the French setting that acts as the backdrop to their daily experience.

To understand how it is that Maghrébine Muslims will find some French food practices a normal expression of their own food customs, one must understand the colonial relationship between the two locations. While the colonial past between France and the countries of the Maghreb leads to negative colonial memory and thus stereotyping behaviour by both sides, it can also have positive effects. In the section on colonialism, I began by presenting a brief exploration of the role of the baguette and couscous in the relationship between colonizer and colonized. I showed how baguette is brought by the French colonizers and becomes an essential element of Maghrébine food culture. On the other hand, the colonizer also picks up some of the local food culture through the experience of colonization, and thus couscous is enveloped in French food culture as well. I suggested here that these culinary familiarities may serve an important role in cross cultural understanding and solidarity in present day France.

France's colonization of North Africa not only has a direct influence on the familiarity with the food of the other, but also the prejudice against it. Thus, I addressed France and North Africa's historical colonial relationship. After addressing a brief overview of that history, I discussed how France's colonization of the countries of the Maghreb, and particularly Algeria, took on an air of moral crusade. The French colonist was seen as a liberator, of women in particular, in a backward and unenlightened Muslim world. The Algerian, Muslim colonial subject, although technically a French citizen during this time, was set apart as separate, as different, as not fully French, being given distinct citizenship cards that labelled them as

"Français musulman(e)" rather than simply "Français." The situation was one of hostility, often based on the understanding that the Maghrébine Muslim subject was barbaric and violent. The image of Maghrébines as violent was concretized in the eyes of the non-Maghrébine French through the experience of the Algerian War between 1954 and 1962. Islam became directly affiliated with this bloody decolonization effort and thus for many non-Muslim French in both the colonies and the metropole, Islam was understood as a violent force; an understanding that was then applied to all Maghrébine Muslims, not just Algerians.[332] This colonial history and the interaction between France and Islam in the colonial context means that a wide variety of "colonial memories" or lack thereof are present in France today. These colonial memories inevitably affect the relationship between Maghrébine Muslim immigrants and the majority, non-Muslim French population. When events and situations arise that confirm these negative colonial memories, the situation becomes problematic for all sides.

I followed the discussion of colonization with an examination of the immigration history of Maghrébine Muslims to France, and showed how one can see the tensions that may be present to transform one's practice as a reflection of a French identity and not an "immigré(e)." Because of France's colonization of North Africa, and the mere fact of geographical closeness, much of France's immigration numbers come from the countries of the Maghreb. Hence, in the second section of this chapter, I discussed the migratory movements of Maghrébine Muslims to France and the effect of these immigration patterns on current relationships between immigrant and non-immigrant French. I used Jocelyne Cesari's 2009 chapter in Bramadat and Koenig's work to present the three migratory movements of Muslims to France. This overview provides important historical context for some of the infrastructure that supports, or does not, the Maghrébine Muslim community in Paris. For example, during the first two waves of Muslim migration to France, the migrants expected to return to their home contexts and thus lived in temporary housing developments meant for single young men in the suburbs of Paris. With the third wave of migration, and the change from labourers to family reunification, the Muslim community on the ground level in France changed drastically, and yet the infrastructure was not in place to

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[332] This view of Islam as a violent force is grounded in the French view of the decolonization process in Algeria, but its effect is often felt beyond the Algerian community. As I discuss in Chapter 3, hybridization of identities is a common occurrence in France, and Muslims of all origins are often painted with the same brush. Moreover, the focus on the Algerian case is particularly important for this study because the majority of my informants have Algerian origins, either first or second generation (22 are Algerian versus 6 Moroccan and 5 Tunisian).

accommodate this change, thus creating the overcrowded banlieues that are common place in Paris today.

After presenting these early migratory movements I outlined general demographics about Muslim immigration in France. I showed that while Muslims in France come from 123 different nationalities, the majority come from the countries of the Maghreb. Additionally, I presented the fact that approximately 75 percent of immigrants in France are thought to be Muslim, leading to a conflation between the term "immigrant" and "Muslim" (as well as Muslim and North African). Since there are roughly six million Muslims in France, and approximately 2.4 million of them live in the greater Paris region, a city that has a population of roughly 2.2 million within the bounds of the twenty "arrondissements," one can see how the argument is made by some in France that "the immigrant community," understood "the Muslim community" is overwhelming the city and consequently the country. Furthermore, because such a large proportion of Muslim immigrants in France are Maghrébine immigrants, one can understand how the conflation of cultural and religious food practice are a reality in the French context. "Muslim food" in France is often conflated with "Maghrébine food" and vice versa which may influence the interaction with and between Muslim and non-Muslim French.

Moreover, because of France's approach to secularism, the Muslim immigrant in France may find him/herself under more pressure to label religious food practices as cultural food practices to not offend the secularist sentiments that rule the nation. To understand the history and context that may lead to this kind of sentiment I spent the next section of this chapter directly addressing the French approach to secularization, namely laïcité. After a brief examination of the history around the separation of church and state in France, and the 1905 law which officially removed the power of the Catholic church, and any religion for that matter, from the state, I then presented the Republican notion of "freedom *from* religion." In this, I showed how France has an official secularization policy which protects the state from religion and not the other way around.

This official secularization policy is that of laïcité which I addressed next in this chapter. I showed how this term developed and how people have interacted with it since its imagined inception in the 1905 law; the term did not make its official constitutional debut until 1946. Laïcité is often argued to entail religious freedom, but as I presented in this chapter, the definition of religious freedom is often differently understood by various groups in France. To understand the numerous kinds of laïcité possibly active in France I presented Fetzer and Soper's

strict and soft laïcité, and Bowen's political and social laïcité. Within the criticisms of strict laïcité I suggested that laïcité itself has become somewhat of a religion in France, and a central orienting principle of French nationality.

Finally, because of the emphasis on French national identity, and a particular understanding of that identity, Muslims in France may need to make more concerted efforts to show that they too are "French" and all that that entails. These efforts often include the outward manifestations of one's identity, of which food is essential. I closed the chapter by exploring what it means to "be French" and who has access to this national identity. After briefly outlining Thomas' five models of citizenship, and consequently nationality, I suggested that food may be a particularly important aspect of the unified culture that is essential to the Republican national tradition. In this effort, I explored wine drinking as an crucial aspect of French national identity. I asked the question in this section: If drinking wine is one of the many, and some would argue essential, ways to demonstrate one's "Frenchness," what happens for those individuals who do not consume wine, or even worse, view it as haram, sinful, problematic, in their efforts to claim French national identity? What effect might this have on the Muslim immigrant living in the wine-soaked French nation? Can he/she be both French and Muslim?

To conclude, I investigated the concept of "French Islam." Tto understand what might make up any European form of Islam, or French Islam in particular, I outlined Tariq Ramadan's four elements of European Muslim identity. I showed that the first two characteristics of European Muslim identity according to Ramadan are in line with French notions of laïcité, namely (1) faith, practice and spirituality and (2) understanding of texts and context. These characteristics can arguably be pursued in private, thus not threatening the strict separation of religion and public life that is essential to the French national self-understanding. On the other hand, the second two characteristics of European Muslim identity as outlined by Ramadan are more in conflict with French understandings of French national identity as secular and universalistic, namely (3) the education and transmission of religious identity and (4) action and participation. I argued that how one educates one's children and lives out one's identity in other public spaces, perhaps by what they do or do not eat, are the key issues in the negotiation process between Muslims and their European host countries and between the consequent two sides of their transnational identity. Whether one can live out these four characteristics in France or not,

according to the literature, many Muslims in France would argue that there needs to be an "Islam de France" and not just an "Islam en France."

I presented the idea that ultimately having a "French Islam" leads to hyphenated identities for those who claim membership in this group. Conflict often arises out of the pressure from both sides of this hyphenated identity to prioritize one side over the other. One is expected to be both French first and Muslim first. Furthermore, with the common conflation of identities that is present in France, there is a problem in determining what exactly is meant by both "French" and "Islam" in this context. Generally, notions of conflated identities and religious and ethnic identities that are seen as in conflict with modern Western notions of the secular state make the idea of "French Islam" seem more like an ideal than a reality.

Overall, in this chapter I have tried to show how the colonial, immigration, secularist and nationalistic histories and context of France have a unique effect on the daily lives of the Maghrébine Muslims of my study. This effect will be made evident throughout the next three chapters as I present the findings from my ethnographic case study of Maghrébine Muslims in Paris.

Introduction to the Paris Case Study: Food in Identity, Transnationalism and Religious Practice

There I was, perched in the park outside of the Grande Mosquée de Paris on one of my first Friday afternoons in the city, watching as people filed into the mosque for prayer, young and old, men and women, from a variety of backgrounds. As I looked on the mosque filled to capacity and latecomers started to flow out of the large wooden front doors onto the stone steps, and then onto the concrete sidewalk in front of the mosque. Prayer mats were placed in front of them, turning the secular Parisian sidewalk into sacred space. I watched four police officers looking on, seemingly keeping things "in check." I felt slightly uncomfortable by the police presence and wondered how this might make those people in attendance feel as well. I wondered how many churches had four police officers standing out front on a Sunday during their service. As the hundreds of people left the mosque that day, I wondered if I had gotten in over my head.

The arguments made in the next three chapters are based on the data I collected during my six-month fieldwork trip to Paris, France in 2012. The themes that emerged from my data analysis of the foodways of my informants speak to three aspects of the Maghrébine Muslim experience in France: identity, transnationalism and practice. In Chapter 3 I explore how Maghrébine Muslims view themselves, and others in their French context. I address the spectrum of approaches to identity consolidation taken by this community, as is made evident by my data, and the role that food plays in these negotiations. I then investigate the presence and influence of transnationalism on the Maghrébine Muslim community in France in Chapter 4. To this end, I show how food functions as a tool for the transnational immigrant to maintain connection with the homeland, as well as "integrate" into the host land. Finally, in Chapter 5 I explore how both these issues, as well as others, affect the everyday food practice of North African Muslims in Paris. I address how the way one self-identifies can have a concrete effect on how one lives one's life on the ground. I also consider how group identity, specifically a transnational one, can change one's religious and cultural food practice outside of the homeland.

In these three chapters I provide a glimpse into the varied and complex approaches to daily life that are present in the Maghrébine community in Paris and how their approach to their food practices changes or remains consistent with what they did in the homeland. I demonstrate how the individuals of my study address the potentially complicated process of religious identity

negotiation and integration in the seemingly unwelcoming context of Republican France by using food as a tool and symbol of these processes.

Chapter 3: "Et vous, comment voulez-vous que je vous identifie?"[333]: The Role of Food in Identity Negotiation and Presentation amongst Maghrébine Muslims in Paris

3.1 Introduction

Identity is complex and multivalent. We all claim various identities in our lives, some more strongly than others, and some more varied than others. While one individual may see himself as holding only one identity, another individual may see herself as holding many. Identities are claimed and constructed, acted upon and assumed, and every individual will engage with his/her own identities in unique ways. What this flexibility leads to is a wide range of identity consolidation processes and expressions in any given individual, let alone any community. It is impossible to speak of a single Maghrébine Muslim identity in Paris or of a single way that Maghrébine Muslims interact with, change or adapt their identities in their immigrant location. When dealing with human subjects, perfect typologies are impossible to present.

While perfect typologies may not be within the realm of possibility, some categorization of the data can be useful. All typologies have flaws, but some are a helpful means through which to view various phenomena. For this reason, further on in this chapter I use Salman Akhtar's typology of immigrant identity consolidation, which I adjust and expand, to understand the identity processes of the Maghrébine community that I studied in France.[334] While none of my informants were a perfect fit to Akhtar's four consolidation processes, good examples can be found of all. Specifically, I show how food and food practice play a significant role in these identity consolidation processes for the informants in my study. Through this analysis, I show how some Maghrébine Muslims in France claim a hyper-assimilated, ethnocentric, alienated or bi-cultural (what my informants would call a double cultural, and what I would call a transnational) identity.[335]

Before I address these specific identity consolidation processes, I present some general themes that emerged in relation to identity out of my interviews. Information about the identity

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[333] "And you, how would you like me to identify you?" This chapter title comes directly from my list of semi-structured interview questions.

[334] Salman Akhtar, *Immigration and Acculturation: Mourning, Adaptation and the Next Generation* (Lanham: Jason Aronson, 2011).

[335] These are Akhtar's four identity consolidation types. I will address each of them further below.

of my informants was gathered through specific interview questions related to identity, as well as in statements made by my informants to questions not specifically related to identity. What became clear, in fact, was that identity was a central concern for my 33 informants. Most conversations came back to this issue, to how one identifies oneself and is identified by others. One's practice was influenced by one's identity, and vice versa. One's beliefs were influenced by one's identity, and vice versa. One's interaction with people who hold a similar identity or a different identity was influenced by one's identity, and vice versa. Identity was a central concern for the Maghrébine Muslims I interviewed in Paris.

3.2 Multiple Identity Claims: Primary Identity and the Influence of Context

Considering what is known about the French approach to identity, this centrality is not surprising. To begin it is important to note some simple statistics on how people identify themselves when asked a straightforward question about their identity. When asked, "comment voulez-vous que je vous identifie?"[336] a person's first response is often telling of the primary identity that he/she holds. In the case of my informants in Paris, primary identity claims were quite varied. Of my 33 informants 15 claimed national identity first (46 percent), whether French (five informants) or nation of origin (ten informants), seven claimed gender identity as their primary identity (21 percent), five claimed Muslim identity first (15 percent), three identified their name as their principal identity (9 percent), two listed "world citizen" as their primary identity (6 percent), and one claimed his occupation first (3 percent).[337] Because of the variation in first identities given there were no real patterns of identity claims based on country of origin or gender. Of the ten informants who claimed nation of origin as their first identity, nine were from Algeria, and one from Tunisia. None of the Moroccans in my study claimed nation of origin as their first identity. This does not mean that they did not mention this identity at all; it just was not the first identity that they professed. The other minor trend that I found was in relation to gender. Of those who claimed their gender identity first, six out of seven were female. Interestingly, not everyone who claimed French first were French-born (two were French born,

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[336] "How would you like me to identify you?"

[337] One must wonder how these responses might have changed, what identities my informants might have highlighted, or presented as primary, if I held different identities. I.e. if I weren't a blond, white, Canadian, woman speaking French? What if I had been a Muslim? A Maghrébine? A French woman? A man? Etcetera.

two were Algerian and one was Tunisian). Overall, the most significant first identity to be mentioned was a national one with almost half of all informants (with an even split between male and female) stating this identity claim first.

In a country where one's national identity is seen as holding utmost importance, it is understandable why one's perception of oneself in relation to that identity, and others, is such a vital topic. The emphasis on national identity can be seen in the responses to my direct question about identity. In 31 of my interviews, the informants highlighted national identity as one of the most important identities they held. Moreover, as I just stated, in half of these interviews the informants gave either French or one of the Maghrébine national identities as their first identity, and if it was not the first identity mentioned it quickly followed the first. National identity was in the forefront of all these informants' minds. One informant explained that this emphasis on national identity was the French approach to the question of identity:

> En fait ce que tu dis là, ce n'est pas une approche française de l'identité. Si [c'était] l'approche française, je te dirais que je suis Française, que j'ai la double nationalité et que je suis tunisienne. Je suis sur le territoire français, donc c'est la primo en France [la nationalité française est mise en avant]. Quand je suis en Tunisie, c'est ma nationalité tunisienne qui est avant ma nationalité française. Tu vois c'est inversé. Ensuite je te dirais que…mon identité s'arrête là.[338]

National identity is seen as the most important, the only worthwhile identity to mention in the French context. It was only in two interviews where this emphasis on some form of national identity was not present. In these two cases, the informants referred to themselves as "citoyens du monde"[339] and refused to label themselves with any strong nationalistic identity.

In the above quotation, we can also see another theme that emerged in peoples' responses to the question of which identities they presented, namely, that the context would affect how they would respond to such a question. I had informants who expressed that they felt more French in France and more Maghrébine[340] in the Maghreb (i.e. more Algerian in Algeria, more Moroccan

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[338] 121209_001—"In fact, what you say there, is not a French approach to identity. If it was the French approach, I would tell you that I am French, that I have a double nationality and that I am Tunisian. I am on the French territory, so it's the first in France [the French nationality is placed in front]. When I am in Tunisia, it's my Tunisian nationality that is in front of my French nationality. You see it's the inverse. After, I would tell you…my identity stops there." As I addressed in Chapter 1, for anonymity I exclude all personal identifications from the text, and use a unique code number for each interview.

[339] 121108_001; 121124_001—"Citizens of the world."

[340] I am using the term "Maghrébine" here to refer to the three national origins of my informants. Instead of listing "Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian" every time I talk about these identities, I am using this term as a catch all for all

in Morocco, more Tunisian in Tunisia), or that they would emphasize these identities in these locales more strongly.[341] On the other hand, I had informants who expressed the exact opposite and stated that they felt more Maghrébine in France and more French in the Maghreb.[342] When one's identity is the minority, it is often highlighted. Elsewhere, I refer to this as the minority status effect; that is, "when one's identity changes from being one that is shared with the majority to one that is representative of a minority, symbols of that identity start to play a more significant role for the migrant," and food is one such symbol.[343]

The influence of context on identity could also be seen in relation to religious identity for many of my informants. Like the need to emphasize one's national identity where it is not the majority identity, the need to emphasize one's religious identity when it is not the majority was also felt by my informants. One informant explained that, because of the lack of polemic in the Maghreb toward Islam, there is no need there to emphasize one's Muslim identity. Islam is seen as "for everyone" and as a result it was not a distinct identity to be held and stated.[344] Furthermore, these informants argued that, in the Maghreb, "on s'identifie pas comme musulman car tout le monde l'est."[345] Regardless of polemics, the Muslim identity is presumed to be an inevitability and not worth mentioning in the Maghreb. On the other hand, where religious identity is not inevitable, i.e. in France, one may feel the need to hold and profess this identity more strongly. This falls in line with Steven Vertovec's suggestion that one's minority status leads to a great deal of self-consciousness, often leading immigrants to become more aware of their religion in the migrant context.[346]

3.2.1 Born Muslim: "même si on ne le veut pas"[347]

The idea that everyone is born Muslim if they are born in the Maghreb presents another thorny aspect of the identity negotiations happening for North African Muslims in their immigrant

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the above. While regional identity is important to my informants, as I argued in Chapter 1, that is not the purpose of the term here.

[341] 121128_001.

[342] 121124_001.

[343] Rachel Brown, "How Gelatin Becomes an Essential Symbol of Muslim Identity: Food Practice as a Lens into the Study of Religion and Migration," *Religious Studies and Theology*, vol. 35, no. 2 (Dec. 2016): 89-113.

[344] 121123_001.

[345] 121206_001—"We don't identify as Muslim because everyone is one."

[346] Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 140.

[347] 120917_001—"Even if we do not want it."

locations. This raises the question of where the separation between innate and chosen identity lies. Once one claims an innate identity, an identity that one is "born with," does that influence to what degree that identity is adaptable? Does one's affinity with the identity grow or weaken based on the understanding of it being a "born identity?" Can innate identity be left behind? From examining my data, this notion of being "born Muslim" was a prominent idea expressed by my informants.

Before exploring exactly how my informants spoke of this native identity it is important to note that there seems to be some conflation of the term Muslim and Maghrébine presented here. Peggy Levitt states that when migrants come from contexts where there is little separation between church and state, religion and nationality reinforce once another in the migrant context.[348] This argument was presented by some of my informants, stating that because one is Maghrébine, coming from one of the countries of the Maghreb, or seeing oneself as holding this regional identity, one is inevitably Muslim as well. This conflation of national, regional and religious identities, then, is not merely something that comes from the outside and is projected onto members of those communities, but it is something that comes from within the community itself. One of my informants expressed that "Muslim" and "Arab" are being conflated in the West, yet went on to say that if you are born in the Maghreb, you are born Muslim, buying into the very conflation against which she was speaking.[349]

This informant was not the only one to express the inherent characteristic of the Maghrébine Muslim identity. When speaking about their Muslim identity, 10 of my 33 informants stated that because they were born in one of the countries of the Maghreb they were "born Muslim." For example, when addressing her Muslim identity and explaining why she called herself Muslim in spite of her stating that "Je ne suis pas vraiment pratiquante," one of my informants laughed and said "oui je le suis, mais en fait, à partir du moment où en Algérie on est née Algérienne, donc on est systématiquement musulmane même si on ne le veut pas. Voilà. On l'est."[350] The idea that one could hold an identity even if one does not want to hold said identity is an important aspect of the immigrant's experience to take into account. Much of the conflict

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[348] Peggy Levitt, "You know, Abraham was really the First Immigrant": Religion and Transnational Migration," *International Migration Review*, vol. 37, no. 3 (Fall 2003): 853.
[349] 121123_001.
[350] 120917_001—"I am not really practicing;" "Yes I am, but in fact, from the moment when in Algeria, we are born Algerian so we are systematically Muslim even if we do not want it. We are it."

that arises around religious identity, and often religious practice, comes from the idea that one can choose one's religious identity and resultant practice. What happens to this idea when religious identity is viewed as an innate identity, much like gender or race or even nationality— and, for that matter, what happens to a Maghrébine immigrant to France when a secular identity is viewed as the national innate identity? If one cannot help but claim female, or white or Canadian identity based off of the circumstances of her birth how does this change her interaction with the world around her? From looking at the response from many of my informants that Islam is an inborn identity, could this help us to understand how some may view it as difficult to change? Just as it is incredibly difficult to change one's gender identity in the eyes of those around you, could religious identity be just as tough to leave behind, even if one desires to leave it? Could this lead to the re-labelling of religious identity as something else, namely a cultural identity?

3.2.2 Who Can Claim a Particular Identity?

This was a significant point made by some of my informants as well, the notion that even if you wanted to claim a particular identity, certain contexts, or characteristics may prevent you from doing so. Just as much as certain facts would automatically include someone in an identity group, i.e. being "born Muslim," some of my informants spoke of the fact that certain characteristics would preclude them from claiming particular identities as well. Something as simple as facial hair may trigger this response, as one of my informants explained:

> si quelqu'un, par exemple, il me voit avec la barbe, il dit: pas un Français. Il dit: un musulman. Donc moi, je dis musulman, donc je sais dans ma tête, et lui il me regarde comme un arabe, ou un musulman. Donc moi, je me sens musulman Arabe. [351]

He explained to me that because other people see a characteristic or trait, such as a beard, and immediately place him into a specific identity group, that he does the same. He does not even try to claim another identity because he argues that he would not be allowed to claim that identity anyway by most non-bearded French around him. Another of my informants reiterated this point when he said "Ça sert à rien de dire qu'on est Français, parce que ça se voit immédiatement sur

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[351] 120726_001—"If someone, for example, he sees me with a beard, he does not say: a Frenchman; he says: a Muslim; so me, I say Muslim. So I know in my head, and he looks at me like an Arab, or a Muslim, so for me, I feel Muslim Arab."

nous. Puisque les médias nous ont catalogués depuis x-temps, ça se voit immédiatement sur nous."[352] This informant explained that there is no point in claiming French identity when "it is seen on" him, i.e. it is clear from his appearance that he is not what is considered "French." This informant went on to explain that he considered himself both, but at the same time explained how he did not "feel French" and thus was "not French."[353] While other informants mentioned their physical characteristics as limiting them from claiming French identity, some gave other examples of traits that precluded them from calling themselves French. For example, one informant mentioned their "façon d'être" (way of being) as a reason why "je passerai jamais pour quelqu'une qui est née en France. Quelqu'une qui est Française, jamais."[354] For many of my informants, food practice was one "façon d'être" which excluded them from being accepted as "French." As one young, second generation Maghrébine woman expressed to me, "la France c'est vin, fromage et baguette. Je mange que la baguette. Donc voilà. Je ne suis pas vraiment Française, Française."[355]

Another informant claimed, alongside her physique that gave away her identity, that her name would not allow her to be viewed as French by the society. She explained that the majority non-Muslim French society "me renvoie en permanence le fait que je ne suis pas, de par mon physique, de par mon prénom, de par mon nom, Française."[356] Some of the members of the community told me of taking on more "French sounding" names in an attempt to avoid discrimination and/or to claim French identity more easily. Any symbol or sign of difference seemed to lead these informants to believe that there were excluded from the French identity, highlighting the idea that to "be French" is to be a part of a "nation one and indivisible."[357]

What is crucial to note about many of my informants who spoke of the inability to claim French identity is the fact that most of them have French citizenship. In fact, 20 of my 33 informants actually had French citizenship. It seemed that whether or not my informants had a "right" to claim the French identity had little to do with their actual approach to this identity in

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[352] 121130_001—"It serves no purpose to say we are French, because it is immediately seen on us. Furthermore, the media has categorized us since x amount of time, so it is seen immediately on us."
[353] 121130_001.
[354] 121123_001—"I will never pass for someone who was born in France, someone who is French, never."
[355] 120905_001—"France is wine, cheese and baguette. I eat only the baguette. So there you go. I am not really French, French." I will return to the role of food in presenting identity below.
[356] 121203_006—"Constantly reminds me of the fact that I am not, by my physique, by my given name, by my family name, not French."
[357] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 2.

particular. Instead it was mostly based on perceived or real notions of who is allowed to claim this identity.

While there were many of my informants who felt they could not claim French identity for a variety of reasons, there were others who held this national identity strongly, some who had citizenship as a reason and others who did not. For example, one informant expressed to me:

> Moi, par exemple, je me sens Français, je ne suis pas Français. Je n'ai pas la nationalité française mais je me sens Français. J'ai connu des Maghrébins qui sont Français de nationalité mais qui ne se sentent pas Français. Donc c'est vraiment une question difficile à répondre. C'est quoi être Français?[358]

Unlike those informants mentioned above, who could claim French identity based on nationality but chose not to for various reasons, this young woman could not claim French identity based on nationality but wanted to claim it regardless. Unlike this one informant who could not claim French identity based on nationality or citizenship, there were a few of my informants who claimed French identity based solely on this fact. Others would claim it because of something as simple as time spent in France. One man explained to me that because he had lived in France longer than Algeria, and because he had done most of his schooling in France, he felt more French than Algerian.[359] He had French citizenship, but his main argument behind claiming French identity was one based on what he felt rather than what was written on paper. Here we can see variations of Thomas' five models of political membership that I discussed in Chapter 2. For some, "being French" was a matter of descent, for others it was a culture, and for others still, a contract.[360]

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[358] 121206_001—"Me for example, I feel French. I am not French. I do not have French nationality but I feel French. I know Maghrébines who are French in nationality but they do not feel French. So it's a very difficult question to answer. What is it to be French?" This informant, in her response to my question "when you hear the word integration, what comes to mind?" kept posing the rhetorical question "what is it to be French?" She discussed how the answer to this question varies depending on who is responding. For some, she suggested, it is to be Catholic, for others it involves giving up one's nation of birth, for others still one's ability to speak French is the key, while for others that doesn't matter as long as one is white, for some it is a matter of papers, and others it is a question of integration, while for others integration does not matter at all as long as you are from the right background, and for her it was a matter of adopting French culture, which included picking wine and cheese and exploring small regions of the country. In all of this, this informant suggested that to answer the question, "what is it to be French?" was almost impossible considering the diversity of opinions.

[359] 121202_004.

[360] Thomas, *Immigration*, 34-46.

3.2.3 Informants' Definition of French Identity

Considering the multiple responses to French identity that I just outlined, the question becomes: What is French identity according to this group of Maghrébine Muslims in Paris? I have presented the fact that this identity is often seen as inaccessible to Maghrébine Muslims in France. If it is in fact accessible, I have shown how it is viewed as desirable by some, and undesirable by others. But is there consensus on what constitutes this identity? While no perfect consensus can be reached as to what French identity means, there are some characteristics presented by my informants that they view as evidence for "French" identity. One of the strongest pieces of evidence that one can present is citizenship/nationality. It was argued that if you were French on paper, it was an identity that you could hold. But, as seen above, sometimes this paper definition was not enough either for the Maghrébine Muslim trying to claim it, or for the non-Maghrébine, non-Muslim, majority French population.

One common thread that was presented by my informants who spoke about French identity was the primacy of this identity in the majority French population's eyes. In line with the universalistic approach to nationalism that Scott outlines in her work,[361] my informants argued that French identity is viewed as the most important identity one can hold, and is in fact the only identity one should hold in France. All other identities that one may hold are relegated to the realm of "culture" or "origins" and even then, are meant to be kept private.[362] For example, one informant told me that she was not French because she did not have French citizenship, but if one day she were to get French citizenship, she would then label herself "Française d'origine algérienne."[363] Although she proudly stated her Algerian identity at that moment, where she had not yet claimed French identity, she described the process of relegating her Algerian identity to one of simple "origins" if she were to claim the French identity.

So the French identity, in this case, is seen as superseding all other identities, but what is this French identity? How is it understood by those North African Muslims who are trying to claim it? Although the terms were used interchangeably by my informants, there appears to be a difference between French citizenship and French nationality.[364] This distinction can be seen

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[361] Scott, *Politics of the Veil,* 11-13.
[362] Ibid., 11.
[363] 121102_001—"French of Algerian origin."
[364] This distinction is made entirely by myself to separate the two seeming ways that my informants spoke about French nationality. My informants themselves would use the words "citoyenneté" and "nationalité" interchangeably. One person would use what I label "citizenship" as "nationality" while another would use what I

especially in those informants who have French citizenship and yet do not feel as if they have what is required to claim French nationality and thus French identity.[365] In these cases, the informants would describe French citizenship as a simple legalistic or tactical aspect of their experience of living in France.[366] For example, one young woman explained to me that she had French citizenship but would never call herself French. For her, because she was not born in France, it was not an identity but simply a bureaucratic fact of life; hers was a contractual understanding of French nationality.[367] Similarly, another informant explained that he obtained French citizenship simply to help with gaining employment, not for "le patriotisme français."[368]

French citizenship can be a necessity rather than a cherished identity. This is distinct from French nationality, which is something that one is either born with or claims for oneself based on common culture. In the cases of those informants who are born in France, this identity is unquestioned. That being said, there are some circumstances where my informants did not have French nationality but did have French citizenship and saw it as much more than just a necessity; they saw it as an important identity. One of these informants, who claimed French identity based on the time he spent living in France and his lack of connection to the homeland, expressed the following about French national identity,

> c'est la notion de ce qu'on appelle l'identité nationale, qu'est-ce que être Français, c'est plutôt la question de qu'est-ce que être Français. Est-ce que être Français c'est boire du vin, manger de la charcuterie, avoir un béret, la baguette, etcetera? Non, est-ce qu'être Français c'est parler français, vivre en France, croire en certaines démocraties, en certaines, je dirai oui, en certaines idées, en certaines visions. C'est plutôt ça. Personnellement.[369]

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label "nationality" as "citizenship." The point is to show how this identity can be constructed and understood in different ways.

[365] As I explained in Chapter 2, Elaine R. Thomas presents five ways of understanding the national "we" that are at work in France in her work *Immigration, Islam, and the Politics of Belonging in France,* 34-46. Because descent and shared culture are the two strongest ways of understanding nationality present in the Republic, even if one has a "contract," i.e. citizenship, with the French Republic, this does not equate to a feeling of belonging in the national "we."

[366] This understanding is similar to the "contract" way of understanding the national "we" in Thomas, *Immigration,* 34-46.

[367] 121105_001. In line with Thomas' discussion of the 5 types of national "we," specifically the contract citizenship (Thomas, *Immigration*, 34-46).

[368] 121129_002—"French patriotism."

[369] 121202_004—"It's the notion of what we call national identity, what is it to be French. It's more the question of what is it to be French. Is to be French to drink wine, eat charcuterie, have a beret, the baguette, etc? No, is to be French, to speak French, to live in France, believe in certain democracies, in certain, I would say yes, in certain ideas, in certain visions, it's more that. Personally."

For this informant being "French" was so much more than simply a matter of where one was born, or what one ate; it was about sharing ideas and cultures. Perhaps this is also why some of my informants who had French citizenship could not or would not choose to identify as nationalistically French, because they did not see themselves as holding the same culture. For my informants who professed Maghrébine identity as their primary identity this choice was particularly evident. These informants emphasized the fact that they were Algerian, Moroccan or Tunisian, and that it was an identity of which they were very proud and which clearly distinguished them from native-born French identifiers. These informants were happy to be excluded from the "French" identity and be called a "blédard." This is a term used by the majority French population and by those whom they are labeling as such, to refer to someone who comes from the Maghreb. It can be seen as having a condescending connotation to it, attaching some notion of "country bumpkin" to those who are labeled with it. While the majority French population sees it as a negative label, there are those from the Maghreb who see it as a compliment, as evidence that they have not lost their culture from their homeland and as evidence that their Maghrébine identity remains strong.[370] These informants emphasized that they were NOT French, and were proudly from "au bled" and this led to a confidence of identity that those who hold a "double culture" could not possibly have. Or so they would argue.

3.3 Double Culture: The Benefits and Downfalls of Two National Identities

The idea of "double culture" frequently arose in my fieldwork.[371] Ten of my 33 informants spoke about the idea of "double culture" and its effects on either themselves or others in their communities. The basic notion presented by my informants was that someone who holds a "double culture," who has a double identity, is someone who holds both French and Maghrébine identity.[372] Commonly this "double culture" was seen as being held by second or third generation Maghrébines born in France. What was noteworthy from my data was that, in fact, my informants who were born in France did not outright mention this "double culture." Four of my

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[370] I will return to the ways that my informants use this term as a point of pride and as an essential identity in Paris later in this chapter.

[371] I explore how people negotiate their "double culture" when I explore Salman Akhtar's typology of identity negotiation later in this chapter.

[372] Baumann takes issue with the idea that someone can be "between two cultures," as this reveals the difficulty of seeing "culture" itself as reified (Baumann, *Contesting Culture*, 14).

five French born informants did not see themselves as holding a Maghrébine identity at all. Instead this part of their lives was relegated to either "origins"[373] or "l'identité de mes parents."[374] The traditions that these "origins" provided were clearly important to these second generation Maghrébines and would even become focal points of much of their daily lives, but according to them did not influence how they identify themselves. The one French-born informant who did claim both French and Maghrébine identity stressed all sides of her identity. She began by saying "je suis Française mais je suis Tunisienne, d'origine tunisienne."[375] If she had stopped at this identity statement, one may have been able to place her with her cohort of second generation Maghrébines mentioned above who relegate their Maghrébine identity to that of origins. Instead, she continued, calling herself "Française, musulmane, Tunisienne" and then, after emphasizing the centrality of her Muslim identity, "musulmane, Tunisienne, Française."[376] All three identities were mentioned to varying degrees but all three were important. What is fascinating to note is that this informant's sister stressed that she did not hold a Tunisian identity at all. This is just one of many examples that shows how identity is highly individual and influenced by a variety of factors.

While my French-born informants did not speak of a 'double culture," many of my first-generation Maghrébine immigrant informants did. It seems that the idea of a "double culture" is one that is imposed from outside the French context. It is what is used by Maghrébine immigrants to illustrate what identity they, or they assume others, hold. My informants who were born in the Maghreb, who claimed a "double culture" identity, often saw themselves as having some level of "French" identity before they even moved to the French mainland. For example, one informant explained to me:

> J'ai la nationalité française, tout à fait. Je me sens un peu franco-algérien, les deux. Je préfère prendre les deux cultures. La culture que mes parents m'ont donnée et la culture française que j'ai acquise ici, mais qu'aussi mes parents m'ont donnée. Mes parents, déjà, ils avaient cette culture française. Mon père était dans la marine française, il était canonnier; donc il nous a éduqué avec cette double culture avant que je vienne en France. Donc, les deux se mélangent.[377]

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[373] 120905_001; 121031_001.

[374] 121005_001; 121106_001; 121108_001—"My parents' identity."

[375] 120822_001—"I am French but I am Tunisian, with Tunisian origins."

[376] Ibid.

[377] 121205_002—"I have French nationality, absolutely. I feel a bit Franco-Algerian, both of them. I prefer to take the two cultures. The culture that my parents gave me and the French culture that I acquired here but also that my

Although this person was not born with this "double culture" in the strictest understanding of it, he believed it to be a significant aspect of his identity. For this informant, and many others, this "double culture" identity was a beneficial thing, a thing of beauty, and one that they were proud to hold.

Those informants who professed a "double culture" for themselves tended to argue that it was a positive thing. One informant stated that they saw the "double culture" as positive because it allowed the person who proclaimed it access to multiple cultures.[378]

Similarly, speaking specifically as it relates to food, one informant suggested that the beauty of the "double culture" was that one could tap into either side when needed and had access to two of the richest and most varied food cultures in the world. Instead of being American and "eating hamburgers" all the time, she saw her "double culture" as giving her access to richness and variation, in diet but also in life.[379]

While those who professed a "double culture" saw it as beneficial, those who refused this identity saw it as problematic. Again, it is important to note that these informants, who spoke of "double culture" and its downfalls did not hold the identity themselves. Instead they projected the problems with holding a "double cultural" identity on second and third generation Maghrébine Muslims in France. Although they projected it onto these "others," my interviews with second generation Maghrébines in Paris did not reveal that a "double cultural" identity was something with which these second generation Maghrébines struggled. Moreover, they were not even speaking about such an issue. It was, in fact, first generation Maghrébines who held both sides of the "double cultural" identity. Regardless, because my sample size of second generation Maghrébines was so small, I cannot state that the characteristics and struggles that my informants spoke of for those holding a "double culture" did not exist. My data merely reveals that generalisations should not be made about all second generation Maghrébines by the mainstream French culture, nor the first generation Maghrébines in the larger community.

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parents gave me. My parents already, they had this French culture. My father was in the French Marines, he was a "canonnier", so he educated us with this double culture before I came to France. So the two mix."

[378] 121205_001.

[379] 121203_006.

3.3.1 Characteristics of Double Culture

So what were the characteristics and struggles of the so-called "double cultural" identity? First, according to my informants, the issue was seen as one of inner turmoil. Identity negotiation can be a tough task in the best circumstances. When one is faced with two seemingly competing and strong identities, this can lead to much confusion within oneself. In fact, one informant expressed the issue as one of disruption. By not knowing which part of your identity is your true identity, you are left with a disruptive thought process that makes everything else in your life difficult or disengaged. In fact, this informant suggested that "en finale, de faire partie de deux choses c'est faire partie de rien."[380] This "double culture" was seen as a "sad" thing, sad to not know who you are, and it was a reason why many of my informants were glad to "not have this problem."[381]

This desire to avoid the problem of not knowing who you are often led these informants to profess an even stronger Maghrébine identity. Another informant, the only one who claimed a "double culture" and saw it as problematic, expressed that this "double culture" was something that needed to be resolved. There was a notion of unrest, or uneasiness with holding to both sides.

> Évidemment, j'ai un problème d'identité à résoudre; enfin que j'arrive à le résoudre…J'ai accepté de couper la poire en deux. J'ai accepté d'avoir une identité française en France et une identité tunisienne en Tunisie. Et je n'exporte pas l'une à l'autre.[382]

Ultimately, this informant argues that it is impossible to hold both sides of the "double cultural" identity at the same time. While one can hold one side at a particular moment and the other at another moment, they are seen as foundationally incompatible, impossible to project equally in the same moment. This is reflected in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* when he states that the person "who is Arab and French…if he wants to be sincere with himself, chooses the negation of one of these two determinations."[383] Another informant suggested that even if one may wish to hold both sides of this "double culture" identity that person would be viewed by those who hold strictly to one or the other as not holding either. Like the informant mentioned above who

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[380] 121123_001—"In the end, to be a part of two things is to be a part of nothing."
[381] 121128_001.
[382] 121209_001—"Evidently I have an identity problem to resolve; I finally managed to solve it…I accepted to cut the pear in two. I accepted to have the French identity in France and a Tunisian identity in Tunisia. And I do not export one to the other."
[383] Fanon, *Wretched,* 155-156.

suggested that to be a part of two things is to be a part of neither, this informant explained to me that those who hold a "double culture" are viewed as immigrants in both contexts.

> Tous les étrangers en France sont nulle part chez eux. Quand on est en France, on est des étrangers; quand on retourne chez nous, on est des étrangers. On n'est nulle part chez nous, on est au milieu. Vous voyez? Lorsqu'on arrive par exemple au Maroc, "les immigré(e)s sont là, ah les immigré(e)s,'' et quand on arrive en France, "Ah, les immigré(e)s sont là"....On est tout le temps traités comme immigré(e)s, donc on n'a pas une place où c'est chez nous.[384]

This conflict of being labeled an "immigrant" in both contexts, of being stripped of both sides of the "double culture" identity, is seen as problematic for the informants who spoke of it.

This notion of not being able to find oneself in either side of the "double culture" leads to the idea that one cannot possibly know who we are when we have two competing identities. Because of our innate drive to identify ourselves, this process would lead second and third generation Maghrébines to identify instead with another identity, the only one that clearly made sense, according to my informants, and that was often Islam. The idea presented here was that one had such a strong need to identify, but was told from all angles, both interior and exterior, that one could not identify with either or both national identities. The result? Strong identification with another identity, usually a religious one.

This was one argument presented to me for why radicalization may be a reality for some Muslim youth in the banlieues in Paris. According to this argument, the youth are "told" by the majority French population that they are not French, and yet at the same time are "told" by the majority Maghrébine population that they are not Maghrébine. The one identity that they are told they can hold, that they feel an un-negotiated connection to, is their religious identity. In speaking about the second and third generation Maghrébines in the banlieues of Paris, one informant explained to me the following:

> Après il y a les extrémistes…tu sais comment ils arrivent à les avoir [à leur convaincre de les joindre]? En fait, ils viennent, ils s'occupent d'eux, ils leurs donnent du travail, ils leurs promettent des choses. Et bien eux, ils ont trouvé tout simplement: je viens en France et la France m'a rejeté, elle n'a rien fait pour moi. Pourquoi je n'irais pas vers eux?[385]

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[384] 121130_001—"All foreigners in France are nowhere at home. When we are in France, we are foreigners, when we return home we are foreigners. We are nowhere at home, we are in the middle. You see? When we arrive in for example Morocco, "the immigrants are here, ah the immigrants", and when we arrive in France, "ah, the immigrants are here"…We are always treated like immigrants, so we do not have a place that is our home."

[385] 121201_002—"After there are the extremists…do you know how they manage to have them [to convince the youth to join them]? In fact, they come, they take care of them, they give them work, they promise them things.

They claim Muslim identity to be part of something.[386] The need to identify, to understand oneself in relation to others is essential, especially in one's youth, and this conflict of not knowing one side of a "double culture" but trying to hold to both may lead to a potentially stronger religious identity. In fact, one informant explained that extreme religious factions, like the Muslim brotherhood, will take advantage of this need for identity in many of these newer generation youth, and will draw them in, solely because they can offer a clear identity, a clear community, and a clear understanding of one's role amidst the majority population that surrounds them.[387]

It is because of the potential fragility of a "double culture" that many of my informants hold one or the other identity, French or Maghrébine. While some argued for the potential of conflicted identities leading to more extreme expressions of religiosity, most of my informants would not claim this type of religious identity but would profess something that I am calling "cultural Muslim" identity. It is to that topic that I turn next.

3.4 "J'ai une culture musulmane"[388]: Cultural Muslims in Paris

One of the main parameters of my study was that my informants would hold some notion of Muslim identity. They had to claim Maghrébine identity in some way, but they also had to claim Muslim identity to some degree. As I presented in Chapter 1, how one claimed this religious identity varied drastically across my data set, but all stated at some point in their interview that they were "Muslim" in some way. While other scholars, or even individuals within the community, may argue that there are specific characteristics or actions that one must have to be labeled as Muslim, my only restriction was that the informants saw themselves as Muslim to some degree. As I explained in Chapter 1, Ahmed in his work *What is Islam* takes issue with this "Whatever-Muslims-Say-It-Is" definition of Islam.[389] While I agree with Ahmed, that suggesting that "whatever-Muslims-say-it-is" leads to problems in terms of defining *Islam*, I was not

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And well, in the end they find themselves simply, "I come to France and France rejects me, she does nothing for me, why wouldn't I go toward them?"

[386] 121123_001—"A bit to say 'I am part of something.'"

[387] 121202_004.

[388] 121128_001—"I have a Muslim culture."

[389] Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 266-270.

seeking a definition of Islam from my informants. Instead I was allowing them to define *themselves* as Muslim, in whatever way was meaningful to them. In agreement with Ahmed, I argue that "whatever and however differently Islam may *mean* to Muslims, to all Muslims Islam is *meaningful*."[390] That being Muslim, whatever that may denote, was a *meaningful* identity to my informants was my only requirement for inclusion in my study. This requirement led to an intriguing self-understanding held by some of my informants: that of "cultural Muslim identity." In fact, 12 of my 33 informants (over one third) classified their Muslim identity as a "cultural" one.

3.4.1 Cultural Islam: Definition

Before exploring what these 12 informants said about their Muslim identity, I present what it is that I mean by "cultural Muslims," and how someone fits into this category. First, it is vital to address the problematic nature of categorization, and the separation of "cultural Muslim" identity from "religious Muslim" identity. Again, I turn to Ahmed's *What is Islam* to address the criticism of this approach. Ahmed suggests that breaking apart religion and culture into separate categories, as Hodgson does in his *The Venture of Islam*,[391] is problematic because it assumes that there is a *thing* that is "true" Islam, the religion, while other, usually understood cultural manifestations are somehow less authentically 'Islam.'[392] He also suggests that by organizing phenomena in binary ways such as this we miss out on the "human and historical phenomenon of Islam."[393] I argue that by choosing to try to separate out this category, and showing the incredible variation within all categories that we may as scholars try to impose on our informants, it is my intention in fact to draw attention to the "human and historical phenomenon of Islam."[394] Furthermore, by focussing on these "cultural manifestations" or "cultural identities" I show how these informants' enactment of Islam is no less authentic than those who label themselves as

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[390] Ibid., 249.

[391] Hodgson uses three separate terms where Ahmed uses one. Broadly speaking, for Hodgson, Islam = religion, Islamdom = society and Islamicate = culture, such that Islamicate "would refer not directly to the religion, Islam, itself but to the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims." Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization,* Volume One, *The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 59.

[392] Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 162-164, 171.

[393] Ibid., 116.

[394] I address this diversity of interaction within and between the categories of "culture" and "religion" further in chapters 5 and 8.

"religious" Muslims. I do acknowledge that in any attempt to categorize, to place people within a particular understanding of a given phenomenon, that I am guilty of trying to determine the bounds of the concentrate of Islam present in my informants' experience.[395]

My understanding of who is a "cultural Muslim" or what it means to be "culturally Muslim" comes largely from my informants who labeled themselves as such. For example, one informant, in response to my question about identity, responded:

> Je suis une femme, je suis Algérienne et je suis de culture musulmane. Je ne me considère pas comme croyante religieuse, mais inévitablement j'ai une culture musulmane, vu que j'ai grandi dans un milieu complètement religieux.[396]

This informant went on to explain that while she identified much more closely with her Muslim identity as a religious one in Algeria, once she came to France and had distance from her family and the religious milieu, she saw it more as a cultural identity. This Muslim culture for her was often dependent on one's traditions. In the words of another informant: "Oui, je suis musulman, oui. Je le sens, mais c'est plus par mimétisme, par tradition, par habitude."[397] From these examples it became clear to me that there was a specific identity at work that I needed to explore.

At first glance I thought that this identity might have something to do with the often-made distinction between "practicing" and "non-practicing" Muslims; no matter how complicated this distinction may be considering the various definitions of practice and non-practice. I questioned whether the label of "cultural Muslim" was something someone used to replace the label of "non-practicing Muslim." By examining the responses of my informants, particularly in relationship to their practice, it became clear that these were in fact two separate aspects of their identities. One could be a "practicing" cultural Muslim or a "non-practicing"

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[395] Ahmed suggests that "*any* such conceptualization of Islam that is based on identifying an Islam-concentrate whose presence in greater or lesser dilution may then be measured in some sort of litmus test inevitably leaves us with the problem of determining when it is that a given phenomenon is characterized by a sufficient quantum of the concentrate 'Islam' to be 'Islamic' and when it is not. In the absence of universally accepted criterion by which to distinguish the Islamic from the Islamicate, we—Muslims and Unbelievers alike—will, like Hodgson, inevitably fall back onto our own respective preconceptions and predilections to determine what that concentrate is" (Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 175).

[396] 121128_001—"I am a woman, I am Algerian and I am of a Muslim culture. I do not consider myself a religious believer but inevitably, I have a Muslim culture, seeing as I grew up in a completely religious milieu." Another informant said "je suis musulmane. Je ne suis pas croyante en l'Islam mais je suis d'une culture musulmane (I am Muslim. I am not a believer in Islam but I come from a Muslim culture)" (121209_001).

[397] 121206_001—"Yes, I am Muslim, yes. I feel like it, but it is more by mimicking, by tradition, by habit."

cultural Muslim; so practicing versus non-practicing could be a subset of this overarching identity of "cultural Islam." Non-practice was not the hinge on which this identity rested.

In fact, for most of my "cultural Muslims" it was practice that was the evidence of their Muslim identity, in place of creed or belief or belonging. Those informants who had some "religious" practice in which they would continue to engage did so because of cultural reasons, not religious ones, where religious refers to a sense of personal piety.[398] For example, they did so because they wanted to maintain tradition or connection to homeland, because it was habit, etcetera. The evidence of their "cultural Islamic" identity was often a specific action that they took. For example, the informant above, who expressed being Muslim by tradition, explained to me that he was not practicing and yet he did practice Ramadan. It was basically based on this practice alone that his Muslim identity rested. He explained:

> Je fais le ramadan par exemple. En même temps, je ne fais pas la prière, je bois de l'alcool, je mange du porc, etcetera. Mais je me sens quand même musulman. Même si je ne pratique pas du tout, je me sens quand même musulman. C'est dans une notion un peu culturelle et aussi d'un point de vue de religion et aussi d'un point de vue culturel, mais culturellement musulman.[399]

Ramadan was seemingly the only distinguishing thing about this informant's practice or behaviour that made him "Muslim."

What distinguished the "cultural Muslims" from "religious Muslims" seemed to be the intention behind the action. If the intention behind the action or identity was because of tradition or culture, and not because of some deep-seated conviction, belief or religious understanding, then it was often a good example of cultural commitment rather than religious commitment for my informants. These informants still feel Muslim, but they simply have a different intention behind this identity than someone who feels Muslim because of personal piety reasons. One informant described this as follows:

> En fait, je suis musulmane, mais pas dans le fond de la religion…C'est-à-dire que, comment expliquer ça? C'est, je me sens musulmane dans les sens où, dans ma culture, dans mon entourage, dans ma façon aussi de pratiquer, [en]fin, de pratiquer les fêtes par

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[398] This is in line with Hodgson's understanding as presented by Ahmed in *What is Islam*: "the core of Islam the religion is personal piety" (161).

[399] 121206_001—"I do Ramadan for example. At the same time, I do not do the prayers, I drink alcohol, I eat pork, etc. But I feel Muslim all the same. Even if I do not practice at all, I feel Muslim all the same. It is in a slightly cultural notion and also from the point of view of religion and also from the cultural point of view, but culturally Muslim."

exemple, je peux fêter une fête musulmane. Donc, je peux [me] sentir [musulmane], mais après, je peux passer de l'autre côté sans aucun problème.[400]

This woman celebrates Muslim festivals and holidays because of a cultural identification with these things, not a traditionally understood religious one. As she explains, it is because it is cultural and not religious that she can easily move to the other side (understood as the non-Muslim way of life/identity) with ease.

These kinds of engagements with Islam reveal how complicated it can be to define what is religion and what is culture. For these 12 informants who considered themselves "cultural Muslims" they still very much functioned within common understandings of "religion."[401] In fact, I am not trying here to suggest that these informants were not "pure" Muslims, or "authentic" Muslims, or not fully engaged with Islam as such, and only Islamicate.[402] I am simply trying to present the self-understanding that was presented to me in the field by these 12 people.[403]

Ultimately, because religious conviction was not behind these informants' identity, this way of imagining oneself in the world allowed for a greater flexibility in practice and processes of identity for them. There was a greater degree of picking and choosing which aspects of one's identity to live out for these cultural Muslims than for more, traditionally understood, religious

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[400] 120917_001—"In fact, I am Muslim but not deep in the religion…That means, how do I explain that? It's, I feel Muslim in the sense where, in my culture, in my entourage, in my way of practicing. Like, practicing the holidays for example. I can celebrate a Muslim holiday. So, I can feel [Muslim], but after I can pass to the other side without issue."

[401] Space is not sufficient to explore the many definitions of religion and culture that exist in the study of religion, and specifically in the study of Islam. For an excellent overview, see chapters 3 and 4 in Ahmed's *What is Islam.*

[402] Again, see Hodgson's *The Venture of Islam*.

[403] Steven Vertovec in his work *Transnationalism* suggests that there are seven different trajectories of identity for Muslims in Europe: "(1) the secular option—discarding Muslim identity altogether; (2) the cooperative option—playing on Muslim identity in the process of pursuing common goals with other groups; (3) the cultural option—maintaining certain social and cultural practices without much religious sentiment; (4) the religions option—emphasizing wholly scriptural modes of religious affiliation at the expense of cultural aspects (an option described by some as 'fundamentalist'); (5) the ethnic-religious option—perpetuating a specific national or regional form of Islam (e.g. Moroccan); (6) the behavioural option—expressing Islamic tenets through moral or ritual behaviour only; and (7) the ideological option—identifying with or opposing the 'official' Islam of a particular home country" (154-55). My category of "cultural Muslim" here is a combination of Vertovec's "cultural," "ethnic-religious" and "behavioural" options. Levitt similarly provides 5 ways of being religions in her work *God Needs No Passport*: (1) the strict faithful, (2) the questioning faithful, (3) the Golden Rule faithful, (4) the Symbolic faithful, and (5) the self-help faithful. My category of cultural Muslim is most similar to her "Symbolic faithful" as they are "people who used religious symbols to express feelings of religiosity and *identification* [emphasis mine], without participating regularly in religious culture or celebrations" (104).

Muslims.[404] Partaking in Ramadan was the most consistent, "cultural" practice engaged in by "cultural Muslims," but even that would be absent for some. Basically, the cultural Muslim would rely on whatever practice, belief, or behaviour that represented their culture the most to them; that meaningfully represented their own understanding of Islam. For most of these so-called cultural Muslims it was a food practice or set of food practices that was the clearest representation of their Muslim identity.

3.5 The Role of Food in Identity Negotiations for Maghrébine Muslims in Paris[405]

Food plays a significant role in identity formation. It aides in solidarity and separation and thus clearly defines the in group from the out group. In fact, "anthropological work has produced a broad consensus that food is about commensality—eating to make friends—and competition—eating to make enemies."[406] Eugene Anderson in his work *Everyone Eats*, notes that the word companion comes from the Latin word for "bread sharer"; those with whom we eat are those with whom we are close.[407] Furthermore, Mary Douglas presents a hierarchy of food experience and intimacy,[408] showing that it is foundationally through food practice that boundaries are constructed within and between groups.[409] If this is the case, in an immigrant context this may lead certain groups to invite or exclude others to eat with them in a statement about who is "in" and who is "out" of the realm of intimacy. Douglas suggests that the various ways that we interact with one another around food reveals a great deal about our social relationships. It is in the distinction between meals and drinks where this becomes evident. She states that

> drinks are for strangers, acquaintances, workmen, and family. Meals are for family, close friends, honoured guests. The grand operator of the system is the line between intimacy

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[404] I return to this idea of cultural versus religious practice and flexibility versus obligation in Chapter 5.

[405] Parts of this section have been published in my chapter, "Tell me What you Eat and I'll Tell you What you Are. The Literal Consumption of Identity for North African Muslims in Paris, France," in *Everyday Life Practices of Muslims in Europe: Consumptions and Aesthetics*, ed. Erkan Toguslu (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015), 41-56.

[406] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts,* 5. Claude Fischler in his work "Commensality, Society and Culture," *Social Science Information*, vol. 50, no. 3-4 (December 2011): 528-548, supports this by stating that "while commensality bonds participants, it also excludes outsiders" (529).

[407] Eugene N. Anderson, *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 125.

[408] Mary Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," *Daedalus* Vol. 10, No.1 (1972): 66.

[409] Graham Harvey, in agreement with Douglas, also emphasizes that what one eats, or does not eat, places one in a group that behaves in similar ways. Harvey, "Respectfully Eating," 39-40.

and distance. Those we know at meals we also know at drinks. The meal expresses close friendship. Those we only know at drinks we know less intimately.[410]

Similarly, Miller, Rozin and Fiske suggest that food sharing indicates a relationship that is personal rather than professional.[411] Markedly, 19 of my Paris 33 interviews (58 percent) were conducted over drinks (coffee, tea, wine, etc.), nine had no consumption involved at all (27 percent), two were over drinks and sweets (six percent), two over a meal at a restaurant (6 percent), and only one over a meal at the informant's home (3 percent). This general lack of invitation to partake in a meal with my informants often felt like a message, along the lines of Douglas' distinction above, that I was not included in the intimate group. As time went on, and I gained some level of bread-sharer status, I began to receive dinner invitations, but these were still mostly limited to meals located outside of the informant's home. By the end of my fieldwork, I had eaten in the homes of only five of my informants - a dramatic difference from my experience in Montréal which I address in the Montréal case study chapters.

3.5.1 Food and Muslim Identity

Beyond stating that I was not a member of the in-group through the kinds of consumption experiences I was invited to be a part of, my informants also clearly stated what made them a part of that group through what or how they ate. Beyond the simple statement about one's predilection for pork or not, the informants in my study would speak about alcohol, halal meat and the fast of Ramadan when addressing what makes them Muslim. In response to the interview question about Muslim identity, about what practices and/or beliefs are indicative of Muslim religion or culture,[412] every single one of my 33 informants made some mention of food or a food practice as indicative and foundational to their Muslim identity. While not everyone spoke about daily prayer, alms giving, or even a basic belief in God and Muhammad, every single informant either spoke about fasting, halal, pork or alcohol and often all four. For example, one

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[410] Douglas, "Deciphering," 66.

[411] Lisa Miller, Paul Rozin, and Alan Page Fiske, "Food Sharing and Feeding Another Person Suggest Intimacy: Two Studies of American College Students," *European Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 28, no. 3 (1998): 423-236.

[412] The question that I asked was "Je suppose que vous êtes musulman/e. Est-ce correct? [Yes; if No, the interview possibly ends, but sometimes a "No" can really mean "I'm not a good Muslim," so a few other questions can be asked to tease out a proper response]. Pourriez-vous me parler du type d'Islam que vous pratiquez? Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire d'être musulman(e)?" (I suppose that you are Muslim. Is that correct? Could you speak to me about the kind of Islam that you practice? What does it mean to be Muslim?).

young woman said to me "je suis musulmane, je suis née musulmane, je fais le ramadan, oui, mais pas la prière."[413] Similarly, another informant answered the question of what it means to be Muslim, or how she shows that she is Muslim, with the following response: "je ne suis pas pratiquante. Je ne fais pas la prière. Je fais le carême mais c'est plus par tradition. Je fais ma religion. Je ne mange pas du porc. Je bois de l'alcool."[414] When I asked another informant if she felt Muslim, in spite of not practicing, she responded as follows:

> Oui, oui, parce que je fais, par exemple, le ramadan. Ça je le fais parce que, pour moi, c'est important. Je ne conçois pas de ne pas le faire. Par contre, faire les prières tous les jours, non, parce que je ne [les] connais pas et je ne cherche pas trop. Mais ce que je peux faire, je le fais: le ramadan et je ne mange pas de porc.[415]

A food practice, often Ramadan, is the base on which their Muslim identities rested. Consumption practices seem to act as an important means of self-identification for many immigrants.

Ethnic/religious identity hinges on a food practice. The problem arises that, if the non-Muslim French population see a representation of religious identity in the food that Muslims in France eat, this could cause a potentially difficult setback for Muslims who are also trying to claim French identities. The notion of being French first and not having visible identities other than French identity are foundational for the French understanding of who can and cannot be French.[416] If Muslims are eating halal meat, which is inevitably seen as a religious food practice, this may be seen as an affront to secular understandings of how to live one's life in France. Food as a religious or ethnic identity marker can hinder the integration process into French identity.[417] It may hinder it because if Muslim immigrants in France refuse to consume food that is seen as central to French identity, i.e. wine and pork, it may be questioned how they can possibly integrate fully into that identity. One informant expressed the centrality of food to French

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[413] 121105_001—"I am Muslim, I was born Muslim, I do Ramadan, yes, but not the prayers."
[414] 121123_001—"I am not practicing. I do not pray. I do the fast but it's more by tradition. I practice my religion. I do not eat pork. I drink alcohol."
[415] 121129_001—"Yes, yes, because I do, for example, Ramadan. That I do because, for me, it's important. I cannot conceive to not do it. On the other hand, do the prayers every day? No, because I do not know them and I don't look too far to. But what I can do, I do. So, Ramadan, and I don't eat pork."
[416] For discussions about French notions of identity and laïcité, especially in relation to Muslims in France, see Bowen, *Why the French don't like Headscarves*; Bowen "Does French Islam Have Borders?"; Fetzer and Soper, *Muslims and the State.*
[417] It can also aid integration. One only needs to think of the many Maghrébine dishes which French people incorporate into their own culinary preferences. By consuming couscous, tajine, Moroccan mint tea, etcetera, the French may be prompted to view these "foreigners" as French.

identity when she expressed to me that "la France c'est vin, fromage et baguette. Je mange que la baguette. Donc voilà. Je ne suis pas vraiment Française, Française."[418] As I argued in Chapter 2 of this work, Marion Demossier in her work *Wine Drinking Culture in France* suggests that wine is so intertwined with French identity that to not drink wine firmly places one as an outsider.[419] Another of my informants expressed this very feeling to me:

> En France, l'alcool c'est une mode de vie. Il fait partie de la culture. Quand on va chez quelqu'un on emmène une bouteille de vin que l'on va choisir. On n'emmène pas de pot de fleurs, on emmène du vin; on n'emmène pas de gâteau, pas de chocolat sauf si la femme est enceinte. On emmène une bouteille de vin que l'on va ouvrir, que l'on va partager…quand on ne boit pas d'alcool, on n'a pas accès à certain plaisirs purement français.[420]

How can Muslims, then, at least those who do not drink wine, the product of the French ground and culture, claim this identity?

3.5.2 Akhtar's Four Categories of Identity Negotiation

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, in order to explore the various responses to identity negotiation that were present for my informants I use the fourfold typology presented by Salman Akhtar in his 2011 work *Immigration and Acculturation* as a framing tool.[421] The four immigrant identities that he presents are the (1) ethnocentric identity, (2) hyperassimilated identity, (3) alienated identity, and (4) bicultural identity.[422] Like any typology there are no

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[418] 120905_001—"France is wine, cheese and baguette. I eat only the baguette. So there you go. I am not really French, French."

[419] Demossier, *Wine Drinking Culture in France,* 27-29.

[420] 121206_001—"In France, alcohol is a way of life. It is part of the culture. When we go to someone's house we bring a bottle of wine that we will choose. We do not bring a pot of flowers, we bring wine; we do not bring a cake, no chocolate, unless the woman is pregnant. We bring a bottle of wine that we will open, and that we will share…When we do not drink alcohol, we do not have access to certain purely French pleasures."

[421] Akhtar, *Immigration and Acculturation.*

[422] We find similar categories for the experience of migrants in Peggy Levitt, *God Needs No Passport, Immigrants and the Changing American Religious Landscape* (New York: The New Press, 2007). While Levitt posits six national responses that religious migrants can take (American, Homeland, Ethnic National, Dual National, Cosmopolitan, Religious Global Citizens) in the host context only a couple overlap with Akhtar's categories here. For example, Levitt's "American," what I will in the conclusion call "hostland" identity, overlaps with Akhtar's hyperassimilated identity. Her "Homeland" identity equates to Akhtar's "ethnocentric" and her "Dual National" equates to Akhtar's "Bi-cultural" identity negotiation. Levitt does not present a category that fits with Akhtar's alienated identity. Derek S. Hicks, "An Unusual Feast: Gumbo and the Complex Brew of Black Religion," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America,* eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 134-153, also presents the ways that foodways communicate messages about cultural identity in three ways: the migrant can 1) focus on the host context identity and reject the home; (2) aggressively maintain traditional foodways; (3) blend the two (Hicks, "Unusual Feast," 145). These reflect three of the four

perfect examples of any of these identity types and most of my informants would have characteristics of all four of these categories. Most of the informants did generally fall in line with at least one of the four categories, most often Akhtar's second and fourth categories. I now present each of his categories in turn and show how food plays a foundational role in identity negotiations for my informants.

3.5.2.1 Akhtar's Ethnocentric Identity

Akhtar's first category is that of "ethnocentric identity." This term encapsulates people who emphasize their ethnic/religious identity in their immigrant location, often more so than they did "au bled" (in the homeland). When one finds oneself in an unfamiliar context it is not unusual to hold to the familiar more strongly. Religious and ethnic practices may be emphasized in the beginning as a way to maintain feelings of connection to the homeland, and if continued can lead to communalistic trends. What may start as a simple search for the familiar can lead to separate communities formed by people who speak only with other Maghrébines, only in Arabic, who shop only at halal butcher shops and who eat only traditional North African food.

In relation to food, then, ethnocentric identities are represented by heightened ethnic/religious food practices. Here the immigrant would cook mostly food from the home location, in religiously prescribed ways. As Akhtar states, in restaurants "things that were familiar and beloved are nowhere to be found while tabooed items dance proudly on the menu's floor. Waking up from such culinary nightmare, the immigrant rushes to an ethnic restaurant that serves food familiar to him."[423]

While many of my informants spoke about this sort of identity consolidation process happening for others, specifically those Muslims who live in communities in the banlieues, my data set itself did not provide many examples of this sort of extreme ethnic maintenance response; nevertheless, many of the informants would eat at ethnically-run restaurants when they were feeling homesick and were looking for transnational connection. For example, one informant stated that eating at an ethnically-run restaurant allowed him to maintain "repères"[424]

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identity consolidation processes presented by Akhtar here. (1) is the hyperassimilated identity, (2) is the ethnocentric identity, (3) is the bicultural identity. Again, there is no equivalent to Akhtar's "alienated" identity in Hicks' work.

[423] Akhtar, *Immigration*, 96.
[424] 121205_002—"Moorings."

with which he could understand himself. Using this word in particular reveals how food grounds an ethnocentric identity.

Many of my informants expressed an increase in religious and ethnic food practices in the host location—that is, ethnocentric food practice became more prominent in France than in the Maghreb in some cases. This was evident in relation to the practice of eating halal food. A few informants expressed that it was in France that they learned what halal food was, and as a result it was in France that this practice became even more important than in the Maghreb. Although this practice was unknown to the informants back home in the Maghreb, it still became affiliated with Maghrébine/Muslim practice and one's engagement in that practice, becoming an example of an "ethnocentric" practice and identity.

While many of the informants in my study had subtle moments of emphasis on ethnocentric identity, it was more in my interactions with people at the mosque where this sort of identity consolidation process was evident. In speaking with some of the community members there, as well as with some of the leadership, emphasis was placed on eating only halal and only North African dishes. The notion of eating pork or drinking wine was seen as an example of French people's general character of excess and immorality, and maintaining religious food practices was thus essential in showing how they were different from the indulgent French. It was crucial in creating boundaries that marked Maghrébine identity as separate.

3.5.2.2 Akhtar's Hyperassimilated Identity

Akhtar's second category of "hyperassimilated identity" was clearly represented in my interviews. While the notion of assimilation or integration carries a great deal of negative connotation for many of the people in the communities which I study, the idea of adapting one's identity and practice in the host location, to become more French, is common. Scholars of Muslim communities in France such as John R. Bowen and Jocelyne Cesari suggest that in many instances assimilation is judged by the degree to which immigrants lose their culturally-specific behaviours and blend into the French model.[425] Whether being categorized as "practicing versus believing" or "good versus bad" Muslim, Maghrébine immigrants are often judged by the host society and by themselves based on which practices they leave behind.

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[425] Bowen, *Why the French don't like Headscarves;* Cesari and McLoughlin, *European Muslims.*

In the French context where food and drink are central to national identity, these elements are one avenue that immigrants can use to show their assimilated, integrated identity. Hence, "hyperassimilated" immigrants would reject their home food and would take up eating the host nation's food. In comparison to ethnocentric identity types who may eat 85 percent Maghrébine food and maintain religious food practices, these "hyperassimilated" immigrants would eat 85 percent French food and often leave religious food practices behind. For example, in an interview with one young woman she expressed the following opinion to me: "En Tunisie, je ne recherche pas à manger de porc, de foie gras, je mange ce qu'il y a; je m'adapte. Mais en France, c'est vrai, j'ai un comportement, des habitudes françaises, on va dire."[426] In this she suggested that adaptation to the cultural setting on all levels was important; one assimilates to either side when one finds oneself in a context with a particular culinary approach. She went on to explain that she prepares mostly French fare when in France. Another woman whom I interviewed drank alcohol (champagne specifically), ate pork, did not necessarily eat halal meat and generally cooked European dishes at home. In this she was able to show that she was just like everyone else, even though she stated that "la société française me renvoie l'idée que je ne suis pas Française."[427] While the "hyperassimilated" immigrant may emphasize French modes of eating, some cultural/religious food practices are still kept, usually depending on the situation and community one finds oneself in.

3.5.2.3 Akhtar's Alienated Identity

The third category of identity consolidation in Akhtar's typology is that of the "alienated identity." This type of immigrant neither identifies with the home or host identity.[428] They feel lost in between. One may find the "alienated" identity in the experience of very recent immigrants: those immigrants who have just arrived in the host land and are trying to negotiate on what end of the spectrum of assimilation and ethnocentrism they are going to fall on. Furthermore, this "alienated" identity negotiation may be found in those individuals who do not want to be identified with their home culture because of experiences of prejudice against those cultures, and yet cannot, or do not want to, identify with the host culture.

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[426] 121209_001—"In Tunisia, I do not look to eat pork, foie gras, I eat what there is; I adapt. But in France, it's true I have a behaviour, shall we call it, French habits."
[427] 121203_006—"The French society sends me the idea that I am not French."
[428] Akhtar, *Immigration*, 192.

One young woman whom I interviewed was a good example of this identity negotiation. On the one hand, she could not imagine eating pork, or leaving many of her religious and cultural food practices aside; she could not identify as fully French. On the other hand, she was also hesitant about putting extreme emphasis on the Maghrébine Muslim food practice and this expression of identity because she saw many of her compatriots as "too extreme"[429] and consequently feeding into the prejudicial approach to this community in France. She felt like she could not identify with her home or host culture and as a result was left in what Akhtar would call an "alienated" space, not sure what or how to identify herself.

While this young woman personally expressed a desire to not identify with either Akhtar's "ethnocentric" or "hyperassimilated" identities, this "alienated identity" was often one placed on other members of the Maghrébine Muslim community in Paris by my informants. Informants would express that while it is not an identity that they held, they did see many so-called alienated people in the community. This identity was often placed on second and third generation Maghrébine Muslims, who could not really claim French identity because of being othered by non-Muslim French, and yet at the same time could not really claim Maghrébine identity because of being othered by Maghrébines in the Maghreb.

A few of the informants in the study noted that because these (other) people were stuck between two identities, they would struggle with which practices to engage in. Tension would arise in debates regarding the consumption of halal products and drinking alcohol most prominently. The "double culture" identifiers would try to find a place in both the French and the Maghrébine cultures that surrounded them, often making them feel unable to claim either.

While some people remained in this "alienated identity" state for long periods of time, many people in this circumstance latched more strongly onto the Muslim identity; the only identity which these second and third generation Maghrébines felt that they could undoubtedly claim. This would then lead to large groups who would find themselves in the "ethnocentric identity" category, but specifically as it relates to their Muslim identity. Food practices such as keeping halal, not eating pork, not drinking alcohol and fasting for Ramadan, become important for these previously "alienated" identifiers, even more so than those who hold the "ethnocentric identity" from the beginning.

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[429] 120905_001.

3.5.2.4 Akhtar's Bicultural Identity

Immigrants who embrace both sides of a possible hyphenated identity represent Akhbar's fourth category: "bicultural identity." They embrace beliefs and practices of both home and host country. While the alienated immigrant is one who is conflicted by their bi- or double cultural identity, the bicultural immigrant according to Akhtar is one who is comfortable on both sides of their identity.[430] For these informants, they were both fully French and fully Muslim/Maghrébine, again acknowledging that for them these terms were often interchangeable.

Even for those of my informants who saw themselves as only Maghrébine, the food practices in which these immigrants engage represent an admixture of loyalties to two cultures. I interviewed Maghrébine Muslims who called themselves Muslims, who practiced the Ramadan fast, but who would also eat pork and drink alcohol. I interviewed Maghrébine Muslims who would state that they are not really Muslim but at the same time would not eat pork and not drink alcohol amidst friends and colleagues who would. A multifaceted case was presented by a man who stated: "je consomme uniquement et exclusivement de la viande halal,"[431] and yet, in the same breath, emphasized his desire to eat French fare. In fact, he opened a restaurant that makes high end, traditional French food. He explained that he opened the restaurant because of

> les frustrations que j'ai eues autant que musulman qui mange halal: ne pas pouvoir manger français, la cuisine française, alors que j'ai grandi en France, je m'ai baigné en France, j'ai une culture française. Le fait de ne pas pouvoir manger français c'était la frustration, ce que j'appelais gastronomique. La discrimination gastronomique…maintenant on n'est plus discriminé. On peut manger français, on peut manger du foie, on peut manger du magret de canard, tout le temps respectant sa religion.[432]

While this "bi-cultural" Muslim maintained his practice of eating halal, but halal French food, for most of the immigrants with whom I spoke who fit in this category, the idea of keeping halal seemed to be the most flexible of food practices; it was the most easily left behind. Many would buy halal meat for their homes, but not restrain themselves to only eating halal meat when they

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[430] For this chapter, I use Akhtar's "bicultural" label although I prefer to call this identity negotiation process "transnational" and discuss my use of this term in Chapter 7.

[431] 121031_001—"I eat uniquely and exclusively halal meat."

[432] 121031_001—"The frustrations that I had as a Muslim who eats halal who was not able to eat French, French cuisine, even though I grew up in France, I bathed in France, I have a French culture, but the fact to not be able to eat French, that was the frustration. I call that gastronomical discrimination. But now we are not discriminated [against]. We can eat French. We can eat liver pâté. We can eat duck cutlet, all the while respecting one's religion."

were at school or work or out for dinner with friends. For example, one woman I interviewed expressed the following:

> On ne mange pas le porc. Voilà. Nous ne mangeons pas le porc. Voilà, c'est tout. Si non, mais… uh … en général on mange de la viande halal. Mais des fois, par exemple, surtout au travail, des fois ça m'arrive d'aller manger au Macdo [McDonald's]. Macdo…la viande… ce n'est pas halal. Voilà.[433]

Others would reject halal completely, suggesting that it did not matter to them in their new immigrant location at all. For example, one woman said to me, "alors, je m'en fous de la viande halal…peut être que j'ai plus de respect pour ma dernière paire de chaussettes misent en panier de linge sale; non, je m'en fous, mais royalement."[434]

These adjustments in ethnic/religious food practice are evident for people who label themselves, in one form or another, cultural Muslims. One of these Muslims expressed to me that he did not believe in God necessarily but still saw himself as a culturally Muslim Algerian French man. When explaining some of his practices to me he stated that, to not shock certain family members or friends he would practice the fast for the month of Ramadan. He expressed that,

> traditionnellement, je ne mange pas du porc, par exemple. Uh, l'alcool, je bois de l'alcool. Pas de porc, pas de, les vrais interdits c'est ça, c'est le porc, c'est les viandes qui n'ont pas été, comment dire? Si j'ai le choix entre la viande halal et pas de viande halal, je prendrais la viande halal. Malheureusement, on n'a pas toujours le choix.[435]

The complexity of practice and understanding of identity is made clear in the aforementioned example. Furthermore, the woman who cared less about halal than she did about her dirty socks told me that she generally bought halal food and would prepare traditional Maghrébine dishes at home, but would also eat pork even if she did not like it. She expressed some of her double culture in the following way:

> Je n'aime pas le porc. J'aime pas la charcuterie. Mais je mange du porc…. Ça me dérange pas. Pour moi c'est comme, uh, les épinards. Je mange pas les épinards parce que j'aime pas les épinards, mais si je suis bloqué sur une île déserte avec une boîte d'épinards, je vais manger des épinards. C'est pareil pour le porc. Quand je suis invitée

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[433] 121006_002—"We don't eat pork. There you go, that's it. But um, in general we eat halal meat. But there are times, for example mostly at work, there have been times where I went to eat at McDonald's. McDonald's … the meat is not halal. There you go."

[434] 121203_006—"I don't care at all about halal meat, it's possible that I have more respect for my last pair of socks that I put in the dirty laundry basket. No, really, I don't care at all."

[435] 121202_004—"Traditionally I do not eat pork, for example. Alcohol, I drink alcohol (…) if I have the choice between halal meat and non-halal meat I take the halal meat, but unfortunately we don't always have the choice."

chez les gens qui ne savent pas que je suis musulmane, et qui pensent qui vont m'offrir à manger, qui m'offrent un plat avec du porc, je vais pas leurs dire « non, non, je mange pas [ça]. » Non, je le mange, mais j'aime pas trop ça, mais je le mange.[436]

To not differentiate herself from those around her, to not cause offense, even if she genuinely did not like the meat, she would eat it all the same.

These last two examples may be seen as concrete examples of what Mohammed El-Bachouti calls "bounded creativity."[437] El-Bachouti explains that the immigrant is "truly free to choose their actions, but they select one action versus another to mitigate conflict in the host country."[438] Another informant demonstrated this notion of bounded creativity when he explained to me that he eats halal at home but not at work as he does not want to cause a problem. He explained: "Je mange ce qu'il y à manger, je l'accepte, et voilà."[439] Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in France may choose particular food actions that help to mitigate the conflict of identity that they themselves are experiencing, or to mitigate the conflict that those within the larger French culture may suggest is inevitable if the Maghrébine immigrant does not eat "French food." The so-called bi-cultural Maghrébine Muslim immigrant may be especially suited to engage in these selections, having some creativity in action but with some boundaries of identity in place.

What became clear from many of the interviews with individuals, who felt like they had a double culture, was that they would emphasize certain practices with certain people and other practices with other people. When with practicing Muslim friends or family, and often when home in the Maghreb, they would keep halal, not eat pork, not consume alcohol, fast during Ramadan, etcetera. But when they were with non-Muslim French friends they might leave their more traditional practices aside to drink "un verre avec des amis"[440] or to taste "une bonne

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[436] 121203_006—"I don't like pork. I don't like cured meats, but I eat pork, if I have access to eat it, I eat pork. It doesn't bother me. For me it is like spinach. I don't eat spinach because I don't like spinach but if I was on a desert island with a box of spinach I am going to eat spinach. It's the same for pork. When I am invited to people's houses who do not know that I am Muslim and they are going to offer me something to eat, who offer me a dish with pork, I am not going to say to them 'no, no I don't eat that.' No, I eat it, but I don't like it very much, but I eat it."

[437] Mohammed El-Bachouti, "Individualization of Muslim Religious Practices: Contextual Creativity of Second-Generation Moroccans in Spain," in *Everyday Life Practices of Muslims in Europe: Consumption and Aesthetics*, ed. Erkan Toguslu (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015), 98, 108.

[438] El-Bachouti, "Individualization," 108.

[439] 121130_001—"I eat what there is to eat, I accept it and, there you go!"

[440] Drink a glass [understood of some form of alcohol] with friends.

choucroute"[441] (typically mixed with sausages). It becomes clear that food practice and consumption can act as another lens with which to examine immigrant identity negotiation and maintenance.[442]

3.6 Conclusion

It is impossible to speak of a single Maghrébine Muslim identity that emerged in Paris. Every individual expressed their identity in a unique way, emphasizing certain aspects over others, and reflective of each informant's distinctive history and context. In this chapter I explored the various identity categories that emerged for my informants in Paris. First, I presented an overview of the various identity claims that my informants made in Paris. In this I showed how the kinds of identity claims that my informants made either instinctively or after some exploration were incredibly varied.

I then addressed some of the identities present for the informants of my study. In this, I looked at the idea of a "born Muslim" identity. Here my informants explained how someone could hold an identity based purely on the circumstances of his/her birth. One was "born Muslim" because one was born in one of the countries of the Maghreb and into Muslim cultures and contexts from which one could not escape. I suggested that if religious identity could be argued to be a "born" identity, much like race, or ethnicity, it might be seen as more difficult to change than is generally argued for religious identity. This led into a discussion of who is actually able to claim any given identity. In this my informants suggested that even if one wanted to claim a particular identity, usually French, because of various factors, including one's

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[441] Taste a good sauerkraut—which, in France, can come "garnished" with sausages.

[442] While Akhtar's categories were helpful for thinking through the various ways that my Parisian informants negotiated their identities in Paris, there are a few critiques that I have of his typology. First, his work is principally focused on youth, whereas I argue that these kinds of identity negotiations are happening for all ages of immigrants. This is not just a matter of regular identity processes that any youth might undergo, but about the set of challenges to and experiences of identity for the immigrant individual, no matter their age. Second, Akhtar's four categories do not quite cover the range of experience that immigrants have in relation to identity negotiation. Here I believe that Peggy Levitt's six categories are closer to covering the wide array of perspectives and approaches taken by immigrants in their identity negotiation and presentation (Levitt, *God Needs no Passport*, 70-83). I find this to be especially the case in relationship to her "Cosmopolitan" category. I had two informants who expressed this kind of identity and others whose food practices would have been reflective of it as well, that I could not present here with Akhtar's typology.

appearance or name, that identity may not be open to that individual. Not just anyone could "be French."

An exploration of what it meant to "be French" according to my informants followed. For many of my informants, the primary way of understanding what it meant to "be French" was to distinguish between French citizenship and French nationality. One who had French citizenship could not immediately claim French identity according to my informants. Instead French ethnic nationality, which was seen as encompassing more than just legal citizenship, was the base of "French" identity.

Next, I explored the idea of "double culture"; that people see themselves as holding both French and Maghrébine (Algerian, Moroccan or Tunisian) identity. Informants who held this "double cultural" identity seemed to use it as a means of understanding their transnational identity experiences, or to justify the actions of other transnational identifiers that may act in strange ways. Those who held the identity for themselves tended to see it as a positive thing, offering a great deal of culture to one's life, and flavour since one would have access to both food cultures. Those who refused this double culture and placed it on others, usually second and third generation Maghrébine youth, saw it as a problematic identity to hold, arguing that it would lead to confusion of identity and thus could possibly lead to more extreme religious identification.

The next subsection concentrated on the category of "cultural Muslims" that arose in my data in Paris. This identity label was not just a new way of addressing the often-imposed categories of "practicing" and "non-practicing" Muslims, as this identity often relied on practice of one form or another to illustrate that it was present. Instead, the defining characteristic of a "cultural Muslim" identity seemed to be one of intention. If the intention behind the action or identity was because of tradition or culture, and not because of some deep-seated conviction, belief or religious understanding, then it was often a good example of cultural commitment rather than religious commitment. These informants still feel Muslim, but they simply have a different intention behind this identity than someone who feels Muslim because of clearly "religious" reasons. In this section I showed how religious food practice was often the clearest evidence of this identity for my informants.

This led me into a discussion of the role of food in identity in general for my informants in Paris. I showed how food practice was an essential representation of my informants' various

identities. First, I explored the role of food in Muslim identity in general for my informants and found that food was often the crux on which their religious identities lay. It was the most important and most often practiced religious tradition that my informants engaged in.

I have stressed the importance of one kind of everyday practice, namely food, in one's daily experience and consequent identity over and over in this work. This chapter shows just how essential food is to the identity negotiations and integration processes of a group of Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Paris. Food serves as a foundational representation of my informants' identities, both communal and individual, in the City of Lights. What and how one eats firmly place an individual within a particular identity group and helps that person come to some clear understanding of his/herself in light of conflicting identity groups.

Through an exploration of Salman Akhtar's fourfold typology of immigrant identity negotiation, I showed how members of my informant group placed themselves within this typology based on what they did or did not consume. In this I discussed the role that food plays for (1) ethnocentric, (2) hyperassimilated, (3) alienated, and (4) bicultural immigrants. While I had informants who fell into each of Akhtar's categories, most fit best in the hyperassimilated or bicultural categories, showing that my informants made serious efforts to leave their ethnocentric identities and consequently practices behind. I gave examples of Maghrébine Muslims who do not feel French and yet prepare traditional three course French meals with wine for friends and colleagues. There are also examples of French Maghrébines who do not feel particularly Muslim and yet will not eat pork or drink alcohol, or of Maghrébine French Muslims who do not eat pork at home, but will grab a Jambon Beurre (the traditional French sandwich of ham on a baguette) with colleagues when they are at a conference. The list of diverse responses to identity presentation can go on and on. While every person reacts slightly differently to the immigrant experience and how food practice is consequently worked out for him or her, it is clear from my data that for many immigrants, or at least for a small group of Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Paris, food plays an essential role, in negotiating and presenting old and new identities.

What is evident from the vast array of responses that I received to identity claims is that my research challenges simplistic notions of Muslim identity formation in France. The immigrants' food practices reveal that categories of "good and bad Muslim," "practicing or believing/non-practicing," simply do not cover the diverse identities present in this immigrant location. Instead it becomes clear that scholars must add nuance and diversity to the typologies

present to reflect the reality on the ground, in the everyday life experiences of Muslims in Paris. This everyday experience sheds light on the complex and multivalent approaches to living within a transnational context, a reality which underlies my informants' daily lives and is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 4: "Le meilleur brassage culturel"[443]: Food, Transnationalism and Integration in Paris

4.1 Introduction

Identity negotiations are central to the immigrant experience. In Chapter 3 I suggested that how one views oneself and is viewed by others is a constant consideration for members of the Maghrébine Muslim community in France. The working out of identity most often takes place within a context of interaction between different groups, between "us" and "them." Without an "other" to compare oneself to, questions of identity tend to remain unstated or not reflected upon. In relation to food, it is often when a practice, belief or approach is placed beside a conflicting practice, belief or approach that it becomes a statement of identity. Pork consumption, or the lack thereof, takes a more significant role in identity, when one is surrounded by a clear "other": those who do/do not eat pork. The separation of communities into "us" and "them" is essential in addressing who is a part of the "us," in this case French national identifiers, and who is part of the "them," in this case, Maghrébine transnational identifiers.

In this chapter I address the kind of binary thinking that lays the groundwork for the integration efforts as well as the negotiation of transnational identity for the Maghrébine Muslims of my study. I begin with a presentation of this "us" and "them" dichotomy as a means of showing why transnational connection is seen as important for my informants. I then explore the seven understandings of "integration" that my informants presented to me, and the role that food can play in expressing one's integration, or lack thereof. In this section I argue that food can serve as the symbol par excellence of both similarity, and difference, between "us" and "them," and can consequently be used by the immigrant to aid in or detract from their "integration" into the French culture, a potentially essential process for those individuals wishing to hold to a transnational identity. The final section of the chapter addresses the topic of transnationalism, exploring how one's interaction with the mundane subject of food and eating aids in my informants' mediation of their transnational identity, where transnational refers to comfort in two nation-state homes. Unlike diaspora identity, where the diasporic individual's centre of gravity is

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[443] "The best cultural mix"—this comes from a quotation from one of my informants who spoke about the fact that mixing traditions, and cultures, whether represented by food or people, was a beautiful thing.

firmly located in the homeland, the transnational identity is claimed by those who see themselves at home in both the host and the home context, and make efforts towards maintaining connection to and claiming identity in both.[444] What and how they eat, and the kinds of food practices in which they engage, leads them to place themselves in varying places along the spectrum of diasporic/transnational identification. Furthermore, I show how food can act as a bridge between the two sides of transnational identity, whether within or between individuals, and therefore can be used as a powerful tool for my informants.

4.2 The Effect of "Us" and "Them" Distinctions on Transnationalism

It did not take long in the field to feel the palpable idea that there is an "us" and there is a "them" in France, and that my informants fit firmly within the "them" category. Even for those informants who were born and raised in France, those informants who barely identified with their culture of origin, those informants who claimed French national identity, they still felt as though there were significant differences between them and the rest of the French population. In fact, this mentality of clear distinctions between "us" and "them" was propagated on both sides. The non-Muslim, multi-generation, European French saw Maghrébine Muslims as "them" and the Maghrébine Muslims saw the non-Muslim, multi-generation European French as "them." One informant suggested that this distinction between "us" and "them" was based on the fact that "on ne voit pas les choses pareille."[445] Dichotomies were set up between "the West" and "the Maghreb."[446] The "othering" process of Muslims by majority, non-Muslim French communities is widely known and generally discussed in other sections of this work, so the focus of this section is on the dichotomies created and maintained by the Maghrébine Muslim community of my study. Ultimately, if my informants view themselves as inherently separate from the European French "them" this will have a significant impact on their feelings toward and seeming ability to claim the French side of their transnational identity.

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[444] I will define my use of "transnationalism" further in section 4.4 below as well as in Chapter 7 when I address my Montréal data.
[445] 120822_001—"We do not see things in the same way."
[446] "The West" as understood by my informants to be either secular or minimally Christian. "The Maghreb" as understood by my informants to be Muslim. Thus, conflation of the religious understanding, approach and practice with cultural ones were frequent.

These dichotomies between cultures, between "us" and "them," can be seen in two different realms: general culture and food practices. In interest of space I cannot address all the general cultural differences that my informants spoke about. I focus primarily on those practices that relate directly or indirectly to food.[447]

In that light, an important distinction that was made between the Western and Maghrébine cultures was the approach to hospitality in both. Informants would mention the importance of hospitality to Maghrébine culture, noting that there seemed to be a great deal of this hospitality missing with people who were a part of the West. Informants would stress how this was a difference between "their" culture and "our" culture. One informant for example expressed the following. She said,

> il y a des choses en France qui s'opposent à ma culture ... d'hospitalité…on n'est pas obligé de téléphoner aux gens avant d'aller chez eux, on n'est pas obligé de prendre rendez-vous trois semaines avant pour un dîner; on peut arriver, et y a de la place, on n'est pas obligé d'aller à l'hôtel alors qu'il y a une chambre d'amis. Tu vois ce genre de choses?[448]

She gave examples of how the Maghrébine culture or hospitality worked, as a seeming contrast to what one might find in the majority French friendship and family circles. While the French have a reputation for being cold and distant, even with their inner circle contacts, the Maghrébine culture is presented as being one of warmth and closeness, of hospitality.

While hospitality is generally a characteristic of Maghrébine culture, as became clear in my Québec data, this hospitality seemed to be altered in the French context—Frenchified, if you will. This seemingly important approach of hospitality was not present unless you were already inside the "us." I return to this argument in the conclusion when I compare the French and Québécois contexts, but it is merely important to note here the role that hospitality plays in the minds of Maghrébine Muslims in France as a distinguishing mark between "us" (the more hospitable ones) and "them" (the colder, more distant ones).

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[447] My informants highlighted differences between themselves and the French community surrounding them in how the French treat animals, how they view life and the afterlife, in that the French shut religion out while they orient their lives by it, and that the French were viewed as hypocritical and fake.

[448] 121209_001—"There are things in France which are opposed to my culture…of hospitality…we are not obliged to call people before going to their house. We are not obligated to set an appointment three weeks in advance for a lunch; we can arrive and there is space. We are not obligated to go to a hotel when there is a guest room. You see, that sort of thing."

4.2.1 Food as Distinguishing Mark Between "Us" and "Them"

While there were basic characteristics, attitudes and practices that my informants argued were indicative of the difference between the "West" and the Maghreb the most frequent examples my informants gave were related to food practices. The dichotomies in food practice were found in three realms: what one ate, how one ate and where one ate. Because food is foundational to identity, as argued above, its use as a symbol of distinction between "us" and "them" is noteworthy here. If what, how and where one eats are all foundational to who one is, and if these ways of being are seen as dichotomous with others, certain food practices may solidify these binary mentalities, making a fluid transnationalism difficult to hold.

For example, in regards to <u>what</u> one eats, one informant told me a story about a move by a far right political association that emphasized this "us" and "them" distinction through a particular food practice. Because of the significance of this story to the current argument I will quote it at length. My informant told me that,

> dans le sens inverse, il y a eu une association qui faisait la soupe populaire pour les pauvres pour exclure les non chrétiens…. Ils ont mis des lardons dans la nourriture qu'ils servaient aux gens. Donc les juifs et les musulmans ne mangeaient pas. C'est une pratique barbare à mon sens quand on parle de 2012. Et ça c'était une association du Front National qui servait soi-disant de la nourriture aux pauvres. Sauf que lorsqu'il y a du porc, on sait très bien que le porc qu'il soit juif ou bouddhiste ou musulman, il ne mangera pas. C'était une anecdote mais ils pensaient exclure les autres religions.[449]

This "anecdote," as my informant labels it, was prevalent in popular media between 2004 and 2006. The extreme right, French political group, *Bloc Identitaire* and some of its affiliate groups organized soup kitchens to provide soup for homeless individuals in France (*sans domicile fixe*: SDF) but they made these "*soupes identitaires*" (identity soups) with pork. Many understood these actions as a purposeful act of racism towards and exclusion of Jewish and Muslim individuals in the community, even leading officials in Strasbourg to ban such soup and Paris police to close down the soup kitchens that served them.[450] This example shows that not only are

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[449] 121205_001—"In the opposite sense, there was an association that ran soup kitchens for the poor to exclude the non-Christians. …They put bacon in the food that they served to people. So Jews and Muslims would not eat it. It's a barbaric practice in my opinion when we are speaking of 2012. And that was an association of the National Front that supposedly served food to the poor. Except, because there was pork, we know full well that pork, whether Jew or Buddhist of Muslim, he will not eat it. It was an anecdote but they thought to exclude the other religions."

[450] "French Crackdown on Racist Soup," BBC News, accessed 29 June 2016, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4644766.stm; "Pork Soup and Muslims: Recipe for Racism?," NBC News,

these distinctions felt between and among cultural groups, but they can be used by some groups and individuals to further the notion of dichotomous cultures for political purposes.

Beyond the common differences in <u>what</u> my informants eat versus the "them" to which they were comparing themselves, i.e. not eating pork, more simply, my informants gave examples such as the fact that they buy and consume food with fewer pesticides, which is more "natural" than the food that the majority French culture eats.[451] One informant stressed the difference in relation to meat and meat products.

> Par exemple, la viande, les Français achètent directement dans les supermarchés tout fait. Ça [il] n'y a pas chez nous. Même si on travaille, on a toujours la tradition de manger frais, de pas manger de la nourriture dans les boîtes, les conserves. Vous ne trouvez pas ça chez les Maghrébins, ou rarement.[452]

Food practices are generalized across cultures. In this statement, the informant is suggesting that all majority non-Maghrébine French people buy their meat from supermarkets or butchers who do not give them fresh meat, and that all Maghrébines buy their meat from butchers who provide them with fresh meat. Whether that is the case, the discourse is present and has an affect on notions of difference and/or similarity—as well as what is better, or not.

The distinctions are also present in <u>how</u> one eats and prepares food. First, how much food a person consumes is an important example of the differing values present in the two groups. The amount of food consumed by each culture is seen as a dichotomy between abundance versus necessity.

For example, while in France I attended and acted as the witness for a wedding for one of my informants. While both her family and the groom's family were both Maghrébine, the bride and groom decided to have a more traditional French meal at their reception. The entire meal, which lasted four hours, consisted of halal foie gras, followed by a course of fish, then meat, then a cheese course, dessert and fruit, finished with platters and platters of Maghrébine pastries. The abundance of food at the meal seemed to conflict with the notion that in Islam people are not

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accessed 29 June 2016, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/11010604/ns/world_news-europe/t/pork-soup-muslims-recipe-racism/; "Polemique autour d'une soupe au porc à Nice," TFI News, accessed 29 June 2016, http://lci.tf1.fr/france/2005-12/polemique-autour-soupe-porc-nice-4861011.html.
[451] 121008_001; 121202_003.
[452] 121102_001—"For example, meat, the French buy directly in the supermarkets all ready. That, we do not have where we are from. Even if we work, we have the tradition of eating fresh, of not eating canned food, conserved food. You will not find that at Maghrébine homes, or rarely."

supposed to eat too much, they are not to overindulge, according to my informants.[453] The sister of the bride commented on this at the end of the meal when I was talking to her. She mentioned that there was too much food and that it was wasteful and unnecessary. While I was very full by the end of the night, and feeling like the meal was probably one course too long, I do not know that any French person would have agreed. In fact, most of the people I spoke to about the meal expressed that it was normal for French weddings to have that much food.

Furthermore, while the French mode of cooking is often viewed as complex and time intensive, many of my informants suggested that Maghrébine cooking is even more so. In fact, they suggested that because workdays are so long in France, there is simply no time to make traditional Maghrébine dishes.[454] These require too much work and too many hours, which the non-Maghrébine French culture simply does not understand or support. Family meals in the Maghreb are long events, staying at the table for hours, enjoying the meal together. The European mode of eating is viewed as fast. Not only that, but the kind of plate used is also seen as distinct in the two cultures. While in the Maghrébine context a communal plate is used, in France separate plates are the norm. Not only are separate plates the norm, but eating from one dish is seen as less cultured or refined—not really "French."

Where the meals happen is also an important distinction between Maghrébine and non-Maghrébine French, according to my informants. Many informants stated that it was essential that Maghrébine food be consumed with others. In fact, for many it was not possible to eat a Maghrébine dish alone. One woman explained to me that "la différence c'est que notre bœuf à nous ne se mange pas seule. C'est triste de faire un couscous et de manger toute seule… les plats pour une personne, ça n'existe pas."[455] This informant explained to me that not only were there no recipes for one-person couscous, but you were to always make enough for extra people that may happen to show up. Furthermore, the centrality of eating as a family was built into the daily structure of the culture in the Maghreb and was lacking in the French context. One informant explained to me that, while it was almost impossible to eat with one's family at lunch in France, it was an everyday occurrence in Morocco. She explained that, "à midi, on rentre pour manger,

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[453] I address the arguments for not over eating in Chapter 7.

[454] 121123_001; 121206_001; 121207_001.

[455] 121123_001 - "The difference is that our food is not eaten alone. It's sad to make a couscous and to eat it alone…dishes for one person, that does not exist."

on est en famille. Là-bas on a deux heures de pause déjeuner entre midi et deux."[456] She went on to say that "Ce sont des rituels qui sont dans le sang. On essaie de les garder."[457] These differences in practice and approach are not only important but are bred in the bone. As a result, the distinction between "us" and "them" may be hard to remove.

4.2.2 The other "them": Othering as a Defensive Strategy

Many of my informants would use other groups to show how their own community, namely the Maghrébine Muslim community, was not as problematic as some of the others out there. Natasha Bakht suggests that minority individuals often feel the need to create "stranger strangers" in order "to construct a flattering image of ourselves, rather than doing the work of asking harder questions about who we are as a society."[458] The most prominent group that was brought up as an example of a "stranger stranger" by my informants was the Jewish community in France. My informants expressed that, while they had different practices from the dominant French "us," they were not as bad as "them," i.e. the Jewish community. This became clear in relation to food practice. My informants, when speaking about the food practices that might be used as examples of how they did not fit in with the "us," would bring up Jews as an example of people who limit what they eat, in order to show how they are not *that* different: they are not the only ones who limit what they eat and they are not the only strange "them" in the midst of the dominant French "us." For example, one informant explained to me:

> On [nous] oblige en France à entrer tous dans la même boîte…les musulmans, mais ce qui est en contradiction, c'est que les juifs mangent le même, comme nous, quoi? Oui, donc en France on a la tendance [de] vouloir unifier tout. A faire que soit, on est tous pareille. Sauf que c'est impossible.[459]

This informant was explaining that, while it was part of the French approach to put everyone in one box and to put one's back up about any practice that showed distinction, it was actually an

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[456] 121216_001—"At lunch time, we go home to eat, we are with family. There we have a two-hour lunch break between noon and two."

[457] 121216_001—"These are the rituals that are in the blood, we try to keep them."

[458] This quotation is from Lori G. Beaman, "Introduction, Exploring Reasonable Accommodation," in *Reasonable Accommodation: Managing Religious Diversity*, ed. Lori Beaman (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 8, in reference to Bakht's chapter in the edited volume. Bakht herself states "our need for these 'stranger strangers' who refuse to comply with our rules help us to better comprehend who we are" (Bakht, "Veiled Objections, 99).

[459] 121203_006—"In France, they put us all in the same box…Muslims, but it is in contradiction, because the Jews eat the same, like us. What? Yes, in France we have the tendency to want to unify everything/everyone, to make it as though we are all the same. Except it is impossible."

impossible feat. She was using the Jewish community as an example of another community that "eats the same" as Muslims, that restricts certain food consumption, thus distinguishing itself from the larger mainstream, "unified" French community. Another informant when defending the Muslim restriction on pork, highlighted how it is not a distinct practice that should place the Muslim community on the outside because "dans la religion juive, je crois que c'est aussi interdit de manger du porc."[460] This statement was an effort to say, "you see, we aren't the only ones. We can still be a part of the 'us.'"

While some of my informants used the Jewish community as an example of another group with restrictive food practices as a means of highlighting the fact that Muslims were themselves not so different from the mainstream culture, others pushed this further and suggest that the Jews were more difficult, had more restrictive food laws and could be seen as more "different" than Muslims to the dominant French culture. It was a trope that was used to show that there were worse "thems," "stranger strangers," out there. For example, one informant talked about the fact that they could go to Jewish butcher shops to buy their meat, that it was halal for them to do so, but the reverse was not true.[461] When I asked others about the links between religion and food in Islam, some responded that there were not really any links, unlike in Judaism. One informant quickly cut me off to say "Non, non. Ce n'est pas comme le judaïsme où tu ne mélanges pas la viande et le lait. Non, on a aucune restriction"[462] This informant went on to explain that there were of course a couple of restrictions on Muslims, such as not eating pork and eating halal, but her main focus was to show that there were "others" who were more complicated. Instead of just stating that Islam had a flexible, non-restrictive relationship to food, she first presented the idea that there was worse out there. Others would also describe how Jews have specific religious food obligations, but they, as Muslims, did not really have the same sort of thing. For example,

> c'est vrai que dans les religions comme le judaïsme, ils ont certaines nourritures qui sont liées directement à la religion. Nous non. Peut-être la seule chose que l'on a c'est le jour de l'Aïd on doit égorger un mouton. On n'est pas obligé d'égorger un mouton, on peut

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[460] 121207_001—"In the Jewish religion, I believe that it is also forbidden to eat pork."
[461] 121130_001; Another informant also brought up the fact that Muslims could go to Jewish butchers because "les juifs vont plus loin que les musulmans" (121202_004).
[462] 121201_001—"No, no, it is not like in Judaism where you cannot mix meat and milk. No, we have no restrictions."

égorger une chèvre, quelque chose comme ça. On n'a pas de rapport direct entre la religion et la nourriture.[463]

This informant emphasized that while other religions have restrictions, Islam does not, and it is consequently more flexible in the cultural outworking of the tradition. Relatedly, another informant drew the distinction between Islam and Judaism as follows:

> des juifs, pour le coup, eux ils ont des restrictions alimentaires. Par exemple, ils n'utilisent pas les mêmes casseroles pour faire cuire tel ou tel aliment. Ils ne trempent pas et ne mettent pas la cuisse dans la casserole dans laquelle on a déjà fait cuire du lait. Dans l'Islam la seule restriction c'est de ne pas manger du porc. Même si dans la même casserole on peut faire rien. Oui on ne mange pas de porc, mais si je préparais dans une casserole, j'ai l'habitude de faire cuire du porc, et bien la casserole est lavée, et bien, je peux cuisiner autre chose. Du point de vue de la boisson, le seul truc interdit c'est l'alcool. Faut pas le boire, faut pas cuisiner avec, faut pas le vendre, faut pas le porter etc. Ce sont les deux seules restrictions. Après, dans l'Islam, on mange tout, on boit tout.[464]

In this quotation, we can see the justification for the relatively simple restrictions that are in place in Islam, according to my informants. Unlike the Jews who "cannot even cook in certain dishes," Muslim food restrictions, the argument goes, are easily adaptable to the French context. One can imagine a sub-context to this conversation that indicates that this informant would be able to go to a non-Muslim French person's home and use their dishes to cook their meals, while a Jew could not.

While my informants used the Jewish food restrictions to show how the Muslim community was not the only one to engage in different practices, or to show how the Muslim way of practice was not as difficult or problematic as some may think, the consensus from my informants was that the Jewish community, despite having stricter food restrictions, was a much less threatening "them" in the eyes of the dominant French community than the Muslim community. Many of my informants would bring up the fact that even though kosher is just as

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[463] 121201_002—"It's true that in religions like Judaism they have certain foods that are directly linked to the religion. Us, no. Maybe the only thing we have is the day of the Eid we have to slaughter a sheep. We are not obligated to slaughter a sheep, we can slaughter a goat, or something like that. We do not have a direct link between religion and food."

[464] 121206_001—"The Jews, for example, they have food restrictions. For example, they do not use the same dishes to cook this or that ingredient. They do not place the leg in the dish in which we already cooked milk. In Islam the only restriction is to not eat pork. Even if it was made in the same dish, we can do nothing. Yes, we do not eat pork, but if I make it in a dish, where I have the habit of making pork, and of course the dish is washed, and well, I can cook something else. In the point of view of drinks, the only restricted thing is alcohol. You cannot drink it, cannot cook with it, cannot sell it, cannot carry it, etc. Those are the only two restrictions, after in Islam we eat everything and we drink everything."

strict, if not more so, than halal, it does not seem to pose a problem to the dominant culture in France. This was reflective of Scott's suggestion that "the Jews from the Maghreb pose many of the same challenges to French universalism that Arabs/Muslims do, and yet the animus of those who worry about the fracturing of the nation is directed at Muslims, not at Jews."[465] One informant suggested that this was another realm within which one could see discrimination against the Muslim community in France. He stated that "il y a de la viande kascher et très peu de viande halal, et ils en font tout un plat par rapport à la viande halal; là, ça rentre dans le cadre de la discrimination."[466] Some would argue that this was based on the fact that the situation on the ground does not seem to matter, but simply the perception of and obsession with all things Muslim in France. Others argued that the more positive, or at least less problematic, view of the Jewish community derived from the fact that the Jewish community seems to have more power in effecting change in France than the Muslim community. One informant stated that it was religion that was the problem, specifically the Muslim religion. She said that the only reason why the Jewish religion was not an issue was because "en France la société juive est très influente; donc, le débat 'kascher ou pas' ne se pose pas."[467] Even though Jews are also engaging in practices that may separate them from the larger French collective, the perception from my informants was that it did not matter because this other, more normalized, group was not the focus of Western media attention.

Because the notion of "us" and "them" is so thoroughly felt by my informants, it often leads to a much stronger desire to maintain and profess transnational connections than it may in other more nationally inclusive locations, such as Canada.[468] Trying to erase borders between the homeland and host land may become important for people who struggle with being a part of the "them." Before I address directly the important role of transnationalism for my informants, it is essential to explore how the topic of integration is experienced by and affects these groups. The focus on the "integration of them" influences transnational practice and identity as well.

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[465] Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 78.

[466] 121126_001—"There is kosher meat and very little halal meat and they make a big deal about halal meat, so that enters into the category of discrimination."

[467] 120905_001—"In France the Jewish society is very influential, so the debate about kosher or no kosher is not had."

[468] This will become clear in chapters 7 and 8, which look at Maghrébine Muslim experience in Montréal, Canada. While there is still a strong presence of transnational practice and identity in Montréal, there is not the same emphasis on how essentially different this identity is for the Maghrébine Muslims who profess it.

4.3 "On intègre quelque chose mais pas quelqu'un"[469]: The Role of Integration in Transnationalism

The discourse on integration has a significant impact on immigrants in a variety of contexts. This discourse is prevalent in the French immigrant context, where integration is a daily topic of conversation and media focus. In a context such as France where a national, unified identity is the professed ideal, the integration of newcomers into that identity is a focus of politics, and of daily interaction. People who do not visibly or ideologically fit into the majority, secular French population are faced with questions about their integration on a frequent basis. Whether they claim or have French national identity often does not matter. They are viewed as a "them" and as people who need to be integrated, whatever that may mean. In this section I explore how my informants respond to the topic of integration. I present some of the various responses to the question that I posed directly about integration, as well as responses that came up throughout our interviews. I address definitional issues as expressed by my informants and present the various ways that Maghrébine Muslims think about integration in France. Finally, I survey the role of food in integration. While I touched on this briefly in the section on food and identity, I show how some "others" are using food as a means to integrate into French culture and or act against integration.

After working through questions about food practice and daily life in my interviews, I would end each one by saying I had two questions left, the first of which was a big one and the second of which was a fun and easy question to end the interview on an enjoyable note. I would then ask my informants the second last question of the interview, which was: "lorsque vous entendez le mot 'intégration' de quoi pensez-vous? Est-ce que vous vous voyez 'intégré' dans la société française? Vous souciez-vous de celà?"[470] This question elicited many different answers and generated clear emotional responses in some of my informants.

Most responded to the question as if it were an inevitable question, one they had addressed many times before. There were people who answered with what seemed like a cookie

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[469] 121106_001—"We integrate something, but not someone."
[470] "When you hear the word 'integration' what do you think of? Do you see yourself as 'integrated' in the French culture? Do you care?"

cutter answer that they had rehearsed and presented as their official stance on integration. Others struggled to express their response, either out of anger that such a question was being asked, or out of pure disinterest in the topic. Having already spent an hour with me, talking about generally pleasant topics, though, all my informants, even the "integrationally frustrated" ones, gave me extensive answers on this topic. While in Québec this was one of the questions that was quickly asked and answered, in France, the depth of knowledge, experience and interaction with this topic was much bigger and thus resulted in much more complex and nuanced responses.

Informants tended to fall within a handful of definitional understandings of what integration was. They argued that integration was 1) not assimilation, and yet 2) about being just like everyone else (assimilation). Others argued that it was 3) about being a good citizen, 4) or about being good in general. Finally, there were those who stressed that integration inevitably implicated 5) respect, 6) racism and 7) language issues. Before I address each of these seven responses, a few preliminary comments must be made about the process of defining the word "integration" for my informants, as well as whether they viewed the term positively or negatively.

When I asked the integration question, many people would respond immediately, not with their actual response but with a variation of a set of other questions. They would ask, "What does it actually mean?" "According to whose standards?" "To whom does it apply? To those who want, versus those who don't want, French identity? First generation versus second and third generation? Just immigrants or French born people as well? Only Muslims?" For many of the informants who expressed such questions, the term "integration" was one that incited passionate, negative responses within them. These informants would emphasize that they did not like the term,[471] or that it was reductionist.[472] One informant went as far as to say that "Moi ça me révolte quand j'entends ça."[473] While this informant had a visceral response to the word, there were others who suggested that it was simply a useless term. For example, when I asked one informant what he thought when he heard terms such as integration and assimilation, he said "je pense à la débilité profonde d'être humaine. Voilà…l'assimilation, l'intégration, je suis très honnêtement ni

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[471] 121129_001.

[472] 121126_002.

[473] 121102_001—"Me, that is revolting to me when I hear that."

pour, ni contre. Je trouve c'est juste un terme qui n'a pas lieu d'être."[474] For this informant, integration is a topic that does not deserve the attention that it has been given. While people may adjust to particular settings, his thought was that it was not something to be overly dissected, and especially not something to be set up as a distinction placed on others.

Similarly, another of my informants, who just so happens to be the former informant's sister, gave an example for why integration does not work on a human level. She said, "le terme intégré pour moi c'est tout à fait débile pour les personnes. Fin, on intègre je ne sais pas, des chiffres dans un intervalle, on intègre quelque chose mais pas quelqu'un."[475] Like many of my informants, she argued that the term was simply not applicable to the situations to which people try to apply it. It is a hijacked word, a word that is a political term and nothing else.[476] It is "uniquement un terme politique autour duquel on va rassembler des gens. Parce que, qu'est-ce que ça veut dire intégrer?"[477] These informants in general tried to argue that integration is given too much weight in current discussions on immigrant experience in Europe, and because the term, according to their arguments, holds no weight in discussions of human interaction. It should be dropped altogether.

Other informants allowed for the use of the term but struggled to determine to whom integration applies and who gets to determine to whom it applies. One informant stated "C'est quoi être intégré? Tout dépend. D'après certains Français, je suis intégré. Pour d'autres, je ne le suis pas; et d'autres ne se posent même pas la question."[478] If certain people see her as integrated, and others do not, who is determining what it is to be integrated? Who determines to whom the term applies?

Some of my informants did have suggestions concerning to whom the term applies. For example, one person expressed to me that it was a question of socio-economic status. He suggested that integration was only an issue for the poor and it was also not for all "étrangers"

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[474] 121108_001—"I think of the profound debility of humanity. There you go…assimilation, integration, I am honestly not for or against, I find it is just a term that has no place."

[475] 121106_001—"The term integrate, for me, it is totally stupid for people. We integrate, I don't know, numbers in an interval, or integrate something, but not someone."

[476] While integration is a political term in Canada, it also functions as a social term in that context as well, e.g., "Have we successfully welcomed the immigrant or refugee?"

[477] 121203_006—"Uniquely a political term around which we can assemble people. Because what does it mean to integrate?"

[478] 121206_001—"What is it to be integrated? It all depends. According to certain French people, I am integrated. For others I am not; and others do not even ask the question."

(foreigners) but for French Muslims.[479] Similarly, another informant suggested that integration should not be applied to immigrants, but to French nationals.

> Je suis une pure étrangère qui vit en France. Je n'ai pas de souci par rapport à l'intégration car je suis étrangère. Ça ne me pose pas de problème. Je n'ai pas de souci du tout. C'est un peu abstrait pour moi, s'intégrer…Je travaille dans le Social. Si on pouvait déjà intégrer tous les Français d'ici, ça serait bien. Je parle le français de souche. Si on arrivait à les intégrer, eux, ça serait bien.[480]

For this informant, integration is not a term that should be applied to foreigners, who knew their place within French society, but to those within French society itself. One informant suggested that it was a term not meant for immigrants in general, but in fact only for Arabs living, and born in France. She expressed that "moi, quand j'entends intégration je me sens pas concernée. J'ai l'impression que c'est les Arabes nés en France qui ont besoin de s'intégrer, mais pas les immigré(e)s."[481] She went on to explain that immigrants do not need to integrate since they know their position in the host society clearly. They know how and why they came, and as a result they do not need to integrate.

On the other hand, many informants suggested that it was not a fair term to apply to third and fourth generation Muslims living in France. One informant suggested that it was a term that applied to French-born people, but somehow drew the line between generations. He expressed that it was a bit unjust to speak of integration of young people who have been French for three or four generations because "ces gens-là ne connaissent pas leur pays d'origine."[482] The question of to whom the term could be applied was cloudy, and besides, even if one could figure out to whom to apply it and how, the result may not even matter given underlying biases. One informant asked:

> Et ceux qui ont essayé, sont-ils considérés comme des Français? Un Mouloud Ben Achour ou un Shlomo Bengourion, est-il considéré tellement Français même s'il s'est

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[479] 121201_002.

[480] 121128_001—"I am a pure foreigner that lives in France. I don't have any issue in regards to integration because I am a foreigner. It doesn't pose any problem for me. I don't have any issues at all. It is a bit abstract for me to integrate…I work in social service, if we could first integrate all the French here, that would be good. I'm talking about the 'Français de souche.' If we could arrive at integrating them, that would be good."

[481] 121123_001—"Me, when I hear integration I don't feel that it concerns me. I have the impression that it's Arabs born in France who need to be integrate but not immigrants."

[482] 121202_004—"These people do not know their country of origin."

intégré totalement? Non, on le sait très bien. Il est question de physique, couleur et de nom.[483]

Those who are seen as outside of the majority French cultural group would not be seen as integrated anyway, this informant argues, so the debate around integration is not worthwhile.

4.3.1 Definitions/Understandings of Integration

Despite the arguments that integration is a term that is difficult to understand and apply, my informants did try to grasp what it was and what it meant for them and those around them. The first understanding of integration that I am going to explore is that integration is not assimilation. It is not to be equated with assimilation, according to many of my informants. These informants would argue that integration is not about being exactly like the "French" (understood as the mainstream, non-Maghrébine, non-Muslim French majority), even though many "French" think that this is the way to understand integration. What was important for these informants was the idea that one can be integrated, but still maintain elements of their cultural, religious or ethnic identity that may not be viewed as "French."

> Ce que je n'accepte pas dans le terme intégration, c'est le sous-entendu d'assimilation…L'assimilation, le reniement de la culture d'origine, je suis contre. Car ça veut dire qu'il faut que je fasse une croix sur une partie de mon identité. Ça peut induire de graves dérèglements psychologiques. Encore une fois, l'intégration peut se faire sans nier la religion et la culture d'origine. En France, il est possible de vivre avec sa culture et ce que l'on apporte.[484]

This informant was seemingly fine with integration as long as it did not cross the line into assimilation, resulting in an expectation that she would renounce parts of her identity. Another informant explained that adaptation was inevitable in the integration process but not assimilation. For this informant, one of course adapts to the host culture, or else they would have stayed in their home country, but this does not mean that one loses or gives up their convictions.[485] A third

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[483] 121205_001—"And those who try, are they considered as French? A Mouloud Ben Achour or a Shlomo Bengourion, is he considered really French even if he is totally integrated? No, we know that very well. It is a question of physique, colour and name."

[484] 121126_001—"What I do not accept in the term integration is the undercurrent of assimilation…Assimilation, the denial of the culture of origin, I am against it. That means that I must cross out a part of my identity. That can introduce serious psychological disorder. Once more, integration can be done without the negation of religion and cultural origins. In France, it is possible to live with that culture and the one we bring."

[485] 121202_003.

informant explained that assimilation and integration are two separate things and need to be viewed in that way to not marginalize certain communities for no reason.

> Ce n'est pas que les gens ne veulent pas s'intégrer à la société française mais ils ne veulent pas quitter leur identité. Il y a deux choses différentes. Nous voulons être en France tels que nous sommes. Ce n'est pas un refus d'intégration. De l'autre côté, c'est une façon de marginaliser, en disant "si vous n'abandonnez pas votre identité, vous n'êtes pas intégré." C'est là le problème.[486]

By equating assimilation and integration, many immigrants may be labeled "not integrated," which would be an unfair representation of those communities according to this informant.

When integration is viewed as separate from assimilation, many are happy to claim integration into French society. When it is equated with assimilation it is seen as one of the most problematic aspects of the immigrant experience. For example, the informant who spoke of psychological disorder from the emphasis on assimilation above expressed to me that if for some reason assimilation became a forced reality, a necessity in one's integration into France, that would be the day he would leave France.[487] Even though this informant did not believe that assimilation was an essential part of integration in France, there were others who argued that assimilation is exactly the way that integration should be understood. The two terms were interchangeable.

While many would stress the importance of viewing integration as something totally different from assimilation, and see it as not yet an essential part of official integration, others suggested that it was often exactly that. The equation of assimilation and integration was already well established, and expected of those who needed to integrate.[488] Because of this, many of my informants claimed that they were not integrated and did not need to. They would never assimilate with majority "French" society/culture and accordingly would always remain unintegrated.

For these informants, integration meant being "the same" as everyone else. One young, French-born informant explained that integration meant "être pareille avec les autres…de ne pas

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[486] 121212_001—"It's not that people do not want to integrate into the French society but they do not want to give up their identity. They are two completely different things. We want to be in France as we are. It is not a refusal of integration. On the other hand, it is a way of marginalizing by saying 'if you do not abandon your identity, you are not integrated.' That is the problem."

[487] 121126_001.

[488] Scott suggests that in France integration often equals assimilation (Scott, *Politics of the Veil,* 79).

être différent, de vivre pareille."[489] She explained to me that she saw herself as integrated, as living the same as others, even though the majority French society would still reject her. In this we can see the apparent emphasis on assimilation, on being the same and being the same in a particular way. It was not enough for this informant "to live the same" as those around her, because she was still viewed as not "living the same," according to other people's definitions of what "living the same" means. Assimilation is equated with integration. After a long explanation about how people who try to live separately and differently than the mainstream French society have problems with integration, one informant stated: "l'intégration, ça n'existait pas pour moi. Je vis ici comme tout le monde, tout simplement."[490] Here he shows how if one lives, like him, as a doctor, not in the banlieues, engaged in friendship with other French citizens in a French manner, then one has no problem with integration; if one is willing to assimilate, then one does not need to worry about integration, as it will inevitably follow.

The third way that my informants understood integration was related to civil engagement. For these informants, one was integrated if one was a good citizen, and this was often expressed through respecting laws, working, and paying taxes. The same informant who expressed that he would leave France if assimilation were expected for integration gave the following definition of integration:

> Intégration, pour moi, ça veut dire respecter les lois du pays dans lequel je vis; sachant que ce n'est pas mon pays d'origine. Je me considère comme une personne intégrée. Je fête Noël à ma façon, je fête Pâques à ma façon, et je respecte les lois françaises.[491]

He saw himself as integrated because he "respects the laws of the country" and acts as an engaged citizen, which apparently, for this informant, includes celebrating the religious festivals of the majority religious population. Another informant explained that it was specifically the paying of taxes that made someone a good citizen and an integrated citizen in France. She saw herself as integrated because of this fact. For her,

> à partir du moment où je paye mes impôts, je considère que je suis intégrée. Si maintenant mon argent est différent de celui d'un Français, et que le fait que je suis Arabe peut-être me permettra de payer moins d'impôts parce que je n'suis pas une citoyenne normale, je n'suis pas une citoyenne, il n'y a pas de souci…À partir du

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[489] 120822_001—"To be the same as others…to not be different, to live the same."
[490] 121201_002—"Integration does not exist for me. I live here simply like everyone else."
[491] 121126_001—"Integration, for me that means to respect the laws of the country in which I live; knowing that it is not my country of origin. I consider myself as an integrated person. I celebrate Christmas in my way, I celebrate Easter in my way and I respect the laws of France."

moment où je participe économiquement à l'évolution d'une société, je considère que je suis intégrée. Après maintenant, si c'est pas ça, être intégrée, je ne sais pas ce que c'est.[492]

The paying of taxes is an equal experience shared by all good citizens and acts as the base of evidence for one's integration, according to this informant. Of course, there are those who do not pay taxes, Arab or French, and according to this informant these people are not good citizens and as a result are not integrated in France.[493]

While these informants argued that integration was about being a good citizen, others viewed it as being good in general. One informant stated that, for her, "mon intégration c'est d'être bien, d'avoir mon petit chéri, de faire ma vie."[494] She believed that integration was simply about being a good person and living what she viewed as a "normal life." Another informant explained that it was not just about being good, but about being better than she was before. She explained that the term integration was "reductionist" (as mentioned above) and should not be used. Instead, for her the most important thing was what "integration" pointed to, namely, whether or not one lived well in society and was better than before.[495]

The next two ways that informants viewed integration, or the evidence of integration can be dealt with together. These informants viewed integration as implying either respect or, if respect was lacking, then the concept implied racism. On the one hand, for those who saw respect as central, they argued that one could not integrate oneself or others without respecting difference. One informant stated that, in fact,

> le mot intégration c'est respecter la tradition de l'autre, se respecter mutuellement. S'intégrer, ça veut pas dire prendre la culture des Français, s'identifier aux Français; ça, ce n'est pas s'intégrer, pour moi ce n'est pas une intégration. Pour moi, s'intégrer c'est respecter son prochain.[496]

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[492] 121203_006—"From the moment where I pay my taxes, I consider that I am integrated. If now my money is different than that of a French person and the fact that I am Arab maybe permits me to pay less taxes because I am not a normal citizen, I am not a citizen, there is no problem…. From the moment where I participate economically to the evolution of a society, I consider myself integrated. After, if that is not integrated, I do not know what is."

[493] When considering this form of argumentation, it is important to ask how does this work in other contexts where some communities have different taxes, i.e. First Nations in Canada are they NOT integrated, according to this person's definition? If one had different taxes or tax expectations because of another identity that they hold, does this automatically indicate that that person is not integrated?

[494] 121128_001—"My integration is to be good, to have my boyfriend, to live my life."

[495] 121126_002.

[496] 121205_002—"The word integration is to respect the tradition of the other, mutual respect. To integrate does not mean to take the culture of the French, identify as French, that is not to integrate, for me that is not integration. For me, to integrate is to respect the person close to you."

For this informant, one was integrated not if one expected assimilation but if one respected difference.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, some informants indicated that the term integration was inevitably linked to racism. One person suggested that integration, to whom it applies and of whom it is expected, is based solely on skin colour and outward appearances.[497] Another informant expressed the idea that the term integration is used by racist people to present the idea that there are people who have undesirable cultures and identities. For this informant, "l'intégration c'est la grosse arnaque des racistes" and it is only "des racistes qui parlent d'intégration."[498]

The final issue that my informants brought up when answering my question about integration was language. For these informants, language was the ultimate evidence of integration, as well as the foundation for it. Shared language was seen as absolutely essential to the integration process: "if you cannot communicate, you cannot integrate." One informant explained that "quand on prend tous les Algériens qui sont venus d'Algérie, ils parlent le bon français, et bizarrement les Algériens qui sont nés ici, la France n'a pas su leur apprendre le français. C'est bizarre, non?"[499] If language is essential to integration and those Maghrébines who are born in France have a difficult time learning and speaking French, this may be some clear evidence of the fact mentioned previously, that French-born Maghrébines are seen as the target of integration.

Integration turned out to be not as straightforward of a term as I had imagined it might be when I started my fieldwork. My informants interacted with this term in drastically different ways, some seeing it as totally insignificant, while others being moved to tears because of the feelings it brought up for them. While some stressed the importance that integration did not mean assimilation, there were others who saw it exactly as that. Surprisingly, for many of my informants who saw integration as assimilation, rather than feeling as though they needed to assimilate to integrate, they simply chose to claim an unintegrated identity. For those who saw integration as evidenced by civic engagement, integration was not a problematic process or term

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[497] 121203_006.

[498] 121205_001—"Integration is the biggest racist scam…. racists who speak about integration."

[499] 121205_001—"When we take all of the Algerians who came from Algeria, they speak the right French and strangely, the Algerians who are born here, France was not able to teach them French. It's strange, no?"

at all. One simply paid their taxes, respected laws, worked, etcetera, or one did not. While being a good citizen was evidence of integration for some, being "good" in general was what integration was about for others. For these informants one had to be better than one was before if one was to be integrated. Other informants saw integration as relating directly to respect or racism: one was integrated if one respected those around him, or on the other hand, one did not respect the "other" and thus required integration, usually understood as "assimilation" of that "other." Finally, I had informants suggest that integration was primarily based on one's ability to converse in the language of the land.

4.3.2 The Role of Food in Integration

Whether the issue of integration revolves around its relationship to assimilation, citizenship, morality, respect, racism or language, it is undoubtedly a central topic for the people who belong to the communities that I study. It is a notion imposed from the outside and felt from the inside. It is a term and topic that elicits strong emotional responses and is generally a topic that members of minority communities do not want to talk about. That being said, there are ways of gaining insight into one's integration practices, or lack thereof through other practices, namely food. What people eat and how they eat it can reveal a great deal about how they interact with and understand the world around them. For example, Michel and Ellen Desjardins propose that food practice can provide insight into someone's perceptions of the divine, or their own ethnicity, of community building, and of charity, of the challenges of religious diversity and the impact of immigration on relations between individuals of differing worldviews.[500] People's worldviews become evident when examining food. It is for this reason that most of my informants brought up food and food practice when discussing various topics related to integration, whether their own or the perceived integration of others. My informants expressed the centrality of this topic to integration, not only in their responses to my direct question about integration, but also throughout their interview.[501] One informant used food as a metaphor for the process of

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[500] Desjardins and Desjardins, "The Role of Food in Canadian Forms of Christianity," 70-82.

[501] As I mentioned in the section on integration above, the question that I asked about integration was as follows: "lorsque vous entendez le mot 'intégration' de quoi pensez-vous? Est-ce que vous vous voyez 'intégré dans la société française'? Vous souciez-vous de cela?" (When you hear the word 'integration' what do you think of? Do you see yourself as 'integrated' in the French culture? Do you care?). While I did not directly ask about food in this question, the question did come at the end of an interview where I asked a great deal about food and food

integration itself. After describing how people integrate different ingredients from different food traditions to make a new dish that pleases everyone he expressed how this practice is

> le meilleur brassage culturel. On mélange la touche à la française avec les choses marocaines et on fait quelque chose, un plat qui plaît à tout le monde. Et ça, c'est ce qui devrait être en fait avec les gens qui vivent dans le même pays. On devrait pouvoir tous les faire aimer les uns les autres avec ce brassage culturel. On arrive à [le] faire avec la cuisine, on n'arrive pas encore à le faire avec les êtres humains.[502]

In this section I address specific food practices that reveal a commitment to integrate, or a commitment not to integrate, as well as the ability of food and eating to be an access point to understanding and/or encounter with "the other" (an essential element in integration).

As discussed above, some of my informants would argue that one did not have to leave cultural convictions aside to integrate; integration does not equal assimilation. For these informants, food was another example of cultural, religious or ethnic practice that could be maintained in one's integration process.[503] One informant explained that just because there are inevitable adjustments that one makes when one lives in a context that is different from one's homeland, "ça ne nous empêche pas de laisser nos convictions de côté … que ce soit religieux ou culinaire ou autre, il n'y a pas de problèmes."[504] Food is seen as a conviction, and an important one to maintain. While many of my informants would argue that integration is not about eating distinct foods, what one eats still plays a significant role in influencing one's own perception of one's integration, as well as the perception of others. For example, one of my informants, who opened a halal fine dining French restaurant, noted that integration should not be about eating

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practices. It is therefore possible that food was a central part of my informants' responses to this question because they were primed to think/talk about food.

[502] 121108_001—"The best cultural mix. We mix a touch of French with Moroccan things and we make something, a dish that pleases everyone. And that is something that should be in fact with people who live in the same country. We should be able to make everyone like each other with this cultural mix. We manage to do it with cuisine, we have not yet managed to do it with humans."

[503] One is reminded of the "table and chairs" controversy that arose within the Sikh community in the 1990s, where the question arose if a tradition, such as eating on the floor, should be adapted in the Canadian context; should adaptation be a part of integration? Desjardins and Desjardins explore this controversy further and what it says about the "integration" of minority religious communities in multicultural and secular Canada (Michel Desjardins and Ellen Desjardins, "Food that Builds Community: The Sikh *Langar* in Canada," in *Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures / Revue des cultures culinaires au Canada* 1/2 (2009): 16-18, http://www.erudit.org/revue/cuizine/2009/v1/n2/037851ar.html).

[504] 121202_003—"That does not force us to leave our convictions aside. Whether religious or culinary, there is no problem."

pork or drinking alcohol, yet went on to talk about the fact that his restaurant could be viewed as an effort to show integration. He stated that,

> maintenant, après ce qui est paradoxal, c'est que moi je fais mon restaurant parce que j'ai évolué en France. Donc, c'est une manière de dire "oui, regarde, nous sommes intégrés, puisque nous mangeons français maintenant, mais c'est halal." Ça reste toujours halal.[505]

As much as this informant and others may want to argue that particular foods do not illustrate integration, just as much as they may want to argue that integration is not equated with assimilation, there is still a clear understanding that integration is just that. There is an understanding from outside and within these communities that what one eats is in fact a sign of the degree to which one is integrated. Furthermore, if integration is seen as assimilation to French culture, specific food practices would be more indicative of integration than others.

For people in the Maghrébine Muslim community it may be hard to feel fully able to integrate into a society where the majority culture revolves around food practices that are forbidden in one's own culture/religion. This may keep people on the margins, feeling unable to integrate, or being told they cannot do so. One young woman explained to me that if you are a practicing Muslim integration practices are inevitably affected because what you eat and drink, or do not eat and drink, will limit where you can go, and will limit your social group. When describing a situation where she felt she could not go out for drinks with colleagues at school she said, "donc oui ça sélectionne quand on est pratiquant. Ça réduit un peu. Tu sélectionnes ton entourage, avec qui tu restes, avec qui tu ne restes pas. C'est naturel, c'est comme ça."[506] While pork and non-halal meat may be easy enough to avoid (one can eat fish), consuming alcohol can be a much more difficult situation to negotiate.

Another example came from an informant who explained to me that if you refuse alcohol it is seen as an insult to French culture. He expressed that

> j'ai aussi beaucoup d'amis français. Et au niveau individuel, tu sens à chaque fois qu'il veut t'intégrer. Pour lui l'intégration c'est de boire du vin, de l'accompagner à boire du vin et à manger des lardons. Tu le sens. Il ne te le dit pas clairement mais il te le fait sentir. J'ai été plusieurs fois dans des dîners mondains; que ce soit dans des châteaux,

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[505] 121031_001—"Now, what is paradoxical is that I made my restaurant because I evolved [grew up, matured] in France and so it is a way of saying that 'yes, look, we are integrated because we eat French now, but it is halal.' It remains halal always."

[506] 121102_001—"So, yes, that selects when we are practicing. It reduces a bit. You select your entourage with whom you stay and with whom you do not. It's natural, it's like that."

quand tu refuses un verre de vin, ils le prennent mal. C'est comme si tu les avais insultés.[507]

He also explained to me that this sort of insistence on food evidence for integration or identification is only relevant for the Muslim in the situation. He suggested that while it is normal and frequent for non-Muslim French to ask Muslims why they do not eat pork, or drink alcohol, it is not normal or frequent for the Muslim to ask the non-Muslim why he does. The place of alcohol in French culture and identity that I described in Chapter 2 is felt strongly by my informants and often makes it difficult to feel fully integrated if one does not share that practice.

One informant presented an example of the prevalence of alcohol in the French context and the reasoning behind why one's drinking habits can be indicative of integration or the lack thereof:

> Y a des cabinets ou l'on va boire dans le bureau pour fêter quelque chose à midi. On va ouvrir une bouteille de vin, de champagne. Quand on va déjeuner avec son patron, on va boire de l'alcool. En France, entre midi et deux quand on sort pour manger on boit de l'alcool. C'est quand on ne boit pas, du coup on n'est pas dans le même modo que tous les gens qui sont en train de boire et faire la fête etc. On a beau dire, on peut faire la fête sans alcool, avec le coca c'est un peu plus difficile. C'est un peu plus difficile car tout le monde se met dans un état recherché. On va tous communier autour d'une bouteille, ou plusieurs. Quand tu ne bois pas d'alcool tu es en retrait car à un moment quand les gens ont pris quatre ou cinq verres… et bien tu n'es plus au même niveau. Ils sont en train de voler, toi tu marches encore alors que les autres sont beaucoup plus libres, plus ouverts, et tu deviens observateur. C'est ce qui peut faire changer… ce ne sont pas des pressions, mais ça peut être un frein pour intégrer un groupe.[508]

While it is not an explicit expectation that one would engage in these activities with those around them, there is an implicit expectation of these sorts of practices. In a country such as France,

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[507] 121129_002—"I have many French friends and at the individual level, you feel each time that he wants to integrate you. For him, integration is to drink wine, to accompany him to drink wine and to eat bacon. You feel it. He does not say it to you clearly, but he makes you feel it. I have been many times to high society dinners; sometimes in castles; when you refuse a glass of wine, they take it poorly. It is as if you have insulted them."

[508] 121206_001—"There are offices where we will drink in the office to celebrate something at lunch. We will open a bottle of wine, of champagne. When we go to lunch with our boss, we will drink alcohol. In France, between noon and two when we go out to eat we drink alcohol. It's when we do not drink, we are not in the same world as the people who are drinking and celebrating, etc. We can say that we can celebrate without alcohol; with coco cola it's a bit more difficult. It is a bit more difficult because everyone is in a desired state. We are all going to commune around a bottle, or many bottles. When you do not drink alcohol, you are behind because at the moment when people have had four or five glasses and, well, you are no longer at the same level. They are flying, you are walking along while the others are much more liberated, more open and you become the observer. It's what can change things… it is not pressure but it can be a hindrance to join a group."

where food and drink are foundational to national identity (as I discussed in Chapter 2), how and what one eats and drinks can be a powerful symbol of integration.

4.3.2.1 Food as access to the "other"

This brings me to the other aspect of food and food practice that is relevant to integration, namely, the ability of food to be an access point rather than a hindrance to understanding the "other." Without the presence of some "other," integration would not exist. It is only when there are "others" to integrate or "others" to integrate toward that integration matters. Unlike those who argue that what one eats or does not eat leads to separation of groups, there are those who argue that food brings people together in ways that can lead to mutual understanding and respect. Desjardins and Desjardins describe how food can be a means of building community and understanding of an "other" that used to seem foreign.[509] For my informants as well, rather than acting as a means of displaying one's lack of integration and resulting separation from the mainstream French society, food can be seen "plus comme un élément de rassemblement, de ralliement. Ce n'est pas un élément de séparation ni de coupure entre les gens."[510] The table acts as an access point to interaction amongst groups. In a context such as France where the dining table is a central part of daily experience and family structure,[511] it is not surprising to think that it is around the table where one learns about those present.

The table as access point is not only significant to French culture. This same understanding is central to Maghrébine Muslim culture. One informant stated that the moment of the meal was central to the Muslim culture: "c'est là où on se rencontre, c'est là où on parle, c'est là où on rit, c'est le moment de partage et c'est le moment le plus important, je pense, pour les musulmans."[512] Another informant explained that eating a meal together was something traditional in the Maghreb, something brought from "back home," which allows one to share one's origins and desires and to have a discussion with the other person.[513] The centrality of the

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[509] Desjardins and Desjardins, "Role of Food," 72.

[510] 121207_001—"More like an element of gathering, of rallying [together]. It is not an element of separation or of rupture between people."

[511] See Anne Chemin's article, "France Remains Faithful to Food as Meals Continue to be a Collective Affair," *The Guardian*, 4 April 2014. Accessed 2 May 2014 from http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/apr/07/france-food-ritual-meal-tradition.

[512] 121203_006—"It's there that we meet, it is there that we talk, it is there where we laugh, it is the moment of sharing and it is the most important moment I think for Muslims."

[513] 121106_001.

eating experience, then, is a joint cultural conviction for the immigrant Muslim community and the majority, non-Muslim community in France. If some shared cultural practices are essential to integration, then highlighting this similarity may be useful for those communities trying to prove their integration, or the reason why integration is irrelevant to them. These shared cultural practices go beyond the eating experience itself and encapsulate the kinds of foods consumed as well. When French non-Muslim, non-Maghrébines eat Muslim/Maghrébine food they inevitably make the "other" seem less foreign, more a part of "us." Reflective of Fischler's comment that "if eating a food makes one become more like that food, then those sharing the same food become more like each other,"[514] the French non-Maghrébine who not only enjoys couscous but claims couscous as part of his/her own "French" food practices envelops the "other" into "our" self-understanding. Just as disgust in the face of "their" food can feed disgust regarding "their" foreign-ness, so too can acceptance of "their" food feed acceptance of "their" likeness.

Ultimately, the process of defining and then interacting with integration is essential to the immigrant experience in France. Whether integration equals assimilation or not, or whether one engages in distinct practices, food or otherwise, to illustrate one's integration into a particular culture, there is an overarching importance placed on this subject for Maghrébine Muslim communities in France. How deeply one is integrated or how shallow has an affect on how one engages with one's culture of origin. If, as some informants suggested, no matter how hard one tries to integrate that person will never be seen as integrated by the majority French culture, what does that do to that person's sense of self and sense of belonging? If one cannot possibly "fit in" in France, will connection to one's homeland take on a more significant role? It seems as though how one defines and engages with integration can affect how that person defines and engages with transnationalism.[515]

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[514] Fischler, "Commensality," 533.

[515] Vertovec suggests that integration and transnationalism can impact one another, but they do not necessarily have to. For example, he states that "the 'more transnational' a person is does not automatically mean he or she is 'less integrated', and the 'less integrated' one is does not necessarily prompt or strengthen 'more transnational' patterns of association" (Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, 78).

4.4 Fence Straddling and Unstable Ground: Transnational Efforts by Maghrébine Muslims in Paris

With notions of "us" versus "them" rampant in the experience of Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in France, and with forced understandings of integration, one may argue that there cannot possibly be an "Islam de France."[516] As argued by my informants, there are no "types" of Islam,[517] and consequently no such thing as "Islam de France." In response to former President Nicolas Sarkozy's comments about wanting an "Islam de France" and not an "Islam en France" one of my informants said: "l'Islam—qui sois en France ou en Égypte ou aux États Unis—c'est l'Islam. Il y a un seul livre saint, ça s'appelle le Coran. Il n'y a pas un livre saint en France, un livre saint au Canada."[518] For this informant, and many others, the whole discussion of an "Islam de France" was not worthwhile, not only because there could not be a separate Islam for one country, because that would indicate that Islam is fragmented, but also because Islam, from their experience was not accepted as part of the mainstream French culture (as is made evident by the discussion that precedes this section). If immigrants from the Maghreb are constantly being sent the message that they cannot possibly be a part of the collective "we" in France, inevitably this has an affect on the community's emphasis on and desire to maintain transnational identity; to be firmly rooted in France, but reliant on the Maghreb for cultural, social, emotional and even economic sustenance.

As I mentioned above, and will discuss further in Chapter 7, I use the term transnational to refer to the process of feeling "at home" in two or more places, and specifically, in two or more nation-states. Dirk Hoerder in his chapter ""Transnational – transregional – translocal: transcultural" dissects these various, related and yet distinct terms. In his exploration of "transnational" one of his principal criticisms of the use of the term is that it posits national cultures that are identifiable and unique, which he argues cannot hold true since "most states

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[516] See the section on "Islam de France" in Chapter 2 of this work. Also, Bowen, "Does French Islam Have Borders?" 43-55; Bowen, *Can Islam be French?*; Cesari and McLoughlin, *European Muslims*; Cesari, "Islam, Immigration and France"; Zarka, Taussig and Fleury, *L'islam en France*.

[517] 120905_001; 121106_001.

[518] 121031_001—"Islam whether it is in France or in Egypt or in the United States is Islam. There is only one holy book that is called the Quran. There is not a holy book in France, a holy book in Canada."

are—at least to some degree—composed of many cultural groups."[519] Furthermore, and using

other scholars' research as support, he proposes that "migrants arrive in complex societies rather

than in mono-cultural nations," and "no society or state offered only one single model of

adjustment to newly arriving migrants."[520] While this may generally be the case, given what I

have described about French nationalism and its approach to immigration and integration, I argue

that, in fact, France does attempt to present a mono-cultural nation to which all (im)migrants

must adjust. Because of this, my use of the term "transnational" falls in line with the definition

that Hoerder provides in his work, namely that transnationalism refers "to processes by which

'immigrants' or 'transmigrants' build 'social fields' or multi-layered relations linking their

countries of origin with those of settlement, they establish networks in two or more nation-states

and 'maintain activities, identities and statuses in several' locations."[521] More simply, the

definition of transnationalism that I engage throughout this work is that of Steven Vertovec

which he describes as "sustained cross-border relationships, patterns of exchange, affiliations

and social formations spanning nation-states."[522] As I see it, food is an essential instrument in the

transnational immigrant's tool belt to sustain relationships, affiliations, social formations, and

exchange between the host and home land. In agreement with Miriam Abu Salem, I argue that

"food, as well as language, preserves culture and especially during periods of migration it

becomes essential in providing and sustaining self-representation in the public space as well as

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[519] Dirk Hoerder, "Transnational – Transregional – Translocal: Transcultural," in *Handbook of Research Methods in Migration,* ed. Carlos Vargas-Silva (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2012), 70.

[520] Hoerder, "Transnational-transregional," 82.

[521] Ibid., 72. While I choose to use the term transnational here, I do appreciate Hoerder's understanding and definitions of transregional/translocal, and transcultural. Hoerder argues that we must be more specific in regards to the trans-relationships that migrants may have, such that "rather than a state as a whole, particular regional frames like labor markets, schools, and neighborhoods are the spaces of migrant insertion and of interactions and these contribute to individual and societal transculturation" (Hoerder, "Transnational-transregional," 84). In the context of this study then, we may see my informants as transregional, that is, establishing networks, maintaining activities and identities in both Paris and whatever regional city they maintain connection to in the Maghreb. Hoerder's understanding of "transcultural," which he sees as encompassing all the other trans-terms he discusses here, is also useful. He sees it as a four-step system approach which "connect migration decisions and patterns (1) in the society of departure on all levels from local to global; via (2) the actual move across distance given an era's means of transportation and communication; to (3) the society or societies of destination again in micro-, meso-, and macro-regional perspectives; and (4) linkages between the communities in which migrants spent or spend part of their lives" (Hoerder, "Transnational-transregional," 87). This system covers the multiplicity of experience that may be present for any given trans-migrant, and allows for the inclusion of migrants coming from former colonial contexts to their former colonizing nation-states; something that Hoerder thinks is not possible with the term "transnational."

[522] Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, 2.

maintaining firm roots in the motherland."[523] It helps to situate the migrant on both sides of the transnational fence.

In this section I present the evidence for transnational religion and identity amongst the Maghrébine Muslims of my study in Paris. As argued by Anderson, immigrants inevitably straddle cultures, between homeland and host-land.[524] For many immigrants, their feet are firmly on both sides of the fence that they are straddling, trying to find their place in the host-land while still feeling firmly placed within the homeland. The dynamic of which foot is more firmly planted than the other vacillates and often changes over the generations. For example, Ebaugh and Chafetz suggest that "transnational networks are likely to weaken substantially as the immigrant generation passes from community and congregational leadership and ultimately from life."[525] In this they suggest that one's foot would become more firmly planted on the host-land side of the fence as generations pass and one may simply keep one's toe on the homeland side—for example, speaking the home language at holiday events with extended family, and eating the home food once in a blue moon for nostalgic purposes. If this argument is true, the question becomes whether there will come a point where transnational connections no longer matter and what will come after transnationalism for those who formerly held transnational identities. Does the trans- simply get dropped for a pure, one-sided nationalism? Regardless, it is clear from this, and from the former discussion on transnationalism, that the transnational immigrant is in a constant dance with the fence, invisible or not, leaning over to one side on certain occasions and falling toward the opposite side on others.

For the Maghrébine Muslims whom I interviewed, this straddling dance was complex and difficult. For members of groups experiencing prejudice in France, the host-land side of the fence is often protected with sharp barbed wire, sometimes visible and other times not. What is made clear from my data is that one may feel as though she has her foot firmly in France, but she inevitably feels how hostile the ground beneath her is. When the ground beneath your left foot is not firm, you will certainly put more weight on the right foot to balance and protect yourself.

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[523] Miriam Abu Salem, "Religious Dietary Rules and the Protection of Religious Freedom: Some Evidence from Practice in Italy," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, vol. 26 (2015): 181-182, http://ojs.abo.fi/index.php/scripta/issue/view/74/showToc.
[524] Anderson, *Breaking Bread,* 131, 177.
[525] Helen Rose Fuchs Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz, eds., *Religion Across Borders: Transnational Immigrant Networks* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002), 189.

This rebalancing can be seen as what is happening for many of the Maghrébine Muslims of my study. The ground under their French foot is not quite sturdy, often leading to experiences of pain. The ground under the Maghrébine foot, on the other hand, is stable, familiar and ultimately comforting. As humans who seek safety and belonging it is not surprising, then, that Maghrébine immigrants' emphasis on re-creating the homeland in the host-land to some degree would be strongly present in this community. The goal of transnational identity and practice is to make this straddling dance a less clumsy and more elegant representation of self; the goal is to remove the fence completely so that one can move comfortably between the two sides of the field.

4.4.1 To be a Proud "Blédard(e)": The Idealized Homeland

The Maghreb is idealized for many of my informants. Nostalgia for the homeland is strong, whether the person is recently immigrated or a French-born second generation Maghrébine. In fact, for many of my informants the homeland, what they would refer to as "*au bled*," is central in their thoughts and interactions with the world around them. I've already touched on the term "*blédard*." "Au bled" can simply be a way to refer to a foreign country which was someone's homeland, but in the French context often refers to rural, isolated portions of the Maghreb. People who came from "*au bled*" were often seen as less educated, integrated, etc. Although the term "blédard(e)," one who comes from "au bled," on the whole is seen as a negative appellation by the mainstream majority non-Maghrébine French community, it was held up as a point of pride by many of my informants. One woman explained it to me as follows:

> Beaucoup de Français pensent que, parce que tu viens du bled tu as une tendance [uses an accent] à parler **comme ça**, être un peu ce qu'on dit "blédarde." Je suis une blédarde qui maîtrise. C'est différent. Mais ça ne me dérange pas d'être une blédarde, si une blédarde veux dire que je viens du bled. Oui, je viens du bled.[526]

Instead of being offended by being called someone who comes from North Africa (perceived to be culturally backwards), this term is appropriated by those very communities it was meant to insult and is used as a point of pride, in ways reflective of Frantz Fanon's emphasis on

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[526] 121123_001—"Lots of French people think that because you come from the bled you have a tendency [uses an accent] to speak like this, to be a bit, what we call "bledarde." I am a bledarde that learns. It's different. But it does not bother me to be a bledarde, if a bledarde means that I come from the bled. Yes, I come from the bled."

reclaiming the things which the colonizer distorts.[527] Like the veil, which at the time of decolonization acted as "the means by which the abjection of colonial subjects could be transformed into a proud and independent national and personal identity,"[528] so too the very identity of "blédard(e)" could be a subversive symbol taken up by members of former colonies. Another informant considered being called a "blédard(e)" the ultimate compliment.

> Quand on dit "tu viens du bled" c'est le plus beau compliment que l'on me fait, car je n'aimerai pas perdre cette identité pour rien au monde. Je suis Algérienne, je le resterais toute ma vie. C'est ce qui m'a fait, c'est ce qui m'a construit, c'est ce qui me donne mes idées, mon point de vue, ma façon d'être. Après, j'adore vivre en France.[529]

This informant's explanation shows the two sides of the transnational fence. She is proud to be firmly planted in her Maghrébine identity and yet loves having her other foot planted on French ground. Both these informants use a negative term in the majority French context to express a proud transnational identity.

Most of my informants envision a return "au bled" for their retirement. Even those informants who were born in France have an idealized vision of the homeland that encourages a desire to maintain connection with the homeland while in the host-land. In fact, transnational identity and practice allows the immigrant to take the good from both sides of their transnational identity. For example, as one woman explained,

> j'ai la chance, moi, contrairement à ceux qui sont nées en France et qui sont uniquement Français, j'ai la chance de pouvoir me protéger par ma première identité et ma culture maternelle de naissance, qui est la culture algérienne.[530]

Unlike those uni-national people, who can rely only on one-sided identity, transnational identifiers have a complex, rich context from which to draw. When necessary they can emphasize their "Frenchness" and when necessary they can emphasize their "Maghrébineness."

This emphasis on one side or the other can come from a variety of sources. I have already addressed the importance of projecting identities when trying to claim identities, but here I

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[527] Fanon, *Wretched*.

[528] Scott, *Politics*, 64, in reference to Fanon's writings about the veil.

[529] 121128_001—"When they say, you come from the bled it is the most beautiful compliment that they can give me because I never want to lose this identity for nothing in the world. I am Algerian; I will be so for the rest of my life. It is what made me, it is what constructed me, what gave me my ideas, my point of view, my way of being. After that, I love living in France."

[530] 121203_006—"I am lucky, contrary to those who are born in France and who are uniquely French, I am lucky to be able to protect myself with my first identity and my maternal culture of birth, which is the Algerian culture."

address the need to emphasize transnational identity because of inward forces. Immigrants have a need to build, project and protect transnational activities in order to feel connected to their past and understand their present. For my informants, maintaining connection to the homeland is an essential part of their everyday experience in France, more essential for some than for others. Because of the political and social context in France, members of immigrant communities are constantly sent the message that they are not "fully French." Hence, transnational identity is seen as inevitable for these communities, whether they choose it or not, at least as imposed from the outside. On the other hand, again because of the context in France, which is often hostile toward immigrant communities (the majority of which are Maghrébine Muslims) transnationalism provides these communities with some level of acceptance, comfort and self-understanding. While the French side of their identity may be contested, the Maghrébine side often is not.[531]

To maintain connection to the homeland, to break down the real or imagined borders between host- and homeland, and to feed one's transnational identity, accessibility to the homeland is key. This accessibility comes in the form of trips back home, or frequent phone calls and interaction over the Internet.[532] Thomas Tweed emphasizes the importance of artifacts, tropes, rituals, etcetera, in the processes of crossing and dwelling.[533] Ebaugh and Chafetz' work, *Religion Across Borders*, posits that modern technology has made transnational connections easier to maintain.[534] The question then becomes, has modern technology made the need for rituals, artifacts and tropes less necessary in the process of boundary making and boundary

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[531] Perhaps for second and third generation Maghrébines, the Maghrébine identity would be somewhat contested and not all that comforting. As was argued by some of my informants about those French-born double-culture Maghrébines in France. That being said, this contested identity is only felt when the second or third generation Maghrébine goes to the Maghreb. In France, this identity is less contested, and often imposed.

[532] Vertovec addresses the role of technological advancements (particularly communication technology) in the process of transnationalism in his work, *Transnationalism,* 15, 54. The increase in communication technology has inevitably had an affect on the immigrant's ability to maintain transnational connection. Most of the Maghrébines with whom I interacted in France, both in participant observation and in structured interviews, had cell phone plans which allowed them to call friends and family back in the Maghreb, sometimes on a daily basis. While conducting one of my interviews my informant received a phone call. When I asked her if she was sure that she did not need to take the call, she responded, laughing, and said, it was just family so there was no need for her to take the call. If my aunt or a family member had called from across the country, or from the United States, it would have been something out of the ordinary, but this was not the case for this informant, or many others. Constant communication with family back in the Maghreb was part of their daily reality. In fact, I met people at the mosque who had cell phones for the sole purpose of communicating with people back in the Maghreb, not for communicating with people around them in France. They would hold these phones close to them, especially during Ramadan and holidays, to be ready to talk to family and friends at any moment.

[533] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling.* I come back to Tweed's theory in Chapter 9.

[534] Ebaugh and Chafetz, *Religion*.

crossing? If one can simply go on the Internet and see Algeria, is it necessary to recreate Algeria in France? If one can maintain connection to the past and the religiously significant locations of one's religious identity is it necessary to emphasize metaphors, and artifacts? That being said, technology itself appears to be just another mechanism for dwelling and crossing.

What became clear from my research is that even with increased computer and communications technology, which brings the homeland closer, trips back to the homeland still play a significant role (boundary crossing is aided here by a different kind of technological advancement: air travel). Not only are trips by those living in France to the Maghreb common, but trips by family members who still live in the Maghreb to visit those living in France are also common. Vertovec suggests that there are varying degrees of mobility found among the transnational migrant community in any given place. For example, there are those "(a) who travel regularly between specific sites, (b) who mainly stay in one place of immigration but engage people and resources in place of origin, and (c) who have never moved but whose locality is significantly affected by the activities of others abroad."[535] Many of my first generation informants would fall into the first category as they would go once a year to the Maghreb, while others, including second generation Maghrébines who fall into the second category, would go every few years. For example, one informant expressed the importance of going back to Tunisia for the Eid because "ma famille est en Tunisie, quand je peux y aller j'y vais, mais sinon j'y vais [au moins] chaque année."[536] This informant tried to go back home for the major religious celebrations and also simply to visit her family. Another informant explained to me the importance of his transnational identity. He noted that, while he grew up in Algeria, he has lived for most of his adult life in France and he nourishes both these sides of himself. He explained the way that he maintains connection with Algeria as follows:

> Ma vie d'adulte, je l'ai vécu en France, avec bien sûr des allers-retours parce que je partais souvent en Algérie. J'ai gardé le lien avec l'Algérie. Entre parenthèse, je suis également Français.[537]

Frequent trips home allow this Algerian to "keep the tie with Algeria" that is essential to his knowledge of himself as equally French and Algerian. When speaking with another informant

[535] Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, 19.
[536] 121209_001—"My family is in Tunisia. When I can go there I go, but if not I go [at least] every year."
[537] 121126_001—"My adult life, I lived in France, with return trips of course because I go often to Algeria. I keep the tie with Algeria. In parentheses, I am equally French."

about the celebration of Eid Al-Adha, she expressed that it was ideal to celebrate "back home" with the family, where the rituals could be celebrated to their fullest extent.[538] She informed me that, as long as people have the means, she believed that they would go back to the Maghreb for the celebration of the Eid. Even for those without high paying jobs, i.e., without a great deal of disposable income, trips back home are important. Many of the women with whom I worked in the kitchen at the mosque went back to the Maghreb for long visits after the month of Ramadan was complete.[539] In particular, the woman who ran the operations of the mosque kitchen conveyed to me how important it was to her to return home once a year to re-connect with family and reinvigorate herself and her identity as a Moroccan living in France.[540] Many of the people I spoke with at the mosque would talk about saving money all year in order to go "home" once a year. These trips home are made possible by the fact that the distance between France and the Maghreb is manageable. The flights are frequent, short, and depending on the time of year, not horribly expensive. Even when the flights are expensive, these trips are given importance and money is spent regardless.

4.4.2 "Elles arrivent avec les légumes"[541]: Food and Transnationalism

Beyond just connecting with family, and one's past, these trips back home are used strategically as well, mostly to bring food back from the homeland to host-land. To help create a small piece of the homeland in France, to help ease the transition, to "dwell" as Thomas Tweed would say, informants feel a need to bring back food and other objects from "au bled," or have family members bring them for them. The three most frequent items brought back from the Maghreb to France are: couscous, spices and oils, and vegetables. Even though it is forbidden to bring some

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[538] The Eid Al-Adha, also known as the festival/feast of sacrifice, is a significant Muslim festival celebrated annually by Muslims all over the world. It comes at the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael to God. Muslims celebrate by engaging in prayer, visiting with family and friends and by eating together (often from the sacrificed lamb). While it is not necessary to sacrifice a lamb, many see this as the central aspect of the festival. In the countries of the Maghreb individuals can sacrifice their own lamb, but in places such as France and Canada the slaughter of any animal can only be undertaken by certain, trained individuals in particular places. This is why the informant above expressed that celebrating "back home" allowed for the rituals to be celebrated to the fullest extent.

[539] Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, is considered the most holy month of the year as it was during Ramadan that Muhammad is thought to have received the first verses of the revelation of the Quran. It is a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and religious study. During this month, Muslims (although there are many exceptions) fast from all food, drinks, and certain other activities during daylight hours.

[540] Personal communication, 21 August 2012.

[541] 121203_006—"They arrive with vegetables."

food across the border, many of my informants and their family and friends would engage in such behaviour in an effort to feel like the borders between homeland and host-land were not so high. While many of my informants expressed the importance of living by rules, whether of society or Islam, they were willing to break rules to feed their transnational identities. One informant told me about her mother bringing food for her from the Maghreb:

> Ma mère, quand elle vient me voir d'Algérie, elle m'achète des tomates. Elle m'achète des poivrons, des courgettes, des navets. Elle ramène d'huile d'olive. Et parfois, ma mère ramène de la viande. Donc, ma mère fait passer clandestinement dans les valises, et ma mère n'est pas la seul, eh? Elles sont toutes comme ça. Elles arrivent avec des légumes.[542]

This story was one of many that I was told about people bringing allowed and forbidden things back in their suitcases with them. Some would even travel to the Maghreb with an empty suitcase to specifically fill it up with food products that they could not get in France, or ones that simply did not have the same taste (goût) as they do "au bled." Like these women who would arrive with vegetables, David E. Sutton in his work, *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*, also found that his informants would bring back food from the homeland, mostly feta, in their suitcases. He suggests that they do this as a means of evoking wholeness; "the food event evokes a whole world of family, agricultural associations, place names and other "local knowledge.""[543] By bringing back ingredients from "au bled" my informants, like other immigrants all over the world, engage in this evocation.

The fact that many people bring food products back from the Maghreb to Paris is indicative of the central role that food plays in transnational connection. When analyzing my transnationalism code, of the eight most frequently occurring words, half of them were food words. Words such as taste, vegetables, meat and couscous were prevalent in almost every single interview. Technology, no matter how impressive, did not seem to take away the need to continue to buy and consume Maghrébine food products. According to Kalcik's chapter in Brown and Mussell's 1984 work, *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States*, foodways are notably resistant to change because they are part of the earliest formed layers of culture, and

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[542] 121203_006—"My mother when she comes to see me from Algeria, buys me tomatoes. She buys me peppers, zucchini, turnips. She brings me olive oil. And sometimes, my mother brings meat. So, my mother smuggles them in her suitcase and my mother isn't the only one, eh? They are all like that. They arrive with vegetables."

[543] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts,* 81-83. Paulette Kershenovich Schuster also describes the situation of informants going "back home" with empty suitcases and returning to the host land with them full of "home ingredients" in her "Habaneros and shwarma: Jewish Mexicans in Israel as a transnational community," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, Vol 26 (2015), 291, http://ojs.abo.fi/index.php/scripta/issue/view/74/showToc.

those layers are the last to erode.[544] When everything else is changing for the immigrant, these layers of identity that are resistant to change become important. We find an example of the centrality of food in transnational identity in Sussman's chapter in Gafaiti et al.'s work *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World*. There she argues that "cooking Algerian Jewish cuisine offered the Algerian Jews an active way of preserving the past for future generations."[545] In fact one of her informants stated:

> Wherever we are, in France, Montréal, or elsewhere, as long as we prepare our cuisine, we still exist as a specific people with a long history behind us. Our cuisine represents our culture that we try to pass on to the children.[546]

Food is representative of culture and is a means of connection to that culture. One of my informants similarly expressed: "quand je goûte à une cuisine, je retrouve le pays d'origine."[547] Food and transnationalism are inevitably linked because food is inevitably linked to nationalism, to memory and to identity.

For my informants eating and food preparation were important aspects of their efforts to maintain connection with the homeland while in the host-land. In fact, for many, it was the most important and most easily accessible doorway to their home identity. Because when you "taste a cuisine, you find the country of origin," eating that cuisine can allow the homesick immigrant a moment of comfort. Food acts as way to remember, to access memories, and to cross invisible boundaries. Sutton similarly posits that sensory objects and experiences are important "in reconnecting and remembering experiences and places one has left behind for short- or long-term migration…objects can shift levels of identity when experienced in new contexts, becoming a symbol not just of home or local place, but of countries or perhaps regions."[548] Food is one of these objects that becomes essential for reconnecting the migrant to home, for crossing boundaries of time and place, and consequently for re-creating home in the host land.

To maintain transnational connections through food one must have access to transnational ingredients. It is easier to create a "petit Maghreb" when one can purchase

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[544] Susan Kalcik, "Ethnic Foodways in America: Symbol and the Performance of Identity," in *Ethnic and regional foodways in the United States: the performance of group identity*, eds. Brown, Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 39.
[545] Sussman, "Jews from Algeria," 227.
[546] Ibid., 228.
[547] 121216_001—"When I taste a cuisine, I find the country of origin."
[548] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 74.

ingredients that one may find in the Maghreb. One informant explained to me the importance of cooking food from the homeland as a means to present a transnational identity. He explained that such a practice was differently motivated whether he was cooking for himself or for others. He expressed that "si je fais un plat de couscous, ce n'est pas tout le temps. C'est si j'invite des amis c'est pour leur donner quelque chose. Si je le fais pour moi, c'est pour retrouver quelque chose."[549] For this informant food is a means of finding something missing. One does not need to find something that is out in plain sight, but one "finds something" that is hidden, that is understood to be present and yet often not clearly located.

À la recherche du temps perdu, to use the words of Proust ("In search of lost time"), in the process of trying to find something that is missing from one's transnational identity, memory plays a significant role in gaining access to the missing thing. As already argued, food is inherently tied to memory. Meredith McGuire argues that "memory resides in the whole body…[;] that means that memory can be closely connected with our senses and bodily states, including experiences of which we are not even conscious."[550] Our sense of taste, then, and the bodily experience of eating are powerful means of accessing those memories resident in the body. If food is tied to memory and memory is an access point for something that one cannot access physically, then food can be seen as playing a significant role in accessing and presenting connection to distant homelands and identities. Like the students in Desjardins and Desjardins' work, food practices can become essential for people who are living away from "home," because it "connects them with the smells and tastes of home."[551] One informant said that food practices acted as "repères" (benchmarks or landmarks) for his memories.[552] Food is the trigger, the ground for the memory. One woman explained to me that when she went to a Moroccan restaurant, even though she was Algerian, she found the flavours of her childhood reminded her of that.[553] Another informant said the tie of memory and food when he described to me how he thought of his mother and grandmother. When describing what it was like to grow up in a traditional family and imagining his mother and grandmother, he said "j'en ai encore le goût en

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[549] 121206_001—"If I make a plate of couscous, it's not all the time. It's if I invite friends, it's to give them something. If I do it for myself, it's to find something."
[550] McGuire, *Lived Religion,* 99.
[551] Desjardins and Desjardins, "Food that Builds," 21.
[552] 121205_002.
[553] 121207_001.

pensant à elle."[554] For this informant, who was a man in his sixties, his taste memories were what came to mind when thinking of growing up in Algeria.

Not only was food memory a result of accessing memories of the homeland, it was also a deliberate action taken to evoke those memories. As Sutton says, we "eat in order to remember."[555] It was not simply that people thought of the homeland and as a result thought of the food that related to those moments, but food was used to evoke memories, and to evoke mental access to those memories and the related spaces. For example, one informant stated: "si j'ai envie de me rappeler du pays, forcément je vais faire de la chorba."[556] For this informant, a kind of soup was a tool to access a memory about his country. Another informant expressed a similar tactic. He told me that he ate, and many other Maghrébines, even those born in France, eat as though they are back "au bled," in order to gain access to the homeland, to the flavours and to the connection.[557] For other informants it is simply a matter of nostalgia for one's childhood, which is inevitably tied to food.[558]

One may seek out food from the homeland, not necessarily for the transnational connection, but simply for the nostalgia for one's childhood, which one just happened to spend in that particular locale. Regardless, when one eats the home food, one feels at home. As one informant expressed, when describing a dinner that she had at a Moroccan restaurant, "je me suis senti au Maroc; la décoration, le manger, le goût."[559] Sutton explains this as a means of connecting with the imagined community of the homeland. Eating a particular thing, in a particular way, creates "the embodied knowledge that others are eating the same food."[560] Food transports us to the homeland and the homeland to us.[561]

To recreate the homeland in the host-land and to cook the home food one must have access to the necessary ingredients. I addressed this issue by asking my informants if it was difficult to find the necessary ingredients to maintain religious and cultural food practices from

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[554] 121212_001—"I still have the taste when I think of her."

[555] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 2.

[556] 121129_002—"If I want to be reminded of the country, clearly I am going to make a chorba [a type of stew or soup]."

[557] 120726_001.

[558] 121209_001.

[559] 121216_001—"I felt like I was in Morocco; the decoration, the eating, the taste."

[560] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 84.

[561] See, Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, when he discusses the reconstruction of wholeness in the migrant experience (75).

the Maghreb in France. Every single informant suggested that it was relatively easy to find the necessary elements, whether they needed them for their own personal food practices or not. This is a newer development for the community, though.

One informant explained to me that while it is easy to find halal meat, and everything else one may need to recreate cultural and religious food practice in France, that was not always the case. In fact,

> la première génération, quand ils sont arrivés en France, ils n'avaient pas des boucheries halal. Donc, ils ont acheté leur viande dans les boucheries non-halal. Sinon, ils sont condamnés par leur parents de manger de la viande.[562]

For those first generations, before a solid market had started for North African and halal products, immigrants would have difficulty recreating home in France. Hence the emphasis on trips back home to bring products back to France. That is no longer the case, though.

My informants spoke about how easy it was to find everything they needed to cook Maghrébine dishes in France and how this led to feeling like they were "chez nous, au bled."[563] In fact, one informant suggested that,

> aujourd'hui, on peut tout faire. Je n'ai aucune difficulté à préparer les plats que ma mère faisait, et d'autres que je trouve sur internet ou dans les bouquins de recette; il n'y a vraiment aucune difficulté. Aussi bien, en termes de viande qu'en termes d'épices, très important dans la préparation aux Maghreb. Les épices sont très importants. Tout est disponible. Je n'ai aucune difficulté à trouver la matière première pour faire les plats traditionnels…Quasiment tout est accessible. 99% de ce que l'on peut faire en Algérie, on peut le faire ici.[564]

This ease of accessibility of ingredients can be attributed to the former colonial relationship between France and the Maghreb, the close distance between the two locations, and the increasing demand for these products in France. Not only does this allow for ease of access for people to bring ingredients back with them when they visit the homeland, as discussed above, but also to allow the ease of commerce between the two locations.[565]

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[562] 121031_001—"The first generation, when they arrived in France they did not have halal butchers. So they bought their meat from non-halal butchers. If not, they were forbidden by their parents to eat meat."

[563] 121006_002—"At home, au bled."

[564] 121126_001—"Today we can make everything. I have no problem preparing the dishes that my mother made and others that I find on the internet or in recipe books; there is really no difficulty. Both in terms of meat and in terms of spices; very important in cooking in the Maghreb. Spices are very important. Everything is available. I have no difficulty finding the primary materials to make traditional dishes…Practically everything is accessible. 99% of the things we can make in Algeria, we can make here."

[565] 121204_002.

While most of my informants would suggest that you could find almost everything (99 percent) in France and make 99 percent of the dishes, and maintain 99 percent of one's transnational identity, others suggested that the situation in France was even better than that in the Maghreb. It may be even easier in France than in the Maghreb to maintain the Maghrébine part of one's transnational identity because, according to these informants, you can get even more ingredients in France than you could get back home. One informant explained it as follows:

> Il y a des produits ici en France que l'on ne retrouve plus dans les pays du Maghreb. Comme spécialités, les épices dans les pays du Maghreb on trouve de moins en moins de bonnes épices. Alors qu'en France de bonnes épices on en trouve partout. On peut faire la cuisine que l'on fait au Maghreb.[566]

Because France is a country that views food as essential, the market for speciality goods and spices is large, and consequently one can find practically everything one needs. Not only that, but if one is in the Maghreb, one often only has access to the spices and ingredients of the region in which one is located. One cannot necessarily get spices from another region in the Maghreb. In France, on the other hand, one has access to all spices of all regions in one place. One informant painted the picture as follows:

> On trouve tout, même on trouve mieux. Parce qu'en Algérie, on n'a pas les ingrédients du Maroc, de la Tunisie, mais à Paris on a tout ce que l'on veut. Et quand je vais faire mes courses au marché de Saint-Ouen ou au marché de Nanterre, je trouve même la menthe qui vient du Maroc, les courgettes qui viennent du Maroc, pas les courgettes françaises. Et les radis ou le navet venant du Maroc, qui n'existent pas en Algérie.[567]

For this informant, Maghrébine identity was potentially maintained even more easily in France than in the Maghreb because of the access to pan-Maghrébine ingredients.

The question arises: if one can find practically all of the necessary ingredients in France, or perhaps even more, why do people continue to bring food back from the Maghreb with them? Also, if the ingredients are exactly the same, and one can get the spices and products one needs to make traditional Maghrébine dishes, does that mean that the food is exactly the same in

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[566] 121206_001—"There are products here in France that we cannot find anymore in the countries in the Maghreb. Like specialties, spices in the countries of the Maghreb we find less and less the good spices. Whereas in France we find good spices all over the place. We can make the cuisine that we made in the Maghreb."

[567] 121212_001—"We find everything, even we find better/more. Because in Algeria, we do not have the ingredients from Morocco, or Tunisia, but in Paris we have everything we want. And when I do my grocery shopping at the Saint Ouen market, Nanterre market, I find even the mint that comes from Morocco, the zucchini that come from Morocco. Not the French zucchini. The radishes or the turnip coming from Morocco, that do not exist in Algeria.

France as it is in the Maghreb? Does one have an easier time feeling at home with one's food practice in France than in the Maghreb? While one may imagine that this is the case, considering the fact that some of my informants suggested that you could get everything necessary to recreate traditional Maghrébine food in France, most of my informants suggested otherwise. While the dishes were all the same, while one could get harissa and zucchini and halal meat, my informants expressed that there was still a significant difference in taste (goût).

4.4.2.1 Difference in "Goût": The Social Construction of Taste

The idea of there being a difference in taste between Maghrébine dishes prepared in France and those prepared in the Maghreb was a significant theme that arose in my interviews. In fact, all but one of my 33 interviewees mentioned something about this difference in "goût." From the first interview to the last, informants described how one could prepare all of one's favourite traditional dishes, and practice all of one's religious food practices in France, but that something was different, something was missing. That something was a particular taste: the taste of home. I remember sitting in the park by the mosque conducting my first interview with a first-generation Algerian man, who casually brought up this difference in taste and brushed it off as "quelque chose [de] normal."[568] Because it was my first interview, and because I was not looking for this response, I did not engage the topic further, but it did not matter, because later in the interview he brought it up again. He noted that even if someone takes the exact same ingredient in France and in the Maghreb, it will not be the same because the taste would be different. This was not just something he read, or heard, but something he directly experienced. When describing this difference in "taste" to me with various examples, he said: "je parle avec l'expérience, parce que j'ai goûté ici, et j'ai goûté là-bas, donc je sais comment ça se passe. Là-bas c'est différent par rapport à ici. Même l'huile d'olive, par exemple, c'est pas pareil."[569] When I left that interview that day, I noted that it was curious that he had brought up this difference in taste, but did not think much of it. I did not imagine that practically every single one of my informants would highlight this difference. It became clear that there was something going on with the idea of "taste" that I needed to address. This phenomenon is not unusual. Desjardins and Desjardins

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[568] 120726_001—"Something normal."

[569] 120726_001—"I speak with experience, because I tasted here and I tasted there, so I know how it goes. It is different there in comparison to here, even olive oil, for example, it's not the same."

similarly speak about this difference in taste of the same ingredient in two different locations.[570] Instead of the home food tasting better than the same food in the host land, Desjardins and Desjardins speak of this phenomenon in relation to transformed *langar* food tasting "better" than home food even when the same ingredients are used.[571]

Although two of my informants suggested that there was no difference between the taste of the dishes or ingredients in France versus in the Maghreb, the other 30 suggest that there were clear differences. For one reason or another, these informants saw the ingredients that come from the Maghreb as more full of flavour, as having a better taste, and as generally leading to more delicious dishes. When exploring the different responses that people gave me, three explanations for why there was a difference in taste became apparent. The arguments were made that it was because of 1) the organic nature of Maghreb products, 2) the different ambiance, or 3) pure psychology.

The most prevalent reasoning for the difference in taste that my informants gave relates to the nature of the ingredient itself. For these informants, Maghrébine products provided superior taste because they were inevitably organic. These informants would explain that even if one could find all of the necessary ingredients in France, the taste would still be different because the vegetables and the meat in the Maghreb are raised without additives, in the sunshine, and in artisanal[572] rather than industrial ways.[573] One informant explained to me the difference between the vegetables in France and those in the Maghreb as follows:

> Les légumes français ne sont pas terribles. Nos légumes sont plein de terre, ils sont pas très bons à regarder mais en fait ils sont très, très goûteux. Ici, ils sont tous beaux, tous grands, tous mâchants, mais le goût … n'y pas trop. En fait, je crois que notre agriculture en Algérie c'est l'agriculture bio ici. Ce qu'ils appellent le bio ici. Pour nous c'est de la normale en Algérie.[574]

For this informant, and for others, organic vegetables are thought to be the norm in the Maghreb and accordingly provided better taste. Many informants highlighted the abundance of sunlight that

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[570] Desjardins and Desjardins, "Food that Builds."

[571] Ibid., 8.

[572] 120905_001.

[573] 121008_001.

[574] 121201_001—"French vegetables are not great. Our vegetables are full of earth, they are not very nice to look at but in fact they are very, very tasty. Here they are all beautiful, all large, all whatever, but there is not much taste. In fact, I believe that our agriculture in Algeria is organic agriculture here. What they call organic for us it is the norm in Algeria."

the vegetables would get in the Maghreb as the reason for this difference.[575] Another theme that arose throughout people's responses about the difference in taste was the physical comparison between vegetables in France and those in the Maghreb. I had informants express how there are "de très bons légumes" (very good vegetables) in France and yet are far from being "bons" (tasty), while in the Maghreb the vegetables are "tout pourris…pas beaux physiquement"[576] but have an amazing, true flavour. Another informant described it as follows:

> Quand je croque dans une tomate chez moi, c'est une redécouverte de la tomate. Ici, j'ai l'impression que les légumes sont fades. C'est une réalité, ils sont beaux, chez moi ils ne sont pas beaux. Ils sont toujours petits, tout écrabouillés, la carotte elle est tordue. Mais quand on cuisine … on sent les légumes, on sent le goût.[577]

In this response we see the comparison between French and Maghrébine ingredients yet again. It is notable that these informants claim that the French vegetables are beautiful on the outside but bland on the inside while the opposite is true of Maghrébine vegetables. If food represents identity and can act as a metaphor for people, this may be a way of saying that "sure they may look nice, but they are bland and lacking on the inside. Whereas we may not be pretty but we are of the earth, natural, and full of flavour." Not only that, but setting up the difference in taste as one based on "our" ingredients versus "their" ingredients is just one more example of ways that the paradigm of "us" versus "them" can be worked out on the ground. This informant also suggested that when she eats the "home" ingredients she rediscovers the vegetable itself. There is purity to the experience, a truth to the experience of eating these organic, from the earth vegetables, that one cannot possibly get in the host-land.

While many of my informants suggested that it was impossible to get the same sort of taste from ingredients in France, there were a couple of people who suggested that it was possible. When I asked one informant about the difference in taste she responded differently than most. She said:

> Alors je vous fais la réponse des Algériens, qui est, "non c'est pas le même goût parce que les légumes ils sont pas pareilles, parce que la viande il est pas pareille, parce que…." C'est vrai que là-bas certains aliments comme les fruits et les légumes ont un peu

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[575] 120905_001; 121124_001; 121209_001.

[576] 121123_001—"All rotten…not beautiful physically."

[577] 121128_001—"When I bite into a tomato back home, it is a rediscovery of the tomato. Here I have the impression that the vegetables are bland. It's a reality, they are beautiful, back home they are not beautiful. They are always small, all squished, the carrot is twisted. But when we cook with them, we sense the vegetables, we sense the taste."

plus de goût. Ils sont moins insectisés qu'en France. C'est vrai. Mais quand on a une bonne primeur, les légumes ils sont très bons.[578]

The difference in this case is not so much between French and Maghrébine vegetables, but between organic and industrial vegetables. Another informant suggested that it was possible to find good quality vegetables in France but the problem was that they were incredibly expensive. He explained, "les légumes, il faut vraiment acheter le plus cher pour avoir du goût. Or là-bas, le moins cher est déjà bon."[579] In sum, the general belief is that everyone has access to the taste-full vegetables of the Maghreb, whereas in France only those with lots of money do.

Whether one could buy organic vegetables in Paris and closely recreate the taste of the traditional home food, or use the vegetables that one brought home from the home land, some informants argued that this was not enough to erase the difference in taste. One informant explained to me that the difference in taste that was so evident was not so much about the ingredients, but about the ambiance of the eating experience.

Le dîner, ça va être la même chose, le couscous on le fait à Paris ou Alger, ça va être exactement le même. Y aura aucune différence. Mais c'est vrai que l'ambiance donne un goût différent au plat que l'on va manger. Il ne sera pas dégusté de la même façon.[580]

Other informants explained to me that eating back home in the Maghreb offered a better, truer, experience because the ambiance was totally different and this changed everything, even the tastes of the moment. Trying to recreate this ambiance was an important effort put forward by people in the community that I was studying, but many argued that it would be almost impossible to fully recreate because of the French approach to eating and to work. Just as much as a French person may look at a North American and argue that the North American culture is not conducive to slow eating, long lunches, and three hour meals, many of my Maghrébine informants argued that the French culture was not conducive to really slow eating, extra-long lunches, and eight-hour food preparation, not to mention the importance of eating as a family and

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[578] 121203_006—"O.k. I am going to give you the response of Algerians which is "No, it's not the same taste because the vegetables are not the same, because the meat is not the same, because..." It's true that back there certain ingredients like fruit and vegetables have a bit more taste. They are less covered in insecticide than in France. It's true. But when you have a good grower, the vegetables are very good."

[579] 121205_001—"You absolutely have to buy the most expensive vegetables to have the taste. Whereas back there [in the Maghreb] the cheapest ones are already good."

[580] 121206_001—"The dinner will be the same thing, the couscous whether we make it in Paris or Alger; it will be exactly the same. There will not be a single difference. But, it's true that the ambiance gives a different taste to the dish we are going to eat. It will not be tasted in the same way."

larger community. These are the factors that affect the ambiance of the eating experience, and as a result, at least according to this one informant, affect the taste of the dish one is eating. Here we see an example of what Paulette Kershenovich Schuster suggests, that is, that the difference in taste arises from the fact that taste is culturally and socially influenced.[581]

Another informant, who also suggested that the difference in taste comes from a difference in ambiance, explained that this difference was one that happens not in reality but only "dans la tête."[582] She explained that one could have the exact same ingredients, the exact same person who prepares the meal, but because of the difference in ambiance, one will think that there is a different taste. The argument that the difference in taste was merely a psychologically-based difference is the final argument that I address here. For these informants, the difference in taste was evident, but they did not try to argue that it was a physical difference, or one that necessarily actually manifested in a legitimate difference in taste; rather, they said, it was one that was simply created in the minds of the person eating the food. In one of my interviews this idea was presented as follows.

> Autre: Psychologiquement, ce n'est pas la même chose.
> Rachel: Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?
> Autre: C'est-à-dire, c'est dans ta tête que ça se passe. En réalité c'est la même chose mais c'est meilleur si tu le fais chez toi en Algérie. C'est comme ton plat: le pancake. Quand tu le fais avec ta maman, le goût est meilleur au Canada. Pour moi, c'est pareil. C'est la même chose.[583]

This informant claimed that there was no real difference the ingredients are the same, but it still tastes different. Another informant, in reflecting on what could possibly give this different taste, suggested that "c'est peut-être psychologique."[584] She explained that she had searched for so long for what the difference could possibly be, and eventually realized that she had no good reason for it to be different and wondered if it may just be something that she created in her mind.

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[581] Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 297.

[582] 121207_001—"In the head."

[583] 121205_002—"Other: Psychologically, it is not the same thing.
Rachel: What does that mean?
Other: It means, it's in the head that it happens. In reality it is the same thing but it is better if you make it in your home in Algeria. It's like your dish of pancakes. When you make it with your mother, the taste is better in Canada. For me it is the same. It is the same thing."

[584] 121128_001—"It's maybe psychological."

As much as my informants clearly noticed these differences, the taste was not noticeably different for a non-Maghrébine like myself. One afternoon I was visiting with some of my informants, one of whom had just arrived back to France from a trip to Algeria. He asked if I wanted dates. I said, "no thank you" and was even able to justify my refusal by saying "I have lots of dates at home." My friend responded "Oh you do, do you? Where do you come from? Who are you?" insinuating that only Maghrébines/Arabs have dates at home. I responded "I'm a Maghrébine now." This got a laugh. He then assured me that I still had to take some dates because these dates came from Algeria and therefore tasted better than the dates that I had at home. When I got home that evening I snacked on a couple of them, and they tasted exactly like all the other dates I had eaten since arriving in France. I reflected and determined that either I had been eating dates fresh from Algeria the whole time (which I knew was not true), or my palate did not pick up on the differences, perhaps because my palate was not refined enough, or perhaps because these obvious differences in taste were not so obvious for an outsider.

Similarly, while these differences in taste were obvious for my informants, some informants suggested that this difference in taste went away the longer you are away from the homeland. That is to say, while the difference in taste was painfully evident in the first years someone spent in France, with time that difference faded. For example, one informant expressed the effect of time on this issue with the following story.

> Par exemple, quand je suis arrivé, j'ai trouvé que le goût de la viande, des légumes, ne sont pas les mêmes. Moi je trouve que les légumes en Algérie et la viande sont beaucoup plus bons, on va dire. Parce que, on va dire qu'en Algérie il n'y a pas de… ils utilisent pas beaucoup… c'est bio pratiquement. Donc, forcément le goût c'est, uh, mais avec le temps ça veut dire que, quand on s'habitue, quand on commence à vivre vraiment longtemps ici, moi je fais plus la différence.[585]

Another informant expressed this decline in noticeable difference as a process of becoming anaesthetised. He stated:

> Je suis anesthésié de la bouche. Mais quand je suis arrivé c'était clair. Et tous mes amis en France diraient la même chose. Les aliments en France ont moins de goût qu'en Algérie.[586]

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[585] 120917_001—"For example when I arrived, I found that the taste of the meat, of vegetables was not the same. I found that the vegetables from Algeria and the meat was, shall we say, much better. Because, shall we say that in Algeria there is not, they do not use much, it is practically organic. So, naturally the taste is uh, but with time, that means, when one gets used to it and lives a long, long time here, now, I myself do not notice the difference."

[586] 121129_002—"I am anesthetized in my mouth. But when I arrived it was clear. And all my friends in France said the same thing. The ingredients in France have less taste than in Algeria."

For both these informants, the difference in taste was evident to them in the beginning but with time disappeared.

Whatever the argument is for why the taste was different, often meaning "better" in the Maghreb than in France, it became clear from my interviews that it was important to try to get to as close as possible to the full "taste" of the homeland. One informant seemed to suggest that one could not feel fully at home in France because of this difference in taste. She expressed that the difference leads to a great sense of disappointment, so much so that she would rather not even try to recreate the home food because it just could not be the same. She stated, "parfois c'est déprimant. Ah oui, c'est dur, c'est dur. Je préfère de ne pas manger que de manger quelque chose qui a une imitation de quelque chose que j'ai aimé."[587] For this informant it was better to eat something totally different than to try and recreate a loved dish that looked the same, and was prepared the same, but did not taste the same. For her, and for many others like her, her cultural food practice would change because of her connection to her homeland and the continuing influence of memory and experience of "how things *should* be" based on "how things were" in her homeland.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I explored how my informants negotiate their transnational identities through food practice. First, I addressed the process of "othering" that happens between the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study and the non-Muslim, multi-generation European French that surround them. I presented how my informants see a clear distinction between "us" and "them" based on dichotomies between the two cultures, specifically as represented in food practices. My informants suggested that one could see the difference between "us" and "them" based on approaches to hospitality, and more specifically in what, how and where one eats.

While my informants spent a significant amount of time explaining how they saw themselves as distinct from the non-Muslim French community, they also tried to remove these boundaries between "us" and "them" by pointing out other "thems" for the majority French culture to focus on. In this I showed how my informants would speak about Judaism as the real

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[587] 121123_001—"Sometimes it's depressing. Ah yes, it's hard, it's hard. I prefer to not eat than to eat something that is an imitation of something that I love."

"them" and how food was often the example given for why Jewish people in France were a more problematic group than Muslims. At minimum, I had informants show how Muslim and Jewish food practices were similar, arguing that since Jewish food practices were generally accepted in France so too should Muslim ones; if Jewish people in France were not being labelled as a "them" because of their food practices then neither should Muslims.

When considering relations between two separate groups the question of integration becomes important. In this section I addressed the various ways that my informants defined this controversial term. Through this I discovered seven different definitions and consequent understandings of integration. For my informants, integration was 1) not assimilation, and yet 2) about being just like everyone else (assimilation); it was 3) about being a good citizen, 4) or about being good in general; integration inevitably implicated 5) respect, 6) racism and 7) language issues.

Because integration can be a difficult topic to address for many members of immigrant communities in a country such as France, I attempted to gain access to the ways people were engaging with integration on the ground through their food practice. People might not want to talk about integration, but they were willing to talk about ingestion. The ways that my informants interacted with their religious and cultural food practices in fact revealed a great deal about how they felt about their integration processes, or lack thereof. In this section I showed how specific food practices reveal a commitment to integration, or a commitment to not integrate, as well as the ability of food and eating to be an access point to understanding and/or encounter with "the other" (an essential element in integration). For some, maintaining religiously and culturally accurate foodways was in line with their definition of integration; hence they saw themselves as being able to maintain those foodways while still claiming an integrated identity. Others felt a need to change their foodways in an effort to show how they had integrated into the French culture, e.g. by drinking with colleagues. On the other hand, my informants presented the idea that food could also be an access point to understanding the "other."

After this exploration of integration, I then addressed the efforts that my informants made to maintain their transnational identities in Paris. I showed how my informants interacted with both sides of their transnational identities, often idealizing the homeland, and yet transforming the home practice in the host land. Whatever the case may be, my informants felt a need to

maintain connections to the homeland to some extent, and this often happened through their interaction with the home food.

If food is tied to memory and memory is an access point for something that one cannot necessarily access physically, then food can be seen as playing a significant role in accessing and presenting connections to distant homelands and identities. My informants maintained transnational connection by cooking "home food" frequently and in culturally and religiously accurate ways. In order for this to be a reality, my informants needed to have access to the home ingredients, often bringing them back with them from trips "au bled."

While my informants were able to get their hands on all of the necessary ingredients and were able to make all of their home-food in Paris, there was still something missing according to most of my informants, and that was the taste of the homeland. 32 of my 33 informants mentioned the fact that there was a difference in taste in the home and host ingredients. I explored the various reasons that my informants gave for this difference in taste and suggested that this process of reasoning may be a psychological means of addressing one's transnational experience. For many of my informants, food is one of the most beautiful aspects of their homeland identity and thus it is an essential means of maintaining this identity in their immigrant location.

Chapter 5: "Même si je ne pratique pas du tout, je me sens quand même musulman"[588]:
Food Practice as a Lens into Religion and Culture

5.1 Introduction

This discussion of changing practice brings us to the final chapter in the Paris case study and of the exploration of the Maghrébine immigrant experience in Paris. Having explored the negotiations of identity and transnationalism for my informants, I can now address the actual practices of the individuals that I interviewed. I begin with an exploration of the relationship between religion and culture. Using food practice as a lens, I discuss the various ways that members of these communities understand their practice and consequently their engagement with religion and culture. Within this discussion, I present some of the religious food obligations that my informants spoke about and the hierarchy of practice that seems to be evident. This hierarchy allowed me to create a fourfold typology of religious and cultural food practices that I explore in this chapter. Throughout I present the three main arguments that my informants gave for their practice, namely, that 1) it was based in the Quran, 2) there was some scientific or health reason for the practice, and/or 3) it was a way of life. I then finish this chapter by giving an overview of the general trends in these individuals' cultural and religious food practice. In this I explore the times, and examples of, when my informants increased their cultural and religious food practices, decreased them, or generally maintained the same level of practice as they did in the homeland.

5.2 "Un peu les deux: culturelle et religieuse"[589]: Culture Versus Religion in Paris

The distinction between, or relationship of, culture and religion has been a pervasive theme throughout this research. When discussing a topic such as food practice, this question is prevalent. Although Ahmed suggests that breaking anything down into binary categories such as

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[588] 121206_001—"Even if I don't practice at all, I still feel Muslim." This quotation comes from a respondent who practices the Ramadan fast, but does not practice the daily prayers, drinks alcohol, eats pork, etc., and went on to say that the practice of Ramadan was both cultural and religious for him.
[589] 121129_001—"A bit of both: cultural and religious."

this is problematic,[590] I argue that the definition of a practice as cultural or religious has multivalent effects. I found, through examining the food practices of my informants, that how one categorizes a practice can affect how the practitioner feels about her practice, as well as how the outside viewer feels about it. It can affect how flexible, essential or valid both parties consider the practice. Simply labelling the same practice as cultural by some and religious by others reveals the complexity of the issue. How does one determine what is cultural and what is religious? Who is the authority? What is authentic practice? All these questions are difficult to answer in any authoritative way, and this is the reason that Ahmed suggests that breaking things into categories of "religion" and "culture" is so problematic. He argues that

> the human and historical phenomenon of Islam is a field of meaning where truth is constituted, arranged, and lived in terms not of categories constituted by mutual exclusion, but rather by categories of mutual intersorption and inter-locution that run athwart and conceptually frustrate the religious/secular binary or religion/culture division.[591]

By engaging the question of "culture" versus "religion," by examining how my informants understood these terms and their practices that were representative of them, by revealing the diversity of interaction with these categories, I too will conceptually frustrate this binary.

Instead of defining culture and religion and imposing that definition on my informants, I allowed them to define what was cultural or religious for them.[592] My informants clearly engaged these binaries and implemented them in different ways in relationship to their food practices. For example, one informant stressed to me the importance of drawing the line between culture (what he called tradition) and religion. He expressed to me that

> il y a quelque chose vraiment fondamental qu'il faut absolument que les gens comprennent, c'est qu'il y a une religion et une tradition, et ça, c'est pas le même chose,

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[590] Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 116.
[591] Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 116.
[592] These definitions often came out in response to a couple of the questions that I asked my informants during our interviews. First, after asking the question: "Je suppose que vous êtes musulman/e. Est-ce correct?" I would ask my informants to clarify what it meant to them to be Muslim, did they have specific practices that were in line with that understanding of what it meant to be Muslim, etc. Within this they would often separate out religious and cultural elements of their understanding of what is Islam. Furthermore, when I asked my informants about the various food practices that came to mind when they thought about their religious lives and food in those contexts they would list a great deal of food practices. Afterwards I would often enquire of each individual practice, whether or not they saw that practice as religious or cultural.

parce que les traditions divergent selon le pays d'où tu viens, mais la religion, elle est sacrée et elle est unique à tout le monde.[593]

While my informants had differing understandings of what these two realms were, many did make a distinction between culture and religion. While there is some blurring of the lines between religious and cultural practices, most of my informants did argue for a foundational set of Muslim practices, namely the five pillars of Islam.[594]

What was included in the five pillars sometimes varied, and there were some informants who did not know exactly what the five pillars were. They would state that the five pillars were the foundational Muslim practice, but then would either not list all the pillars or would confuse other Muslim practices with the pillars. For example, one informant, a young, second generation Algerian woman, listed the five pillars of Islam to me as follows. "D'une part, c'est faire la prière, ne pas manger de porc, faire l'aumône, fêter le mois du ramadan, et si un jour Dieu me l'accorde, inshallah, comme on dit chez nous, aller à la Mecque au pèlerinage."[595] She expressed that her practice was simply the five pillars of Islam, as if this was the most basic and well-understood way of practicing and yet she forgot the *shahada* (declaring belief in the oneness of God and the unique status of Muhammad as God's Prophet), and replaced it with the interdiction against eating pork. Like the groups which Kate Holbrook examines in her work, the Nation of Islam and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,[596] my informants highlight what some may see as secondary religious values and practices over the more commonly understood central tenets and practices of the faith.

While there are many realms in which to explore the difference and/or relationship of culture and religion, I focus on the realm of food and food practice. As is made evident by the previous example, food plays an essential role in religious and cultural practices for the members of the community that I studied—so much so that one person forgot the most basic of the five

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[593] 121108_001—"There is something incredibly fundamental that people must understand, that is that there is a religion and a tradition and they are not the same thing, because traditions diverge depending on the country from which you come, depending on the culture, and the religion is sacred and unique for everyone."

[594] Reciting the shahada (profession that Allah is the one true God and that Mohammed is his Prophet), five times daily prayer, fasting during Ramadan, almsgiving and the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).

[595] 121005_001—"First, it's the prayer, [then] to not eat pork, to give alms, to celebrate the month of Ramadan and if one day God accords me, God willing as we say, to go to Mecca for the pilgrimage."

[596] Kate Holbrook, "Good to Eat: Culinary Priorities in the Nation of Islam and the Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter-Day Saints," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America*, eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 195-213.

pillars of Islam and replaced it with a food practice. Food in fact is one of the most central areas of Islamic practice for my informants. The most frequently occurring words in my "practice" code were all food related terms. While this has much to do with the fact that the questions I asked in my interviews were principally food related, I also inquired about all "religious" practices and listened and coded for anything that might be considered a religious practice. The most frequent words in my practice code were consequently "viande, halal, alcool, manger, porc,"[597] and other words commonly associated with Muslim religious practice, i.e. prayer, were far down the list of frequently occurring words.[598] Food practice was sometimes the sole expression of one's religious practice, and often one of the most essential expressions of one's religious practice and identity. I had informants who did not see themselves as practicing Muslims and yet engaged in "Muslim" food practices. One informant explained to me that she was not "trop pratiquante" and yet went on to explain that she felt Muslim because "je fais, par exemple, le ramadan…et je ne mange pas de porc."[599] She listed off various food practices as the reason why she claimed Muslim identity (Ramadan, not eating pork, not drinking alcohol and eating halal meat) and yet also labelled herself as non-practicing.[600] When I asked her if these practices were cultural or religious she responded, "un peu les deux: culturelle et religieuse."[601] She seemed to not see herself as "pratiquante" because her central practices could also be argued as purely cultural practices.[602] The complex relationship between culture and religion is clearly evidenced in relationship to food. By examining my informants' approach to food practice, I was able to see the varied relationship between these two subjects and to further complicate the often black and white labels that are placed on the practices of immigrant groups.

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[597] "Meat, halal, alcohol, to eat, pork."

[598] Of course, this still could be a result of the framing of the interview. I presented myself as a researcher who was interested in my informants' food practices. Therefore, even if I asked about other practices, or what it meant to be a practicing Muslim, most of my informants would have been aware of the focus of my research project and could have very easily focused on the food examples in their lives as a means of responding to what they may have assumed I was interested in hearing.

[599] 121129_001—"Very practicing"…"I do, for example, Ramadan…and I do not eat pork."

[600] Two other informants who stated similar arguments were 121126_002 and 121207_001.

[601] 121129_001—"A bit of both, cultural and religious."

[602] It seems as though there is an understanding of practice based on the Western Catholic understanding of who is a practicing Christian and who is not. If one attends church on Sundays and engages in the sacraments, then one is practicing. Many of my Muslim informants when they labeled themselves as non-practicing seemed to have this vision in their heads of what practice referred to. It became clear that they were in fact practicing, but perhaps not in a way that was recognized by mainstream society, and this influenced their own perception of where they lay on the practicing versus non-practicing spectrum.

5.2.1 Fourfold Typology of Food Practice

In analyzing my data, a hierarchy of food practice seemed to emerge.[603] In this, there were practices that were seen as absolutely essential and obligatory and those that were seen as more flexible. I argue that the spectrum was as follows: the more officially religious something was viewed as, or the more something was labelled as religious, the more obligatory it was understood to be. On the other end of the spectrum, the more cultural a practice was viewed as, or labelled as, the more flexible and open to change and/or abandonment it was. This finding accords with those of Samira Mehta, who suggests that labelling a food practice as traditional/cultural/ethnic rather than religious can lead to that practice being seen as more flexible or not as strict.[604] This could also play out the other way, i.e. the desire to make something less obligatory may lead an individual to define that practice as cultural rather than religious. Furthermore, practices were labelled as religious versus cultural depending on whether they were grounded in religious texts or tradition. So, the hierarchy of religious practice worked out in this way.
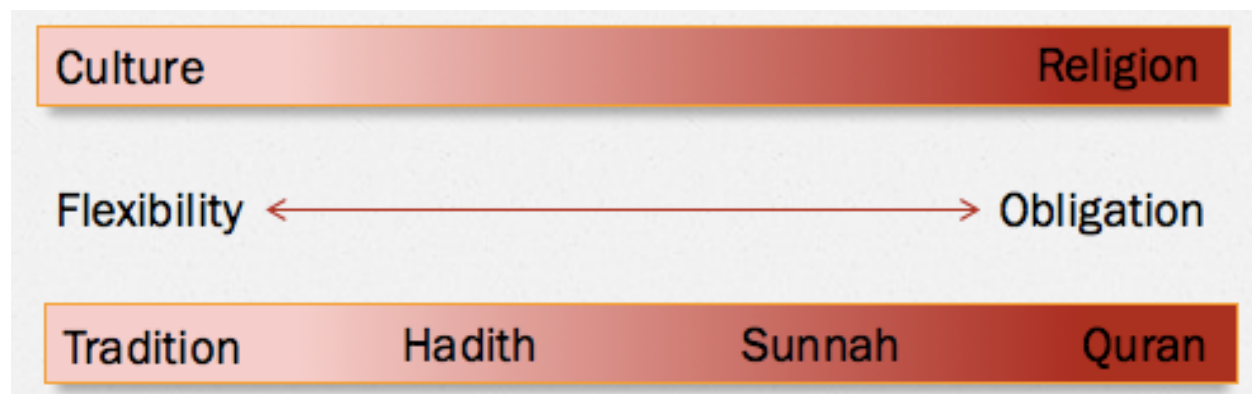
Taking this into consideration I created a fourfold typology of food practice to understand the ways that my informants understood and interacted with these practices. First, there is the Quranically-documented and "prescribed" food practices. These practices include the abstention

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[603] For an excellent overview of the various Quranic food taboos, see Mohammed H. Benkheira, "Alimentation, altérité et socialité: Remarques sur les tabous alimentaires coraniques," *European Journal of Sociology*, vol. 38, no. 2 (1997): 237-287.

[604] Samira Mehta, "'I Chose Judaism but Christmas Cookies Chose Me': Food, Identity, and Familial Religious Practice in Christian/Jewish Blended Families," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America*, eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 156.

from consuming pork and alcohol, practicing the fast of Ramadan and the obligation to eat properly sacrificed animals (halal). The second category is the Quranically-documented but not prescribed category. The lamb of the Eid Al-Adha was generally placed in this category. The third category is Sunnah-inspired food practices. The best example from this category is the practice of breaking the fast during the month of Ramadan by consuming dates and milk. The fourth and final category is that of the cultural food practices not mentioned in any major religious text. This category is where many of the cultural food practices reside, although some of these practices have been given religious significance as well, such as the eating of couscous.

Regardless of their engagement in any of the four categories of practice outlined above, each of my respondents gave some form of justification for their practice. There were three main forms of argumentation that my respondents gave for their practice: 1) it was based in the Quran, 2) there was some scientific or health reason for the practice, and/or 3) it was a way of life. For those who argued that they practiced certain things because they were written in the Quran, there were two sub arguments made. The first was that anything that is written in the Quran has to be obeyed simply by the fact that it was in the Quran. If God said, as is made evidenced by the Quran, that one was not to eat pork, then one was not to eat pork, plain and simple. The respondents who used this argument without any other real back up argument tended to label themselves as practicing Muslims and were fairly conservative in their ideology and approach to their religious lives. Others used the Quran as the justification for their action but took the argument slightly further by suggesting not only that one must do what is written in the Quran point blank, but also because there was a divine wisdom in the Quran.

Science and health reasons were the next ones given for various food practices. Many of my respondents would start from a reason of faith for their practice, but then support that argument with what they considered a scientific argument. In fact, respondents spoke to me about the logic of Islam on a frequent basis. If other traditions or cultures did not seem "logical" they were somewhat discounted, and many of my respondents took pride in the fact that they felt as though Islam and its requirements were completely logical and in line with scientific reasoning. It was almost as if they felt that they had to ground their reasoning for fasting during Ramadan, not drinking alcohol, not eating pork, eating halal meat, etcetera, in something beyond mere faith. While I cannot imagine many Catholics (from the dominant culture) would feel the

pressure to explain why they ate fish on Fridays with scientific arguments, many of my respondents seemed to feel such a pressure.

The everyday nature of food was the third argument that my informants used to explain why they engaged in any of the practices below. My informants would suggest that these practices were an inevitable outworking of belief, a part of one's routine and things that were "anchored" within one's life and experience. "C'est ancré dans le comportement. Parfois on ne fait pas attention, mais ça fait partie des comportements les plus banales de notre quotidien."[605] Another respondent also spoke to the daily, mundane and therefore ever-present practice of Islam. When someone is engaged in something every day, they noted, as a part of his or her everyday existence, it becomes difficult to avoid or break with that.

> Très simplement, c'est une religion qui est très forte, qui a beaucoup de dogmes, beaucoup de fonctionnements, qui intègre énormément le quotidien. C'est-à-dire que même si tu n'es pas croyante en Dieu, même si à 10, 15, 20 ou 30 ans, tu décides que Dieu n'existe pas et que c'est une réflexion personnelle, le fait est que c'est une religion qui est tellement ancré au quotidien.[606]

Whether or not one believes in God, or practices the religion according to Christian or Western understandings of what religious practice looks like, it does not matter, because Islam is "anchored in the quotidian." When examining something such as food practice, this argument from daily, consistent practice is especially strong. Practices become habits, which become mundane parts of one's daily life that do not require special effort or reflection, but are simply done because that is what one has always done.

Ultimately, some people used a combination of two of the above arguments, or even all three, but often they would focus on one as their main argument for why they did any of the practices I outline below. I include some of this argumentation as I present each category of practice.

I start with the Quranically-documented, "prescribed" food practices. One informant while explaining to me that there were no religious food obligations, stopped himself and added

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[605] 121207_001—"It's anchored in behaviour. Sometimes we do not pay attention but it is part of the most banal behaviours of our daily life."
[606] 121209_001—"Very simply, it is a religion that is very strong, that has many dogmas, many functions; that is incredibly integrated in daily life. That means that even if you are not a believer in God, even if at 10, 15, 20, or 30 years old you decide that God does not exist and it is a personal reflection, the fact remains that it is a religion that is incredibly anchored in daily life."

that in fact there are some obligations and those are "tout qui est écrit."[607] He stated that if something was written in the Quran, it was automatically a religious practice and the question was not so much about what was obligatory, but how seriously someone took their religious practice. If someone saw him/herself as a "practicing Muslim," then these Quranically-documented and prescribed practices would be obligatory. Alternatively, for those who saw themselves as "non-practicing Muslims," whatever that may mean, these practices were viewed as religious and obligatory, but they chose to not place the importance on being religiously accurate, and may leave the obligatory practices aside. Another informant explained what she meant by obligatory practice as follows:

> Dans la religion, il y a des choses obligatoires, et d'autres [elle réfléchit] qui font partie du comportement du Prophète; …Dieu a dit, il faut faire la prière, et donc il faut faire la prière, c'est une obligation. Si on ne le fait pas c'est qu'il y a d'autres sanctions. Ça c'est le sens d'obligation.[608]

For this informant, if God said something, as documented in the Quran, it was not only religious, but also obligatory, whereas things said by human voices, such as the voice of Mohammed, as documented in the Sunnah/Hadith, were also religious, but not obligatory.

When looking at the four explicit Quranically-based and prescribed food practices that I listed above, my informants' practices reveal a hierarchy of these practices as well. For example, 30 of my 33 informants fasted during the month of Ramadan, with only three informants not fasting at all. While a few of those 30 informants had altered their practice of Ramadan slightly since living in France, they all still practiced it to some level or another. The next most practiced was the interdiction against pork. Twenty-four of my informants did not eat pork while nine did. In relation to alcohol, 17 did not consume alcohol and 16 did. Finally, the most varied practice was that of keeping halal. In this category nine people kept halal strictly, 15 ate halal when they could but also ate non-halal when halal was not available, eight people were not particular about halal at all and one informant only ate fish out of preference, so halal was not a concern for him.

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[607] 121202_004—"All that is written."
[608] 121102_001—"In the religion there are obligatory things and others (she reflects) that are part of the comportment of the Prophet; … God said that you must pray, you must pray, it's an obligation. If we do not do it there are other sanctions. That is the sense of obligation."

5.2.1.1 Ramadan Fast

The first of the four Quranically-documented and "prescribed" practices that I address was the most fundamental and overarching practice for my informants: the fast during Ramadan. Because of its explicit mention in the Quran (2:185)[609] and its place within the five pillars of Islam, this was the least disputed religious food practice of them all. In fact, it seemed to be the most basic Muslim practice in general. What I mean by this is that even those who did not see themselves as practicing or religious Muslims still fasted during Ramadan and often based their identities as Muslim on this one practice. One informant explained it as follows:

> Beaucoup de membres de ma famille n'étaient pas pratiquants, euh...sauf pour le carême, pour le mois de ramadan, où tout le monde le fait. Tout le monde fait carême, en fait, c'est surtout parce que, hmmm, on a peur du… même si on le fait pas, on le cache [des autres]. On le cache vraiment bien, parce que ça reste un des piliers de la religion qui est le plus important.[610]

Even if people were not practicing, it was expected that they would do this one practice. The incomplete phrase, "on a peur de…," in context implies that a person who does not fast opens themselves to negative social repercussions. Most of my informants, especially those who considered themselves "practicing Muslims," argued for the centrality of this practice within their religious devotion because of the clear-cut prescription to fast as is made evidenced by its place in the five pillars of Islam. While the other food practices that make up this category are also prescribed in the Quran, interpretation can allow for flexibility of practice.

The place of the fast in the five pillars makes it more difficult to argue for a cultural interpretation. Yet for my informants who saw themselves as "non-practicing," Ramadan was still at base religious, but they would argue that their engagement with the practice was cultural.

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[609] "The month of Ramadan is the month when the Quran was sent down as guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and the criterion by which to distinguish right from wrong. Therefore, whoever of you is present in that month, let him fast; but he who is ill or on a journey shall fast a similar number of days later on. God desires ease for you, not hardship. He desires you to fast the whole month, so that you may glorify Him for His having guided you and so that you may be grateful to Him" (Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, trans., *The Quran*, ed. Farida Khanam [New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2009], 2:185) The parameters of the fast are further explicated in 2:187 specifically: "eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct from the black. Then resume the fast until nightfall."

[610] 121126_002—"Many of my family members weren't practicing, except for the fast, for the month of Ramadan where everyone did it (the fast). Everyone did the fast. It's basically because, hmm, we're afraid of, even if we don't do it, we hide it. We hide it well because it remains one of the pillars of the religion, which is the most important."

Although most would see it as religious, these informants generally expressed cultural arguments for their continued practice of Ramadan, not religious ones. For example,

> moi je ne suis pas pratiquant, je fais uniquement le ramadan, c'est par culture. Parce que je suis né en Algérie, je suis venu à 25 ans, on a toujours fait ramadan, c'est comme Noël pour toi, c'est un repas familial, c'est joyeux, c'est une fête en quelque sorte. C'est vrai que c'est difficile de le faire quand on est à l'étranger, mais je vais garder ça en moi. Je ne veux pas me déraciner de ce que mes parents m'ont transmis.[611]

For this informant, and others like him, even if Ramadan was arguably a religious practice, it was more complicated than that. The fast linked him to his family roots. Another informant revealed the complicated relationship between religion and culture that is represented by this practice as follows:

> Je fais le ramadan, par exemple. En même temps, je ne fais pas la prière, je bois de l'alcool, je mange du porc, etc. Mais je me sens quand même musulman. Même si je ne pratique pas du tout, je me sens quand même musulman. C'est dans une notion un peu culturelle et aussi d'un point de vue de religion et aussi d'un point de vue culturel, mais culturellement musulman.[612]

The border between culture and religion appears quite blurred and the terms are somewhat interchangeable for many people. While this informant practiced Ramadan as his basic religious/cultural practice, the other Quranically-documented and prescribed practices did not play a part in his cultural practices and were left aside. What is remarkable in this extract is the fundamental connection made by this person between the Ramadan fast and being a Muslim: to fast during Ramada is to be a Muslim.

5.2.1.2 Pork

Going into my fieldwork I anticipated that the interdiction against pork would be the most fundamental food practice that my informants engaged in due to its repeated presence in the Quran.[613] Instead of just one or two of my informants telling me that they ate pork, nine

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[611] 121205_002—"Me, I am not practicing, I only do Ramadan, it's by culture. Because I was born in Algeria, I came at 25 years old, we always did Ramadan. It's like Christmas for you; it's a family dinner. It's joyous, it's a party in some way. It's true that it is difficult to do when we are in a foreign place but I am going to keep that in me. I do not want to uproot myself from what my parents gave me."

[612] 121206_001—"I do Ramadan for example. At the same time, I do not do the prayer, I drink alcohol, I eat pork, etc. But I feel Muslim all the same. Even if I do not practice at all, I feel Muslim all the same. The idea is a bit cultural and also religious, and also a cultural point of view but culturally Muslim."

[613] "He has forbidden you only carrion, blood, and the flesh of swine; also, any flesh that is consecrated other than in the name of God. But for one who is driven by necessity, it is no sin. For God is forgiving and merciful" (The Quran, 2:173); "You are forbidden carrion, blood and pork" (The Quran, 5:3); "Say [O Prophet], 'In all that has been

individuals admitted to eating pork. For some, it was just that: a guilty admission. For others, they proclaimed their indulgences in pork-eating with absolutely no hesitation, and sometimes with pride. In fact, there seemed to be three categories or reasons given for pork consumption by those who ate pork. The first category encompassed those who ate pork from the time they were children. For these informants, unlike most of my informant group, pork consumption was a part of their customs growing up.[614] They do not see the practice as problematic. The second group included those who ate pork, but did not actually enjoy it that much or had problems digesting it.[615] These people seemed to eat it to fit in, or because they felt like they had no other choice. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, pork plays an important role in French identity. Not only are some of the most iconic French dishes essentially pork dishes—cassoulet, choucroute garni, tartiflette, etcetera—but there have been many recent controversies that highlight the importance of pork as an identity marker in France.[616] As is made evident by my informants who eat pork, these experiences can put pressure on those who eat outside the bounds of "French eating" to change their practice. The final group encompassed those who ate pork because they wanted to, and could come up with an argument why it was acceptable for them to do so.[617] For example, one informant suggested that because the reasons given in the Quran at the time of the Prophet were no longer valid in today's day and age, people can eat whatever they would like today.[618]

While these informants all had different reasons for their pork consumption, most would drastically restrict what kind of pork they would consume. They may eat charcuterie but will not eat a piece of plain pork meat, i.e. a pork chop or roast. While charcuterie can be understood as not pork, or can take on an appearance that is not so obviously pork, pork chops or pork roast cannot. Mohammed Benkheira states that for those few people who do transgress this

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revealed to me, I do not find a ban on anything to eat, except for carrion, flowing blood and pork, all these being unclean or profane, on which the name of someone other than God has been invoked.' But if anyone is forced by necessity, being neither disobedient nor exceeding the limit, then surely your Lord is most forgiving and merciful" (The Quran, 6:145); "He has forbidden you only carrion, blood and the flesh of swine" (The Quran, 16:115).
[614] 121126_002; 121209_001.
[615] 121201_001; 121202_004; 121203_006.
[616] For example, the identity soup controversy in 2006 that I mentioned in Chapter 4. Similarly, in 2015 a new controversy arose over the place of pork in French life with the ban on pork-free options for students in public schools in France. See Angelique Chrisafis, "Pork or Nothing: How School Dinners are Dividing France," *The Guardian*, 13 October 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/13/pork-school-dinners-france-secularism-children-religious-intolerance.
[617] 121124_001; 121128_001; 121205_001; 121206_001.
[618] 121205_001.

prohibition, you will see that they do not eat pork stew, or choucroute, or even ham or "soft sausage"; instead, they will eat charcuterie, i.e. cured meats, paté, etcetera, because "dans cette charcuterie, on ne retrouve ni les couleurs caractéristiques du porc—le blanc et le rose—, ni l'odeur."[619] One informant reflected this idea when she explained that

> les musulmans non-pratiquants, mais vraiment non-pratiquants, mangent en général du charcuterie mais pas du porc cuit, ça pourquoi, je ne sais pas. J'ai l'impression que le porc cuit représente vraiment le porc, et la religion musulmane reste ancrée dans leur tête quand même, et on a du mal [à le manger].[620]

As this informant explained, for many of my informants the interdiction against pork is a foundational representation of Islam, both religiously and culturally.

For the 24 informants who maintained this practice of not eating pork, the reasons differed as well. The three main types of arguments that were given were 1) based on the Quran/religion, 2) scientific/medical in nature, and 3) cultural. Some informants expressed all three types of arguments. For example, one informant explained that she did not eat pork because at base "dans la religion c'est strictement interdit."[621] She expressed this twice, and in between these two affirmations of religious reasoning for not consuming pork, she also presented the arguments from science and culture. Scientifically, she argued for the "fact" that pork is dirty because pigs eat dirty things, and she also argued that there was a study done which showed that it was "dangereux pour la santé de manger du porc."[622] Finally, she also suggested that her abstention from pork was also a cultural practice, stating that "principalement, je ne mange pas de porc car dans ma famille on n'en mange pas; au Maroc, tu ne peux pas trouver du porc qui se vend (elle rit), faut aller le chasser.[623] Et je pense que c'est des habitudes culturelles."[624] This one informant used all three arguments—religious, scientific and cultural—to argue for her practice.

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[619] "In this charcuterie, we do not find either the characteristic colours of pork – the white and the pink – nor the odor" (Benkheira, "Alimentation," 276).

[620] 121124_001—"Non-practicing, and I mean, really non-practicing Muslims in general eat charcuterie but not cooked pork. Why is that? I don't know. I have the impression that cooked pork really represents pork and the Muslim religion is anchored in their heads all the same, and we have difficulty [eating pork]."

[621] 121207_001—"It is strictly forbidden in the religion."

[622] 121207_001—"Dangerous for one's health to eat pork."

[623] Benkheira ("Alimentation," 266) states that while pork consumption is generally avoided in the Maghreb, there is a minority of people who do consume it, often those in rural areas, and most often in the form of wild boar (sanglier).

[624] 121207_001—"Principally, I do not eat pork because in my family we did not eat it; in Morocco, you cannot find pork that is sold (she laughs), you have to go hunt it. And I think it is about cultural habits."

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Others use the Quran as the justification for their action but take the argument slightly further by suggesting not only that one must do what is written in the Quran point blank, but also because there is divine wisdom in the Quran. One young woman explained this to me. Starting with the interdiction against pork she said:

> Le porc déjà c'est dans le Coran. Tout qui est dans le Coran c'est des obligations. Donc déjà, voilà, après chaque chose qui est stipulée dans le Coran c'est … il y a une sagesse derrière. Pour chaque interdiction mentionnée dans le Coran, il y a une explication, une sagesse divine. C'est pas juste dit pour nous ennuyer, entre guillemets.[625]

For this respondent it was not just enough to justify her practice on the grounds that the pork prohibition was in the Quran and therefore must be done; her justification also related to the wisdom that is present in the Quran. After all, if "le Coran dit que ce n'est pas bon, ça doit être pour de bonnes raisons."[626]

For many of these 24 informants, it was clear that they felt like they had to provide reasoning beyond religiously-based arguments for their practices. Perhaps because I was a Western researcher, and an outsider to the tradition, they felt a need to justify their practice, which for many was a strictly religious one, by other means.[627] Here is one example:

> Oui dans notre religion, c'est strictement interdit de manger du porc. Mais je ne le mange pas pour deux choses. La première, dans notre religion le Bon Dieu nous dit qu'il y a une partie du porc qui est fortement déconseillée, qui peut provoquer des maladies, mais seulement dans les pays très chaud. Par exemple, l'Arabie Saoudite, c'est là où le Coran est descendu. Et par la suite, j'ai un gros problème culturel avec le porc. Mes parents n'en ont jamais mangé. C'est plus héréditaire. Mais le fait de le voir, j'ai la nausée, donc ça je ne pourrais jamais faire. J'ai un problème culturel avec le porc.[628]

For this informant, there were both religious and cultural reasons for her practice of abstention from pork. While for some, the religious and cultural are blurred, she saw these two as distinct reasons, but equally powerful in influencing her practice. What is important to note is that even

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[625] 120905_001—"Pork, firstly it's in the Quran. Everything that is in the Quran, those are obligations. So already, there you go. After each thing that is stipulated in the Quran is, um, there is a wisdom behind it. For each interdiction mentioned in the Quran, there is an explanation, a divine wisdom. It's not just said to annoy us, in quotations."

[626] 121216_001—"The Quran says that it is not good, it has to be for good reasons."

[627] I return to this when I explore the three forms of arguments presented for practice below.

[628] 121202_003—"Yes, in our religion, it is strictly forbidden to eat pork. But I do not eat it for two reasons. The first, in our religion, God told us that there is a part of the pork that is strongly discouraged, that can provoke illnesses but only in very hot countries. For example, Saudi Arabia, that is where the Quran is from. And also, I have a large cultural problem with pork. My parents never ate it. It's more hereditary. But the mere fact of seeing it, I get nauseated, so I could never do that. I have a cultural problem with pork."

in her religious argument, she argued from a basis of scientific reasoning. It was not just that God said in the Quran that Muslims are not allowed to eat pork, but there is a further reason related to health that is behind the interdiction. She provides scientific reasoning for God's injunction.

In regards to pork, many other respondents spoke about various scientific studies that reveal that pork is bad on the human system, that it is proven to cause illnesses, that it is dirty, etcetera. One young law student cited scientific studies and explained how science supports the divine wisdom found in the Quran:

> Le porc aussi, il y a des études. Concernant le porc, des études scientifiques ont révélés qu'on dans le porc il y a une partie qui est pas bon et on sait pas où; donc, on commence à douter de tout, tout. Les scientifiques disent que le porc est pas très sain. Moi je les crois. Il y a une substance pas recommandée pour les humains, car sa teneur en acide urique est forte. En plus, chaque principe stipulé dans le Coran a été analysé, étayé, afin de connaître la véracité. De ces derniers jusqu'au présent aucun scientifique n'a pu contredire le Coran. Et je ne me doute absolument pas ce qui est dans le Coran.[629]

This young student held strongly to the belief that science and the divine wisdom in the Quran went hand in hand. She therefore had a clear reason to not consume pork in her mind.

Many of my informants when arguing a cultural reason for not eating pork would suggest that they do not have "l'habitude" (the habit) of eating pork. They would present the reasoning that one does not have the habit of doing something/consuming something and as a result they will not do/consume said thing. Even when the reasoning behind the original interdiction does not appear to be present in their current life experience, they will still not do/consume said thing. This cultural influence on one's practice can be powerful and enduring. One young woman explained to me that pork "disgusted" her.[630] No matter how many people told her that pork was delicious and that she should try it, using various reasons and explanations why it was not problematic, she still could not bring herself to try it. Because she had been "educated" to not eat pork, because culturally she was told that it was dirty and forbidden, she simply could not let go

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[629] 120905_001—"Pork as well there are studies. Concerning pork, there are scientific studies that revealed that there is a part of the pork that is not good and we do not know where, therefore we begin to doubt everything, everything. Scientists say that pork is not very healthy, me I believe that. There is a substance that is not recommended for humans because its uric acid content is high. Moreover, every principle that is stated in the Quran was analyzed, to substantiate, to know the truth of these claims, of these so far, no scientist can contradict the Quran. And I absolutely do not doubt what is in the Quran."

[630] 121105_001.

of that practice. She let go of other religious/cultural food practices, such as eating halal,[631] but the practice of not eating pork was firmly engrained. We can see with this example how disgust is a deeply rooted response.

5.2.1.3 Alcohol

The third Quranically-documented and prescribed practice is the interdiction against consuming alcohol.[632] This practice was maintained by 17 of my informants and broken by 16; essentially a 50-50 split.

If I were to write a paper strictly on this religious/cultural practice in the Muslim tradition, based exclusively on my sample, I would title it "Alcohol: An obligation in variation." These two terms, obligation and variation, are essential here. I had some informants who would emphasize the obligatory nature of this practice and would argue strongly that it could not be altered. One young woman explained it to me as follows: "Dans le Coran, certaines choses nécessitent d'être mises dans un contexte, doivent être interpréter, sauf que pour l'alcool. C'est écrit noir sur blanc que l'alcool est interdit. Il n'a pas besoin de contexte."[633] She most likely made this argument in light of the many arguments presented by other Muslims, real or imagined, that were clearly present in my data set. It seemed as though she assumed that I had heard some of these arguments before and she felt like she needed to correct the wrong understanding. In relation to alcohol, the argument was also made that, scientifically speaking, addiction is unhealthy and one can do regrettable things when under the influence of alcohol.[634] Many of my informants would speak about the fact that it was a religious obligation to not consume alcohol, and yet at the same time would explain why it was acceptable to do so. As the

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[631] Perhaps this is because the discussion of halal in the Maghreb was not as prevalent as that of the interdiction against pork. All meat was halal in Tunisia so this informant was not faced with the same sort of strong emphasis on consuming halal meat as she was on not consuming pork.

[632] For the Quranic verses that address "khamr" (intoxicants)/wine/drunkenness: "They ask you [Prophet] about intoxicants and gambling. Say, 'There is great sin in both, although they have some benefit for people: but the harm is greater than their benefit'" (The Quran, 2:219); "Believers, do not approach your prayers when you are drunk, until you understand what you say" (The Quran, 4:43); "Believers, intoxicants and gambling and [occult dedication of] stones and divining arrows are abominations devised by Satan. Avoid them, so that you may prosper. Satan seeks to sow enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and gambling, and to keep you from the remembrance of God and from your prayers. Will you not then abstain?" (The Quran, 5:90-91).

[633] 120905_001—"In the Quran, certain things necessitate to be placed in context, they must be interpreted except in regards to alcohol; it is written black on white that alcohol is forbidden. It does not need context."

[634] 120726_001—"On peut pas boire l'alcool, parce que c'est mauvais, c'est pas bon pour la santé, et voilà, il y a beaucoup, beaucoup de choses qui sont interdit parce que c'est pas bien pour l'être humaine. C'est ça le but, pourquoi Dieu il a interdit tout ça."

young woman above alluded to, they would argue a specific context for the creation of the obligation in the Quran, and would argue why it was not the same sort of obligation as other practices listed. For example, many of the 16 informants who drank alcohol gave the explanation that the proscription against alcohol came to be in stages and they also argued that it was problematic only for people who did not know their limits. When justifying her consumption of alcohol, one informant defended her view in this manner:

> Parce qu'à la base dans la religion musulmane le Bon Dieu n'a pas interdit l'alcool tout de suite. Il nous disait, dans un de ses versets: n'approchez pas de la prière en étant saoul. Et bien sûr, il y a toujours des gens qui déconnent et qui le faisaient encore. Ils se bourraient la gueule et s'approchaient de la prière. C'est à partir de ce moment-là que le Bon Dieu l'a interdit catégoriquement. Mais il ne l'a jamais interdit *de facto*. C'est venu progressivement. À la base, c'était: n'approchez pas la prière en étant saoul. C'est pour ça que je ne m'interdis pas l'alcool… mais pas d'abus![635]

Another informant explained that she used to abstain from alcohol, but then one day she asked herself why it was forbidden and began to explore the reasoning behind it. When she realized that it had been forbidden because people were coming to prayer drunk, or forgetting to come to prayer at all, she realized that it was not in itself forbidden, but the excessive use of it was forbidden. With this realization, and because she "knew her limit," she began drinking.[636] Another informant expressed something similar, suggesting that he contradicted the religion in relation to alcohol. He expressed that alcohol consumption was not allowed, that there was one rule for all, and yet because he "knew his limit" it was ok for him to consume it.[637]

While most of my informants would either argue why it was acceptable to drink alcohol or why it was not, one informant argued that it was acceptable for some and not acceptable for others. For this informant, the interdiction against alcohol changed based on whether one was a "practicing" or "non-practicing" Muslim. She, a non-practicing Muslim herself, argued that,

> je trouve qu'il y a des musulmans, je parle pas des Maghrébins, je parle de musulmans, qui vont se dire très pratiquants qui vont boire de l'alcool. Je trouve ça pas normale. Ce n'est pas normal. Je trouve que c'est un peu facile. C'est souvent les hommes, mais par

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[635] 121202_003—"Because at the base of the Muslim religion, God did not forbid alcohol right away. He told us, in one of his verses: do not come to the prayer in a drunken state. And obviously, there are always people who said silly things and who continued to do it, they got drunk and they approached the prayer. It was from that moment that God categorically forbade it. But he never forbade it de facto. It came progressively. At its base it was to not come to prayer in a drunken state. It is for that reason that I do not forbid myself of alcohol, but I do not abuse it." Here the informant is referring to the Quranic verse 4:43.
[636] 121201_001.
[637] 121205_002.

contre tu vois ils sont dur—donc non, ça c'est pas normale. Après, quand tu n'es pas très pratiquant et bois l'alcool, et surtout que tu demandes rien aux autres, tu pratiques ta religion pour toi à la limite ce qu'il veut. Voilà.[638]

For this informant, it is not normal for a practicing Muslim to drink, it is hypocritical. But a non-practicing Muslim can do as they please.

If logical reasoning could be provided for the consumption of a product, there seemed to be more flexibility in that practice. This was further evidenced to me when some of my informants were trying to convince me to convert to Islam. I had given them many arguments over the months, mostly in relation to my commitment to my own religious tradition, but one day decided to use the food argument as a reason for my lack of conversion. I explained to them that I could never become a Muslim because I like bacon and wine too much. Thinking that this would be a sufficient excuse, I was surprised at one of my informant's answers. Instead of saying "yes, you have to give up pork and alcohol, because that is what the Quran says," he went on to give me logical reasons why I only need to give up one of those things to become a Muslim. He explained that pork was not necessary for me to continue eating. There were other meats that I could eat that were much better for one's health, and that I simply would not miss it. On the other hand, alcohol was not so easily replaced by another substance and so he could understand why I would not give that up right away, but hoped that with time I would give that up as well.[639]

While this informant suggested that there was some flexibility in the application of the two interdictions based on logic, another argued that both were strictly forbidden for logical reasons as well. After becoming friends with an imam in the community, he offered scientific/health reasons for me to stop eating pork and drinking alcohol. When I was feeling sick, he would ask if I was still eating pork and drinking alcohol. When I would respond in the affirmative, he would look at me with great concern and say "Rachel, if you would just stop eating pork and drinking alcohol, your health would be perfect." Instead of telling me that it was forbidden to do so in the religion, he argued that it was in fact for health reasons that everyone should give up these two substances. He could clearly see that a religious argument would not be

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[638] 121124_001—"I find that there are Muslims, I am not talking about Maghrébines, I am talking about Muslims, who will say that they are very practicing who will drink alcohol. That I do not find normal. It is not normal. I find that it is a bit easy. It is usually men. On the other hand you see that they are hard, so no, that is not normal. After, when you are not really practicing and drink alcohol and especially when you do not demand anything from others, you practice your religion for yourself to the limit that you want. And that's it."

[639] Personal communication, November 2012.

effective for me, and therefore supported his own clearly religiously based argumentation with scientific ones.

This leads me to an important addendum to this first category of practices. While this first category was generally the clearest as to what was religious and what was cultural, and relatedly, what was obligatory and what was flexible, there were some practices that complicated this typology, quite clearly. For example, even though both the interdiction against pork and alcohol were generally placed in this "religion" category, the difference in application of these two interdictions by many of my informants reveals the powerful effect of culture on religion and the confusing nature of the question of what is religion and what is culture. For many of my informants there seemed to be different levels of interdiction in relation to pork and alcohol. Alcohol was forbidden, but at a seemingly different level than pork.[640] While the interdiction against alcohol could be argued away, the consumption of pork was much more difficult to argue and often because the cultural arguments against consumption of pork were much stronger than the cultural arguments against drinking alcohol. In the Maghreb, alcohol was present and was consumed more frequently than many would assume. Informants would explain how alcohol was forbidden, both religiously and culturally, and yet it was for sale and people would drink it in the Maghreb.[641] I had informants tell me of going to bars in Algeria and drinking with friends, although they would rarely drink at home.[642] When I asked one informant if he thought people drink more once they have come to France, he explained that, in fact, most of the Muslims that he knew who drank alcohol were in Morocco, not in France.[643] These various examples show how alcohol, even though it is generally understood as forbidden for Muslims, is still available for consumption in the Maghreb. This was in large part due to the colonial presence of France in the Maghreb in the 20th century, which led to an impressive and productive wine industry in Algeria and Morocco. So even if alcohol is forbidden in the Quran, it is not only present, but continues to be a significant economic industry in the countries of the Maghreb, not only in the first part of the 20th century, but also today.[644]

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[640] 121202_004.

[641] 121203_006.

[642] 121126_001.

[643] 121108_001.

[644] Giulia Meloni and Johan Swinnen, "The Rise and Fall of the World's Largest Wine Exporter—and its Institutional Legacy," *Journal of Wine Economics*, vol. 9, no. 1 (2014): 3-33. In fact, according to Meloni and Swinnen, Algeria was, until 50 years ago, the world's largest wine exporter and was "the fourth largest producer of wine in the

Pork is a different situation. Only two of my informants had tried pork before coming to France, and the two who had consumed it had done so only because their parents had brought it to the Maghreb either from France or because they owned a restaurant for tourists. In general pork is not available in the Maghreb, and thus the interdiction against it is consequently much more culturally charged. I had many more informants suggesting that they refrained from eating pork for cultural reasons than those who would argue for not drinking alcohol because of their culture. If they did not consume alcohol, it appeared to be because of clearly religious reasons and even if they did consume alcohol it was often because of a lack of religiosity, not a lack of culture.

Although alcohol consumption was more prevalent in the Maghreb than in France for some of my informants, for others who drank alcohol it was directly related to their immigrant experience in France. What I mean by this is that, while many of them did not drink in the Maghreb, they began drinking in France. I had informants explain to me that they tried alcohol for the first time in France "parce qu'il n'y a pas de jugement,"[645] which was not the situation in the Maghreb. When asked if she thought there were more Muslims who drank in the Maghreb or in France, one informant expressed that there were more in France saying that "parce qu'il y a plus d'occasions, disons, de sortir, plus de liberté. Euh, la plupart du temps quand ils immigrent, ils sont sans leurs parents, donc ils se sentent un peu plus libres. Oui, donc je pense un peu plus [en France]."[646] For these informants, the French context allowed for more flexibility in practice because alcohol is an accepted substance. Not only is it accepted, though, it is an important social practice. One informant explained that the consumption of alcohol was an important part of his life in France because it was a "mode de vie"[647] in France. The importance of wine to the French national identity, which I addressed earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 2, influences the practice of those immigrating to France from traditionally non-alcohol consuming cultures.

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world" (3). In Morocco, in spite of a restriction on selling alcohol to Muslims, wine production abounds as well, where "annual output stands at about 400,000 hectolitres, or more than 40m bottles of wine, industry sources say, making the former French protectorate the second biggest producer in the Arab world. By comparison, neighbouring Algeria, whose vineyards were cultivated for a much longer period during French colonial rule, produces 500,000 hectolitres on average" ("Wine: Morocco," *Africa Research Bulletin: Economic, Financial and Technical Series*, vol. 50, no. 6 [August 2013]: 20032A-20032C).

[645] 121123_001—"Because there is no judgement."

[646] 121126_002—"Because there are more occasions, shall we say, to go out, more liberty. Most of the time when they immigrate, they are without their parents, so they feel a bit freer, yes, I think a bit more [in France]."

[647] 121206_001.

While they may have maintained their non-alcohol consumption practices if they had stayed in the Maghreb, the immigrant context allows for new cultural practices to challenge the old ones.

5.2.1.4 Halal Meat

The final practice in the Quranically-documented and prescribed category is the practice of consuming halal meat. While "halal" refers to all things that are "permissible," it is used most often by my informants as a term that applies principally to "properly" slaughtered meat.[648] In this section, when my informants speak about keeping, or not keeping, halal they are referring to consuming halal meat specifically. This practice was the most contested and most talked about practice in France, by both the Maghrébine Muslim community as well as the non-Muslim majority French population. My informants felt the need to address the topic of halal because it was a highly-politicized topic.

Unlike the prohibition against pork and alcohol, which had very few political polemics against them at the time, the industry of halal was a major focus of political and social debate. Beyond the issues around pork consumption in France, which I have already highlighted, the polemics around halal were strong. Scholars such as Michaela DeSoucey, Wynne Wright and Alexis Annes suggest that particular foods and foodways can be enrolled in political projects,

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[648] While there are many ways of understanding this, the verses in the Quran on which this practice is based have to do with not eating animals that are already dead (carrion) and the interdiction on blood. The idea of ridding an animal of all its blood to act in line with this prohibition is what most of my informants refer to as "halal meat." The Quranic verses that are most commonly cited then are the same ones that prohibit pork: "He has forbidden you only carrion, blood, and the flesh of swine; also any flesh that is consecrated other than in the name of God. But for one who is driven by necessity, it is no sin. For God is forgiving and merciful" (The Quran, 2:173); "Say [O Prophet], 'In all that has been revealed to me, I do not find a ban on anything to eat, except for carrion, flowing blood and pork, all these being unclean or profane, on which the name of someone other than God has been invoked.' But if anyone is forced by necessity, being neither disobedient nor exceeding the limit, then surely your Lord is most forgiving and merciful" (The Quran, 6:145); "He has forbidden you only carrion, blood and the flesh of swine; also any [flesh] consecrated in the name of any but God. But if anyone is forced by dire necessity, not desiring it or exceeding his immediate need, God is forgiving and merciful towards him" (The Quran, 16:115). The most extensive verse in the Quran that addresses the various points behind halal slaughter is: "You are forbidden carrion, blood and pork; and any flesh over which the name of any other than God is invoked; and any creature which has been strangled, or killed by a blow or in a fall, or has been gored to death or half-eaten by a wild animal, saving that which you make lawful [by slaughtering properly while it was still alive] and what has been slaughtered at an altar. You are forbidden to make the division of [meat] by means of divining arrows; that is sinful conduct…But if anyone is forced by hunger to eat something which is forbidden, not intending to commit a sin, he will find God forgiving and merciful. If they ask you what has been made lawful for them, say, 'All good things have been made lawful for you;' and what you have taught your birds and beasts of prey to catch, training them as God has taught you. So eat what they catch for you, but first pronounce God's name over it. Fear God, for God is swift in taking account" (The Quran, 5:3-4).

especially in a place like France where food is such an essential element to national identity.[649] Furthermore, Marie Dallam proposes that "because food is both a commodity and a necessity for living, it can potentially be used as a tool by either side in a disagreement, regardless of whether the tension is in any way related to food itself."[650]

One of the most famous controversies around this sort of political use of food occurred around the introduction of a halal burger on the menu of one of France's largest fast-food chains, Quick, in 2009-2010.[651] As described by Wright and Annes, the fact that media and politicians used this situation as a tool to perpetuate "the myth of the 'Islamization of France'" is evidence that "gastronationalism can be used as a political weapon laden with nativist and defensive tendencies that intentionally erect boundaries to distinguish 'in' from 'out' groups."[652] I had informants explain to me that the debate around halal was just one other scandal that the government could use to show that a particular group was problematic, or to avoid "les vrais problèmes de la France."[653] This informant went on to explain the problem with the politicization of the topic of halal.

> Le problème c'est que la France se précarise. Les politiques, au lieu de nous parler de ces vrais problèmes nous parle du halal. Les gens sont dans la merde. Voilà, le vrai problème dans la France ce n'est pas l'Islam. Franchement, il y a des personnes, ils ont envie de manger halal, ils mangeraient bien halal. Le problème c'est pas ça. Le problème c'est vraiment le fait qu'on est dans une situation de précarisation et que les politiques, au lieu de s'intéresser ou nous dire ce qui est, vraiment, nous dire les vrais problèmes de la France, ils trouvent d'autres stratégies.[654]

Halal, by this account, becomes a focus of political polemics that puts pressure on the members of the communities that practice it in a real and tangible way. Many of my informants felt the need to respond to the topic of halal simply because of the place it has been given in political discourse. Not only do they feel the need to talk about it, but also some feel the pressure to give

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[649] DeSoucey, "Gastronationalism," 432-455; Wynne Wright and Alexis Annes, "Halal on the Menu: Contested Food Politics and French Identity in Fast-food," *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 32 (2013): 388-399.

[650] Dallam, "Introduction," xxv.

[651] For many, Quick violated "the secular principles underlying republican universalism through their introduction of religious distinctions into the public sphere" (Wright and Annes, "Halal on the Menu," 397).

[652] Wright and Annes, "Halal on the Menu," 397.

[653] 120905_001—"The real problems of France."

[654] 120905_001—"The problem in France is jobs. Instead of talking to us about the real problems, politicians talk to us about halal. People are in trouble. There, the real problem in France, it's not Islam. Really there are people, they want to eat halal, well they eat halal. The problem is not that. The problem is really the fact that we are in a situation of job insecurity, and the politicians, instead of being interested in, or telling us what is real, the real problems in France, they find other strategies."

up the practice in totality because of the polemics around it. Many informants spoke about the fact that in the Maghreb there are no polemics around Islam and therefore no polemics around the practice of keeping halal, whereas in France there are so many different communities present and so many polemics around the things related to Islam that one feels pressured to change one's practice.

Beyond politicians using halal as a means of showing how some communities are problematic, my informants spoke about other highly influential public figures who will use the topic of halal as a means of presenting an argument about the Muslim community in general. One informant spoke of the famous actress Brigitte Bardot and her presentation of Islam. Bardot, along with other public figures, highlighted the way of slaughtering the animals in halal practice as an example of what is wrong with the Muslim community in general; she was engaging in defensive gastronationalism.[655] For this informant, this sort of action was a means for racist people to gain the attention of many and try and deal with other crises that are present in France by blaming a scapegoat. When speaking to me about Bardot he suggested that "avec la crise économique en ce moment les gens sont de plus en plus racistes. Ils rejettent de plus en plus tout qui est étrange."[656] Halal becomes another realm within which the politics of "Islam versus the West" gets worked out.[657]

This polemic inevitably affected how my informants engaged this practice as one of the Quranically-documented and prescribed practices. According to a few of my informants, eating halal was a basic obligation,[658] the first thing that comes to mind when one thinks of Islam and food,[659] and the only thing that is really a "Muslim food practice."[660] All that considered, for my informants the practice of eating halal meat was the most diverse of the four practices in this category. It was seen as flexible by some, essential by others, but generally there was no real consensus on how or why one should follow this practice. As much as it was seen as prescribed

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[655] Wright and Annes, "Halal on the Menu."
[656] 121202_004—"With the economic crisis at the moment people are more and more racist. They reject more and more everything that is foreign."
[657] For another example of this see Adam Withnall, "Denmark bans kosher and halal slaughter as minister says 'animal rights come before religion,'" *Independent,* February 18, 2014. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/denmark-bans-halal-and-kosher-slaughter-as-minister-says-animal-rights-come-before-religion-9135580.html.
[658] 121205_001.
[659] 121126_001.
[660] 121205_001.

because of Quranic documentation of the practice, there was greater interpretation of exactly how one was to engage this process. Like the Jewish informants in Aldea Mulhern's study who do not keep kosher and yet still consider themselves Jewish, many of my informants did not keep halal and yet still claimed Muslim identity.[661] Here we can see an example of how the very categories that we construct as scholars can become complicated and messy when exploring the things of the everyday.[662]

Unlike the injunction to fast during Ramadan, or to refrain from consuming pork or alcohol, the rules around halal meat are varied within the Quran itself and can consequently lead to more varied interpretations and varied practice. As mentioned above, there were four different approaches generally taken by my informants in relation to halal meat: they ate strictly halal, they ate halal when they could and non-halal when they could not, they did not care at all about halal, or they were pescatarians.[663]

Even if "la viande halal c'est dans le Coran,"[664] there are multiple rules and exceptions around this practice located therein, and many of my informants would use this fact as reason for their lack of practice in this regard. For example, many of my informants referred to the rule in relation to halal meat that states that one can eat any meat if one cannot find properly-sacrificed meat.[665] Many of my informants would use this idea and say that because France is not a Muslim country, one is not obliged to keep halal there. They would argue that one might break from halal practice when one "doesn't have the choice." This was sometimes literal[666] and sometimes imagined.[667] Often the breaking of the practice of eating halal meat had to do with being in school/work and having "no choice" but to eat non-halal.[668] One young woman explained this type of choice as follows:

> Dieu ne [le] prohibe pas totalement. Il nous dit d'essayer de manger halal, mais si vous n'avez pas le choix, il faut bien se nourrir. Donc je mangerais du non halal. C'est pas un

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[661] Aldea Mulhern, "What Does it Mean to 'Eat Jewishly': Authorizing Discourse in the Jewish Food Movement in Toronto, Canada," Religion and Food. *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, vol. 26 (2015), 326-348, http://ojs.abo.fi/index.php/scripta/issue/view/74/showToc.

[662] Michel Desjardins, "Religious Studies that *Really* Schmecks: Introducing Food to the Academic Study of Religion," in *Failure and Nerve in the Study of Religion*, eds. William Arnal, Willi Braun and Russell McCutcheon, (London: Equinox, 2012), 154.

[663] Someone who does not eat meat but does eat fish.

[664] 121129_002—"halal meat is in the Quran."

[665] Specifically, the verses that I presented in footnote 616 above: 2:173, 5:3-4, 6:145, 16:115.

[666] 120905_001.

[667] 121006_002.

[668] 121130_001; 121216_001.

interdit strict, c'est quelque chose qui peut dépendre du contexte. C'est comme dans tout: dans la vie on a le libre arbitre. Et donc, si je suis dans un petit village pendant une longue période, à mon avis je mangerai peut-être pas halal au bout d'un moment. Je ne le ferai pas toute suite. J'attendrai. J'essayerai de me retenir, etc., mais si je vois que c'est pas possible de pas trouver de la viande halal, à moment donner il faudrait que je mange quelque chose. Et la viande c'est quand même important. Ça fait partie des choses qui sont importantes pour le corps humain: manger de la viande.[669]

For this informant, and many like her, the context dictates practice.

Beyond just the context and one's ability to find halal meat, another concern was that if one could find halal meat one could not always be guaranteed that it was in fact "authentic" halal meat; questions over certification were prevalent.[670] When speaking with my informants about the topic of halal, inevitably one issue that came up was the question of certification. One of the biggest concerns in relation to the question of the certification of halal was not necessarily whether or not a certification existed but whether or not that certification could be trusted. I had informants stress that there were controls for halal that were universal and trustworthy,[671] and other informants who would suggest that one could never be guaranteed of the validity of certification.[672] There was clearly a desire for a better certifying agency that could offer less room for error and more accountability for the farmers and the butchers who were engaged in the business of halal.[673]

Most informants argued that because of the lack of real, trusted, universal certification, the issue of whether one could find halal, or would keep halal, was ultimately a matter of individual trust.[674] If the individual trusted that his/her butcher was providing them with real

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[669] 120905_001—"God did not prohibit totally. He told us to try to eat halal but if you do not have the choice, well, one must nourish oneself well. So I would eat non-halal. It is not a strict interdiction; it is something that can depend on context. It's like in anything; in life we have free will. And so, if I am in a small village for a long time in my opinion I will maybe eat non-halal after some time. I would not do it right away. I would wait. I would try to hold off, etc. But if I see that it is not possible to find halal meat, bah, at a point it is necessary that I eat something. And meat is still important. It is part of the things that are important for the human body, to eat meat."

[670] Florence Bergeaud-Blackler explains the process of meat becoming halal in the French market and the issue of "fake halal" in her "Social Definitions of *halal* Quality: The Case of Maghrebi Muslims in France," in *Qualities of Food*, eds. Mark Harvey, Andrew McMeekin, and Alan Warde (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), 95, 98. She also explains how because of the "plurality of social definitions of halal products" one can see "why there are several halal certifications and why all attempts to reduce them to one have thus far failed" (103).

[671] 121006_002.

[672] 120905_001; 121102_001.

[673] 121031_001.

[674] Bowen, *Can Islam be French*, 170.

halal meat, they would most likely continue the practice. If they doubted, or felt like the label in general was dishonest, then they could use that as a reason to stop the practice. One informant, for example, explained to me that she kept halal in Algeria but not in France because she trusted the label in Algeria, but does not trust it in France.[675] Others would stop keeping halal because they felt as though it was strictly a business issue in France. One young man explained to me that while he did his prayers, and fasted during Ramadan, he did not keep halal because "pour moi [l'halal] c'est que de business."[676] For this informant, and others like him, the fact that halal had become such a strong business in France led to hesitation about the purity of the practice, and as a result they felt like finding "real halal" meat was not a possibility in France.[677]

While many of my informants would argue that the context of France was not conducive to keeping halal, that it was difficult to find halal meat or to find guaranteed halal meat, others would argue that France was a context within which keeping halal was easy. One informant explained further how context may change one's practice, and also how the French context, or at least the Parisian context, is now one that allows for continued/increased practice of keeping halal. When explaining about his practice of Islam in France, he focused on halal and said:

> il y a des années en arrière où on n'avait pas le choix [et] on était tenté. Une fois, j'ai mangé de la viande qui n'était pas halal. Mais aujourd'hui, là c'est multiple, on trouve un peu partout, aujourd'hui il y a Quick [a French fast food restaurant chain which now carries halal meat products], il y a des grandes chaines qui font du halal. Donc pour moi c'est simple: je ne me pose pas réellement des questions de liens entre la religion et la nourriture; c'est, parce que ça coule de source pour moi. Il n'y a aucune complication. Il n'y a aucun frein, aucun obstacle…Non, aujourd'hui on trouve tous les produits halals et c'est pour ça qu'il y en a qui disent: la dernière génération respecte plus les principes que les anciennes. Oui, parce que la première génération, quand ils sont arrivés en France, il n'avait pas des boucheries halals. Donc, ils ont acheté leur viande dans les boucheries non halals, sinon ils sont condamnés par leur parents de manger de la viande, et alors voilà, certaines s'autorisent cette situation. Mais aujourd'hui je pense que, pour moi, il n'y a plus d'obstacles.[678]

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[675] 121202_003.

[676] 121108_001—"For me [halal] is just business."

[677] See Bergeaud-Blackler, "Social Definitions of Halal Quality," especially her overview of the development of the halal market in France (96-99).

[678] 121031_001—"there were years in the past where we did not have the choice, where we were tempted. One time I ate meat that was not halal. But today, it's multiplied, we find [it] a bit everywhere, today there is Quick, there are major chains that do halal. So for me it is simple: I do not pose questions really of the link between religion and food; it's because it flows from the source for me. There is no complication. There are no brakes, no obstacles…No, today we find all of the halal products and that is why there are those who say, the last generation respects more the principles than the older [generation]. Yes, because the first generation when they arrived in France did not have halal butcher shops. So, they bought their meat in non-halal butcher shops, or if not, they

Not only was the French context conducive to maintaining halal practice for Maghrébine Muslim immigrants, it was the context in which some members of this community learned about halal in the first place.

I had informants tell me that they learned about halal in France, not "au bled." There were different explanations for this as well. One informant explained his discovery of the concept of halal as follows:

> Moi, j'ai découvert ça quand je suis arrivé en France. Puisqu'en Algérie, ça n'existe pas la viande halal, le halal non plus. Les gens, quand ils viennent en France, j'ai remarqué que de plus en plus, c'est assez récent, ils cherchent à manger de la viande halal. Ça veut dire que la bête a été tué sous certains rites. [Il réfléchit.] Pour moi c'est complètement, c'est une innovation, je ne vois pas l'intérêt des gens qui sont très strictes là-dessus. À mon avis, n'y a pas de description exacte sur la viande halal. On ne mange pas de porc: point barre. Le reste de la viande … c'est vraiment une innovation très, très récente, la viande halal. Je ne [le] connaissais pas. Je ne mangeais pas de viande halal. J'en mange, mais je ne vais pas chercher à acheter de la viande halal quand je fais mes courses.[679]

This informant believed halal to be a completely constructed Western concept, and consequently did not consider it necessary to engage in as a religious practice.

On the other hand, I had informants who explained that they learned about halal in France because in the Maghreb everything is halal and does not require reflection or consideration of what that term means.

> J'ai découvert la viande halal quand j'avais 20 ans, quand je suis arrivé en France. On m'a dit, 'Tu ne manges pas halal?' 'Mais c'est quoi halal?' Alors que j'ai vécu 19 ans en Tunisie. Je n'avais pas compris. Donc j'ai compris qu'il y avait deux façons de tuer un animal: l'électrocution ou l'égorger. Mais je n'avais jamais fait gaffe. Mais quand tu vis dans un pays musulman, tu ne te sens pas oppressé par quelque chose, tu ne te sens pas…moi j'ai jamais senti que le porc me manquait. Je n'ai jamais senti qu'il fallait que je fasse attention à la viande que je mangeais, si elle était halal ou pas.[680]

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were forced by their parents to eat meat and therefore some allow themselves this situation, but today I think that, for me there are no more obstacles."

[679] 121206_001—"Me, I discovered [halal] when I arrived in France. Because in Algeria, that doesn't exist, halal meat, halal either. People when they come to France, I noticed that more and more, it's quite recent, they look to eat halal meat. The means that it is an animal has been killed under certain rites. (he thinks) For me it is totally an innovation, I don't see the interest of the people who are really strict about it. In my opinion there is not an exact description of halal meat. We do not eat pork, period. The rest of the meat… it is really a very, very recent innovation, halal meat. I do not know it. I do not eat halal meat. I eat it but I do not go and search to buy halal meat when I do my shopping."

[680] 121209_001—"I discovered halal meat when I was 20 years old, when I arrived in France. They told me, 'Do you do not eat halal?' 'But what is halal?' While I had lived 19 years in Tunisia, I did not understand the question. I understood that there were two ways to kill an animal. Electrocution and to slaughter it. But I never paid attention

For this informant, the practice of halal was taken for granted in the Maghreb because it was a part of everyday, non-contested life practice. It is only when

> il y a besoin d'avoir une identité, d'appartenir à une communauté, de s'identifier à certaines choses. Et du coup on s'accroche à des choses connues, à des éléments communs qui font qu'on appartient à un groupe.[681]

Halal becomes a "known thing," a "common element" that helps a community to identity itself when in a context where their identity is challenged or in question. This is why, for some, halal became a more important practice in France than in the Maghreb.

5.2.1.5 Eid Al-Adha Lamb

The second category of religious/cultural food practice for the members of the community I was studying was the Quranically-documented but not prescribed practices. The clearest example of this was the sacrifice and consumption of the lamb for the Eid Al-Adha. This practice occurs during the celebration of the Eid Al-Adha, at the end of the time of the hajj, as a symbolic reflection on the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son Ishmael in obedience to God.[682] The remarkable thing about this practice was that even though it was not considered a prescribed practice it was almost universally considered a religious practice.[683] My informants would explain to me that it was in the Quran and while it was not obligatory to engage in the slaughter and consumption of a lamb for the Eid, it was essentially a "Muslim" practice, or a Muslim food. For example, one informant suggested that there was a Muslim way of eating but not "Muslim food," except for the lamb for the Eid.

> On n'a pas de nourriture qui est proprement religieuse. On a une façon de manger qui est religieuse, c'est-à-dire on a une conduite à tenir par rapport à ce que l'on mange. Mais on n'a pas de nourriture directement reliée à la religion. On n'a pas. C'est vrai que dans les

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to it. But when you live in a Muslim country, you do not feel oppressed by something, you do not feel… me, I never felt that I was missing pork. I never felt that I had to pay attention to the meat that I ate, if it was halal or not."
[681] 121209_001—"There is a need to have an identity, to belong to a community, to identify with certain things. And then we cling to known things, to common elements that make us belong to a group."
[682] The verses of the Quran that describe the story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael are found in 37:99-109 and the common verse that people refer to in support of the sacrifice of an animal at the end of the pilgrimage is as follows: "Call mankind to the Pilgrimage. They will come to you, on foot, and on every kind of lean camel, by every distant track so that they may witness its benefit for them and, on the appointed days may utter the name of God over the cattle He has provided for them. Then eat their flesh, and feed the distressed and the needy—then let the pilgrims purify themselves and fulfill their vows and perform the circumambulation of the Ancient House" (The Quran, 22:27-29). Finally, the Quranic verse which addresses the Hajj, to which the sacrifice is related, is found in 2:196.
[683] Bowen, *Can Islam be French,* 172.

religions comme le judaïsme, ils ont certaines nourritures qui sont liées directement à la religion. Nous, non. Peut-être la seule chose que l'on a c'est que le jour de l'Eid on doit égorger un mouton.[684]

This was the only "Muslim food." In fact, another informant expressed that the lamb for the Eid was one of the absolute, definite religious food practices and this "certainty" was based on the fact that it was a cross-cultural practice. It did not matter if you were a Muslim in China, Pakistan or the Maghreb, the sacrifice of a lamb for the Eid was practiced everywhere.[685] It did not matter if the informant knew the correct story behind the sacrifice or not, where in the religion it was based, or why exactly they engaged in this practice, but they knew that it was a religious thing.

A couple of informants argued that, even though the lamb for the Eid was essentially religious, it had taken on a cultural implication as well. One informant explained that at base it was religious practice because it referred to the sacrifice of Abraham, but then he went on to explain that

> aujourd'hui ça a pris une autre tournure, c'est plus culturel...on est obligé d'avoir chaque année le mouton, même pour les familles qui normalement ne devraient pas le faire, parce qu'ils n'ont pas les moyens d'acheter un mouton, donc ça devient un truc très culturel.[686]

Another informant expressed a similar understanding of the lamb and the Eid. After having a hard time remembering the actual story of the Eid and which Eid was which, she presented her understanding of whether it was a religious or cultural practice. She expressed that at its base it was religious but today it was much more of a cultural practice. For this informant, it was a way to maintain transnational connection, and to remember being back home.[687] Another informant suggested that God had given certain injunctions in the Quran because he had a divine wisdom that humanity would need in the future. For example, she explained that God created the two

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[684] 121201_002—"We do not have food that is properly religious. We have a way of eating that is religious, that is to say, we have a way to behave with respect to what we eat. But we do not have food directly connected to the religion. We don't have it. It's true that in the religions like Judaism, they have certain foods that are directly linked to the religion. Us, no. Maybe the only thing that we have is, the day of the Eid, we have to slaughter a sheep."

[685] 121216_001. In fact, sheep are not universally slaughtered by Muslims for Eid; other animals are also chosen (goats, cows, buffalo, camels), and those without means, or access to butchers and animals, are not obligated to purchase animals.

[686] 121130_002—"Today it has taken on another twist, it is more cultural. We are obliged each year to have the sheep, even for the families that normally would not have to do it, because they do not have the means to buy a sheep, so it becomes something very cultural."

[687] 121201_001.

Eids and placed them in the Quran so that people would be obligated, in this day and age where it was not the norm, to spend time with their families.[688]

5.2.1.6 Dates

The third category of food practice that my informants spoke about were the Sunnah-inspired food practices. In this section I address the most commonly cited example of this type of practice, the breaking of the Ramadan fasts with dates (and milk). While both dates and milk are mentioned in the Quran, there is not injunction to consume them found there. Instead, the practice of breaking the fast with dates comes from specific hadith which address the "way of the Prophet" or Sunnah.[689] Although many of my informants also suggested that milk was an important element of the iftar, I could not find a specific hadith that addresses the breaking of the fast with milk. This category, and specifically this example, is an excellent example and illustration of the complicated relationship between religion and culture and the difficulty of labelling any practice one or the other.

Because this practice was not in the Quran it was not considered an "obligation" by any of my informants. While some considered it a religious practice, the lack of Quranic validation immediately made it not obligatory, but instead, just "preferred." One informant explained to me that, "en première position, c'est le Coran, en deuxième le Prophète, car c'est le messager de Dieu."[690] She then went on to explain that, in regards to the dates and the milk, people would engage in this practice because the Prophet did. She explained that "si on ne le fait pas ce n'est pas grave. Si tu manges autre chose ça n'a aucune valeur. Pour les gens qui ont un certain amour envers le Prophète, et bien, il suit ses traces. C'est la simple raison."[691] In this we can see that the practice of consuming dates and milk to break the Ramadan fast is not obligatory, but there is still some religious value in it. While eating something else to break the fast is fine, there is no benefit to it. By saying this, the informant suggests that, given that it was something that

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[688] 121202_003.

[689] One of the common hadith in this regard is: "The Messenger of God used to break his fast with some fresh dates, before he prayed; if there were none, then with dried dates (tamarat). If there were none of these he would take a drink of water" (Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, III.164) as found in Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya, *Medicine of the Prophet,* trans. See Penelope Johnstone (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1998), 224.

[690] 121102_001—"In first position is the Quran, in second is the Prophet, because he is the messenger of God."

[691] 121102_001—"If we do not do it, it's not a problem. If you eat something else there is no value in it. For people who have a certain love toward the Prophet, well, they follow his tracks. That's the simple reason."

Muhammad is reputed to have done, there is some sort of religious value in engaging in the practice, something that separates this food practice from any "regular, mundane" practice.

About 28 percent of my informants labeled the practice of consuming dates and milk a religious one. One informant argued that it was "un peu la religion" because of the desire to follow the Prophet in his actions.[692] Another simply stated that it was religious because the Prophet did it.[693] One informant explained that the dates and milk are a bit more than just a cultural tradition, and that people give "une raison religieuse" for the practice.[694] One of the most common reasons that I was given for why it was religious and not just cultural was its universality. For these informants, cultural practices varied depending on the context, whereas religious practices would be generally practiced by all Muslims no matter what the context. One young woman, after explaining to me that because the Prophet did it, they also do it, told me that the practice was religious because "tous les musulmans font ça."[695] This notion of the universality of the practice was important for other informants as well. They argued that, even if people might not eat dates, it is still a universal practice.[696] Dates and milk are "recommandés dans l'Islam," and "toutes tables musulmanes vont avoir du lait et des dattes" during Ramadan.[697] One young man explained the reason why it was a universal practice by stating that "c'est une chose universelle et religieuse en tant que spirituel parce que c'est une des seules pratiques, avec évidemment la prière, qu'on peut assimiler à une des pratiques du Prophète."[698] Like the Quran, which is universally regarded, these informants argued that the life of the Prophet is universally regarded as well and so any of his practices can be seen as religious practices that are worthwhile engaging in.

While this group argued that it was strictly a religious practice, there were others who argued that the dates and milk were "entre croyance et tradition."[699] Even more informants argued that it was strictly traditional or cultural. In comparison to the clearly "religious" food practices of not eating pork, not drinking alcohol and eating halal, the consumption of dates and

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[692] 121006_002—"A little religious."
[693] 121207_001.
[694] 121212_001—"Give a religious reason."
[695] 121105_001—"All Muslims do that."
[696] 121130_001.
[697] 121128_001—"Recommended in Islam...all Muslim tables will have milk and dates."
[698] 121108_001—"It is a universal thing and religious in a spiritual way because it is one of the only practices, along with the prayers, that we can assimilate to one of the practices of the Prophet."
[699] 121123_001—"Between belief and tradition."

milk during Ramadan was simply something one tried to follow out of a desire to imitate the Prophet, according to one of my informants.[700] For her this was an important practice, based in the Sunnah, but it did not evoke "Muslim" for her. What is unusual is that for many of those informants who argued for a strictly cultural interpretation of this practice, they all mentioned the Sunnah specifically. It was almost as a way of saying, "it is not the Quran, it is the Sunnah, and so it is not at that level." It was because the practice was not imposed by the religion that it could only be argued as cultural and not religious.[701] Even if the practice was recommended, it did not seem to hold the same sort of weight for these informants as other practices.

Universality came up for these informants as well, but they used this argument in exactly the opposite way from the group I mentioned above. For these informants, it was exactly the fact that not everyone engages in this practice, that it was not a universal practice, that meant that it was a cultural and not religious practice. One informant told me that she was not aware of the practice in the Maghreb and only learned of it after she had moved to France.

> Les dattes et le petit lait, ou du lait. Chaque rupture du jeûne. Mais ça, je crois qu'on ne le voit pas chez tout le monde. Je ne crois pas. Moi, de mes souvenirs je n'ai jamais vu chez moi la rupture avec des dattes et du lait. Moi, j'ai découvert ça ici.[702]

This informant was suggesting that not only was it not universal across cultures across the world, but it also was not even universal across the Maghreb. Most people would argue that it was a fairly universal practice across the Maghreb, but would bring up experiences of fasting in different locations across the world as evidence of the lack of over-arching universality in this practice. For example, one informant told me of her experience in Syria during Ramadan and how this differed from the fast in the Maghreb:

> Au Moyen-Orient ils n'ont pas ça… certains pays du Moyen-Orient, la Syrie par exemple, ils n'ont pas ça. L'endroit où j'étais, ils ne comprenaient pas pourquoi on prend du lait et des dattes. Alors on essaie de comprendre pourquoi, après q'on s'est dit que les dattes étaient vraiment le symbole du désert, donc de la culture musulmane, parce qu'elle est née dans la péninsule arabique. Et le lait on se dit que peut-être c'est le lait de la chamelle, mais on ne sait pas trop. On ne sait pas trop. Je ne sais pas quelle est l'origine vraiment, mais je sais que c'est pas partout.[703]

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[700] 120905_001.

[701] 121202_004.

[702] 120917_001—"Dates and whey or milk. Every breaking of the fast. But that I think that you do not see that at everyone's home. I don't think so. Me, in my memories, I never saw in my home the breaking of the fast with dates and milk. I learned that here."

[703] 121203_006—"In the Middle East they don't have that, … in certain countries in the Middle East, Syria for example, they don't have that. The place where I was, they did not understand why we take milk and dates. So we

According to this informant, the consumption of dates and milk was not universal, and in view of that was not a religious practice. Unlike the abstention from pork, which can be found across cultures and traditions, the consumption of dates and milk was more culturally specific.

Whether the consumption of dates was seen as religious or cultural for my informants, many gave scientific, logical reasons for engaging in this practice as well. When talking about the practice of eating dates to break the fast during the month of Ramadan, many of my respondents would talk about the kind of sugars and vitamins[704] that are present in dates and how they are a super food for boosting one's sugars after fasting because they are rich in "healthy sugars" and give nutrients where are absorbed quickly by the body.

> Les dattes, c'est au-delà ça, parce que certaines vont rester buter sur le fait que c'était en assimilation au Prophète—et pas uniquement ça parce qu'il faut savoir que c'était aussi un homme assez intelligent pour savoir que huit dattes pouvaient avoir un apport énergétique très important. Il est évident que quand on jeûne pendant toute la journée on a une certaine faiblesse, et les dattes permettent de rapporter l'énergie.[705]

While it was mostly out of imitation of the Prophet that people engaged in the practice, it was also argued to be a significant health benefit to follow the Prophet's lead in this case.

5.2.1.7 Couscous

As is made clear by the various ways that people responded to the questions about what is a religious and what is a cultural practice, it seems that what is culture and what is religion is a highly individual thing; even those practices that may be understood to be strictly religious by some are presented as strictly cultural by others, and those practices that are understood as strictly cultural are presented as strictly religious by others. The final group of practices that I outline are the cultural food practices. These are practices that are not located in any specific religious text or tradition, but sometimes take on a religious value in the everyday practice of

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try to understand why, and after we said that dates are the symbol of the desert and therefore of the Muslim culture because it was born in the Arabian Peninsula. And the milk, we told ourselves that maybe it was camel's milk but we don't know really. We don't know too much. We don't know, I don't know what is the origin of it really, but I know that it isn't [practiced] everywhere."

[704] 121128_001; 121129_001; 121212_001.

[705] 121108_001—"Dates are a good case in point, because certain people will remain fixed on the fact that it was to follow the example of the Prophet, and not simply that because one must also know that he was an intelligent man to know that eight dates were able to have an important energizing effect. It is evident that when we fast during the whole day we have a certain weakness and dates are used to bring energy."

individuals. The specific cultural food practice I present as an example of this category is the eating of couscous.

While couscous is generally argued as a strictly cultural practice, it has taken on religious significance for some. For example, one informant presented a pithy statement about what a "Muslim needs." He said "L'eau, la semoule [couscous] et la respiration. On a besoin que de ça en l'Islam."[706] Couscous is given a significant role in the religion by this informant, and yet later in the interview he goes on to explain that couscous is traditional, cultural, and not on the same level as dates and milk which are in the Sunnah, or even further from the interdiction against pork which is in the Quran.

Another informant, a fairly conservative young woman, also gave couscous some religious significance. When telling me about religious food practices she explained that

> pour les mariages c'est une tradition…c'est par rapport à la religion parce qu'en temps du Prophète (*salalahu alayhi wa salam*), ils faisaient pour les mariages… du couscous…. Je ne sais pas comment trop expliquer. C'est parce que, quand ils se mariaient, ils faisaient du couscous. Ils avaient un repas de couscous.[707]

Although there was not necessarily a story of the Prophet eating couscous in the Sunnah, this informant had learned that Muhammad made couscous for his own weddings and so, for her, it was a religious tradition to make couscous for all weddings.[708]

Her sister had a bit of a different understanding of why couscous was important in her cultural and religious practice. While she also mentioned the story that the Prophet Muhammad ate couscous, for her it was not the actual couscous that mattered but the kind of meal that was represented by the couscous.

> Le couscous est utilisé dans les cérémonies religieuses justement parce que c'est un plat de partage. Aujourd'hui dans la société occidentale, avec l'individualisme qui prime, les gens ont tendance à manger le couscous dans des plats et des couverts séparés. Mais les pays d'Afrique ont gardé cette idée de partage autour d'un même plat. Au Mali on appelle ça un *mafé*, en Tunisie *couscous*, mais l'idée de partage reste la même. Les musulmans [Maghrébiens] font ça, ils font un grand plat de semoule et puis, voilà, c'est quelque

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[706] 121008_001—"Water, couscous and breath. We only need that in Islam."

[707] 120822_001—"For weddings it is a tradition…it's related to the religion because at the time of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), they made it for weddings, they made couscous…I don't know how to explain it really. It's because when they got married, they made couscous. They had a meal of couscous."

[708] I attended the wedding celebration of this informant's sister. While her family made a couscous for the day before the wedding, her sister did not serve couscous for her wedding meal. Instead she served a high end, five course French meal. Her family seemed confused and unimpressed by this meal choice, perhaps because it was against religious tradition as they understood it.

chose qu'on peut manger avec les mains. On donne aux petits, etc., et c'est quelque chose qui est beaucoup plus lier au partage que lier à l'aliment lui-même.[709]

For this informant, couscous is the representation of the religious tradition of sharing, and although she argues that it is a traditional thing, what it represents is religious. Many other informants also spoke of the necessity to eat couscous for certain religious holidays—whether it is for "la nuit du destin" (the night of destiny) where "il faut que je mange un couscous,"[710] or "c'est vraiment le plat traditionnel de fêtes,"[711] "le plat central c'est le couscous"[712] and thus it plays an important role in many of my informants' religious festival lives.

For most of my informants, couscous is clearly a cultural food. It is not found in the Quran, or the Sunnah, and while it may take on significance in one's religious life because it is used in religious ceremonies, it is not at its base religious. One woman was emphatic that couscous was traditional and not religious. She exclaimed:

non, ce n'est pas religieux, non, non, ça n'a rien à voir avec la religion! C'est une tradition chez nous. Voilà. On va dire tradition. Ça n'a rien à voir avec la religion. Il n'y a pas [de place] dans le Coran [où] c'est marqué "le jour de l'Eid il faut … préparer le couscous," non, c'est une tradition, voilà, chez nous.[713]

When I asked another woman, what came to mind when she thought of couscous, she responded: "je pense en Algérie que ça fait partie de mon patrimoine. Mais pas parce que je suis musulmane, pas du tout."[714] It was her cultural identity that was linked to couscous, not her religious identity. Another informant spoke of the differences between Muslim cultures to argue that the consumption of couscous was strictly traditional.

Il y a le Maghreb, mais la religion musulmane, elle est beaucoup [plus répandue] dans les pays asiatiques. C'est là qu'il y a plus de musulmans, et eux, ils ont peut-être une autre alimentation. Ils n'ont pas de couscous…L'Afghanistan, le Pakistan, l'Inde, ils ont une

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[709] 120905_001—"Couscous is used in religious ceremonies just because it is a dish that is shared. Today in Western society, with individualism that prevails, people have a tendency to eat couscous from separate dishes with separate utensils. But in African countries we keep this idea of sharing around the same plate. In Mali it is called a "mafé," in Tunisia "couscous" but the idea of sharing remains the same. Muslims do that, they make a big plate of semoule and, presto, it is something that we can eat with our hands. We give it to the little ones, etc., and it is something that is more linked with sharing than with the ingredient itself."

[710] 121106_001—"I must eat a couscous."

[711] 121124_001—"It is really the traditional dish for holidays."

[712] 121212_001—"The central dish is a couscous."

[713] 121006_002—"No, it's not religious, no, no, it has nothing to do with religion, it is a tradition for us. Period. We would say tradition. It has nothing to do with religion. It is not indicated in the Quran that "the day of the Eid you must put, you must prepare couscous," No, it is a tradition for us."

[714] 120917_001—"I think of Algeria, that that is part of my heritage. But not because I am a Muslim. Not at all."

alimentation qui est un peu différente. Et ils utilisent beaucoup d'épices. On le voit bien, l'alimentation indienne, c'est plus à base de riz. Nous, c'est plus la semoule, mais sinon, oui elle est différente suivant le pays où on vit. Mais c'est vrai qu'au Maghreb, c'est beaucoup le couscous.[715]

Couscous is clearly a cultural tradition for this informant because it is not typically found in other parts of the world where Muslims live. This quotation also shows awareness of how, just like rice is a base of food culture for South Asian cultures, couscous is a base of food culture for those who come from the Maghreb. With Muslims spread across the world, in especially large numbers in South and South East Asia, the Maghrebian focus is perforce limited.

Regardless of whether couscous is viewed as a cultural or a religious practice, it is ultimately argued to be a representative dish of a particular community, namely the Maghrébine community. Couscous may be taking on a symbolic role for French national identity as well. For example, when I asked one informant whether it was difficult to find the necessary ingredients to make a couscous dish her response was, "pour le couscous, non. Parce que c'est un plat national français maintenant."[716] Other informants were quick to point out that one of the favourite (in fact the third favourite, and one of the most consumed) dishes of the French was couscous.[717] Because of the large population of Maghrébines in France, couscous has taken on a major role in French eating habits.[718] One informant also explained that the love of couscous by the French was

> aussi lié au passé entre la France et le Maghreb, avec les colonies… [et] ça m'étonne pas que le plat préféré des Français c'est le couscous—mais que ç'était pendant 20 ans, 15 ans, le plat préféré des Français, des Français pure souche, uh, qui n'ont rien à voir avec le couscous.[719]

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[715] 121129_001—"There is the Maghreb, but the Muslim religion is in many Asian countries. That's where there are the most Muslims, and they, they maybe have a different food. They don't have couscous…Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, they have a diet that is a bit different. And they use a lot of spices. We see that easily, [e.g.] Indian food, it's more a base of rice. For us it's more semolina, but otherwise, yes it's different depending on the country where we live. But it's true that in the Maghreb, it is a lot of couscous."

[716] 121126_002—"For couscous, no [it is not difficult]. Because it is a French national dish now."

[717] 120917_001; 121006_002; 121031_001; 121124_001; 121126_001; 121128_001; 121201_002; 121202_004; 121203_006; 121205_001; 121206_001.

[718] In fact, a polling agency in France found that in 2011 couscous was the third favourite food of the French; falling behind Moules-frites (mussels and French fries) in second place and magret de canard (duck breast) in first. "Les plats préférés des Français (2011)," 21 October 2011, http://www.tns-sofres.com/publications/les-plats-preferes-des-francais-2011.

[719] 121203_006—"Also linked to the past between France and the Maghreb, with the colonies…. That doesn't surprise me that the favourite dish of the French is, but it has been 20 years, 15 years, the favourite dish of the French, the purebred French, uh, who have nothing to do with it, was couscous?"

Not only do the French love couscous, but they make it themselves and even sometimes serve it back to Maghrébines. "Par exemple, le couscous, mes amis français m'invitent chez eux pour manger un couscous, mais ce n'est pas du tout le couscous que je connais. Le couscous français est différent du couscous du Maghreb."[720] So even if the French may appropriate and make couscous, there is still a (non-Maghrébine) French flare to it. Other informants also spoke about the "couscous français": something that at its base was Maghrébine, but was changed by the French to suit French tastes and approaches to food, usually consisting of a mix of meats.[721]

If the French also hold couscous in high regard, there is the possibility that couscous might play a role in relations between the Maghrébine Muslim immigrant community and the majority non-Muslim French population in France. When talking about the possible tension between non-Muslim and Maghrébine Muslim communities in France one of my informants clearly spoke about the role that some foods could play in easing those tensions.

> C'est qu'il y ait de la place pour tout le monde sans stigmatiser l'un ou l'autre. Justement l'unification ou le rassemblement peut se faire via la nourriture, et d'ailleurs on a un bon début avec le couscous, plat préféré des Français. On pourrait continuer avec d'autres plats qui viennent d'autres contrées qui soient aussi répandu, tous aussi appréciés et par tout le monde.[722]

For this informant, couscous is the representation of cultural sharing, and the representation of the appreciation of the "other." It is considered a way to unify and to congregate people and is a model that could be followed with other dishes and between other cultures. Food practices can act as a bridge and means of understanding between varied groups.

Food is a strong tool for mutual understanding as it is a part of most people's everyday life and experience. These practices are a way of life. What happens when the context of one's daily life changes, though? Does the immigrant experience change one's level of practice no matter what the reasoning?

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[720] 121207_001—"For example, couscous, my French friends invite me to their place to eat a couscous, but it isn't the couscous that I know. The French couscous is different from Maghrébine couscous."
[721] 121201_001, 121201_002; 121205_001; 121206_001.
[722] 121126_001—"It's that there is room for everyone without stigmatizing one another. Rightly, the unification or the congregating can happen through food and anyway we have a good start with couscous, the favourite dish of the French. We can continue with other dishes that come from other countries which are also prevalent, equally appreciated by everyone."

5.3 Consistency and Change in Religious and Cultural Food Practices in Paris

In this final section I tackle the changes, or lack thereof, in practice for the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study. I have divided this section into three categories of, or trends in, experience for my informants. Two of the categories record whether this is a change by decreasing a practice in the immigrant location or by increasing the practice. The third category envelops those who maintain their practice in the immigrant location, not significantly increasing or decreasing certain practices. Because second generation immigrants have no home context to which to compare, those six informants will be left out of this discussion.

5.3.1 Increase in Practice

Based on the knowledge that I had of the scholarly presentation of immigrant religion before I went into the field, I anticipated that most of my informants would fall into this category of practice.[723] I assumed that most of the people that I would interview would tell me that they had increased their practice out of a means of trying to maintain transnational identity, or to legitimize an identity when they were in a context that challenged their basic notions of identity.

I was surprised in fact to see that only two of my informants (out of the 27 first-generation informants) had any real increase in their practice in France. These two informants increased their religious practices based on a renewed sense of religious conviction. It was not necessarily because they had a type of identity that was in conflict that they needed to legitimize, but simply that they used to be "non-practicing Muslims" and became "practicing Muslims" for one reason or another. One man explained to me that when he lived in Algeria, and for the first many years that he lived in France, he did not necessarily eat halal food and would drink alcohol quite often with his friends. It was only "depuis que je suis pratiquant"[724] that he stopped drinking alcohol. The change had nothing explicitly to do with the immigrant experience (he had been drinking in France for years after his immigration) but instead was a natural outworking of a new commitment to a religious life. An older gentleman expressed something similar. It was an encounter with a Sufi leader that led him to restart "ritual practice" again, not (explicitly) his

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[723] As I discussed in Chapter 3 in section 3.2, for immigrants who find themselves in a minority position, or claiming a minority identity in their host context, symbols of that identity can become important, such that an increase in practices related to that identity is common.

[724] 121126_001—"Since I was a practicing [Muslim]."

immigrant experience.[725] This informant did go on to explain that the access that he had to more varied practices in France did play a role in his renewed interest in and increase in practice of Islam, but as he tells it, it was more about an individual, personal decision than a result of the context around him.

5.3.2 Consistency in Practice

Some of my informants maintained the same level and sort of practice that they did in the homeland. Whether it was maintaining extensive practice, or no practice at all, for these informants the practices went under no significant change from the Maghreb to France. For example, one man explained to me that "certains Algériens qui viennent à l'étranger, ils rentrent dans la religion vraiment à fond. Ce n'est pas arrivé comme ça [pour moi]. Quand je suis venu, j'étais déjà comme ça. Ça n'a pas changé grand-chose à ma vie."[726] Many of these informants would talk about the fact that in a superficial spiritual society such as France the maintenance of traditions and practices gives some depth and stability to one's existence.

My informants maintained cultural food practices to the largest extent. Considering the fact that "cultural" practices were seen as flexible, and religious practices as obligatory, if one could label their practice as cultural they almost gave themselves a "get out of jail free" card when it came to leaving some practices aside. On the other hand, it also allowed those who labelled their practice as cultural to get around the hesitation about religious practices in France and allowed them to maintain these practices with greater ease; there was not as much pressure to alter these cultural practices. Even for a self-proclaimed "non-practicing" Muslim, one informant explained to me the importance of maintaining some traditions and practices. For example, even though she was not insistent on eating halal meat, she still felt like she had to buy halal meat for traditional Maghrébine dishes.[727] Another informant expressed a similar commitment to maintaining some practice, not necessarily because of conviction but simply because one is used to doing something in a particular way.[728]

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[725] 121212_001.

[726] 121201_002—"Certain Algerians that come from abroad, they enter into the religion very deeply. It did not happen like that [for me]. When I came, I was already that way. That did not change very much in my life."

[727] 121124_001.

[728] 121128_001—"Je ne sais pas, c'est psychique. Je ne sais pas pourquoi mais c'est comme ça (elle sourit). Pour moi, c'est meilleur. C'est la viande qu'il faut. (Elle rigole.) C'est pour ça que je dis, j'ai des séquelles mais je ne sais pas pourquoi je continue à les faire. Et ce n'est pas par conviction, c'est l'habitude. Je n'arrive pas à passer outre."

5.3.3 Decrease in Practice

The third and final trend refers to those who decreased their practice in France from what they engaged in in the Maghreb. This was by far the most common trend for my informants. Some would only decrease some practices and maintain others, while others would stop practicing altogether. When I began my research in France I was told about the verb "se méfier."[729] I noted this earlier. I was told by non-Muslim French and Maghrébine Muslim French that this verb often dictated how the Muslim community interacted with the non-Muslim community in France and vice versa, i.e. that it reflected distrust. Because of this utter "méfiance" there was often fear to practice traditions that may increase the tension or distance between the two communities. Consequently, the French context made some of my informants feel as though they had to decrease their religious practice that othered them in France. Whether they felt forced because of the non-Maghrébine non-Muslim French around them,[730] or because the context provided other practices that were in conflict with their traditional home practices (i.e. eating non-halal foie gras because halal foie gras was non-existent),[731] many of my informants felt like they had to change some of their practices in order to fully live an "integrated" life in France.

I had people tell me that life in France was not as conducive to traditional food practices from the Maghreb because life in France was much more fast paced and did not provide the necessary time to prepare dishes and engage in traditional food practices.[732] I had other informants tell me that it was simply because they would want to go out with friends, and that was often in conflict with their religious practices, going to bars, etcetera.[733] One man told me that he tried to maintain his practice in the French context, particularly eating halal meat and not drinking alcohol, but it became too difficult for him to resist and he left both practices behind.[734] Another informant explained that her decrease in practice came because of a distance between herself and her past, and this distance opened an opportunity for self-reflection not offered to her in the Maghreb:

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[729] To be wary of, or, to distrust.
[730] 121216_001.
[731] 121105_001.
[732] 121201_001.
[733] 121202_002.
[734] 121129_002.

Je ne suis pas pratiquante. Quand j'étais en Algérie, je m'intéressais beaucoup à la religion, j'étais assez croyante. Mais le fait d'être sortie de l'environnement, du cocon familial, ça m'a permis de prendre un peu de recul, et je me suis complètement détachée de la religion. Je ne pratique plus. J'ai un rapport très distancié avec ma religion, qui est l'Islam.[735]

The immigrant context allowed for a distancing from one's religious practice that was not possible, she felt, in the religiously-soaked Maghrébine context.

One of the biggest reasons given for decreasing one's practice was that it was too difficult to maintain the practice to the same level in France as it was in the Maghreb, whether in ambiance or essential elements, and so they simply would not bother. If they could not do it right, they did not want to do it at all. One woman explained to me that, in regards to halal, she stopped consuming halal in France because she could not be sure that the meat was properly butchered. Instead of trying to meet this practice in other ways, she simply decided that if she could not do it right she would not do it at all.[736] The practice was often still significant for these informants; they simply decided that it had to be done in a particular way or else it was not worth it, but they would restart the practice when they would visit the Maghreb. While Ramadan may be too difficult to practice in France, it was something that everyone did, and did "properly" in the Maghreb, and so could be re-instated in one's practice when in the Maghreb.[737] The context clearly changes the practice.

It is important to note that even if my informants changed, decreased, or stopped their religious food practices completely in Paris, this did not stop them from continuing to identify as Muslim in some way. As I stated above, all my informants claimed Muslim identity to some degree. While they may have altered their practice in their immigrant context, and often altered the way they understood their Muslim identity as a result, this did not remove their identification as "Muslim" completely. Specific practices were sometimes the hinge on which the identity rested and sometimes they were not. In fact, food revealed how the terms and categories that we attempt to place on people are incredibly tenuous. We can see that, in agreement with Michel Desjardins, "in talking with people about the role that food plays in their religious lives it does

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[735] 121128_001—"I am not practicing. When I was in Algeria, I was very interested in religion, I was quite believing. But the fact of leaving the environment, the family cocoon, that permitted me to take a bit of a recoil and I completely detached myself from the religion. I do not practice anymore. I have a very distant relationship with my religion, which is Islam."
[736] 121202_003.
[737] 121124_001.

not take long to appreciate that, even on a personal level, the categories developed by scholars are fragile constructs."[738]

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter addresses the specific food practices in which my informants engage, and their changing relationships to them in Paris. First, I examined what food practice can reveal about my informants' definitions and understanding of culture and religion. In this part I explored how my informants label a given food practice cultural or religious depending on whether they see that practice as flexible or obligatory. I argue that where a practice lies on the spectrum of obligatory/flexible tends to be grounded in the source of that practice. If it is found in the Quran it is seen as obligatory, and consequently religious. If it is found only in traditional practices and stories then it is often seen as flexible, and consequently cultural. If the practice is found in the Sunnah, it lies somewhere in the middle of this flexible/obligatory, religious/cultural spectrum. My informants also play with these relationships. By labelling a practice as cultural, which is normally understood to be religious, my informants could justify the flexibility with which they approached this practice. This was evident with those informants who ate pork, arguing that not eating pork was only cultural and thus this practice did not need to be maintained.

Overall a fourfold typology of food practice emerged for my informants in Paris. The four categories were: (1) Quranically-documented and "prescribed," i.e. not eating pork, not drinking alcohol, fasting during Ramadan and eating properly sacrificed meat (halal); (2) Quranically-documented but not prescribed, i.e. the lamb for the Eid Al-Adha; (3) Sunnah-inspired, i.e. breaking the Ramadan fast with dates and milk; and (4) cultural food practices, i.e. eating couscous. While these practices were generally understood to fall into these categories, with category 1 food practices being the most religious/obligatory and category 4 food practices being the most cultural/flexible, I had informants who labelled the food practices in each of these categories in the opposite manner. My informants engaged with each of these practices differently and had different understandings of the role that they played in their religious/cultural lives.

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[738] Desjardins, "Religious Studies that *Really* Schmecks," 154.

Of all the practices, the Ramadan fast was the most clear-cut religious food practice according to my informants. Because of its place not only in the Quran but also within the five pillars of Islam, this practice was the least disputed of all the religious food practices listed by my informants. Even those who understood themselves to be cultural Muslims did not argue away the religious significance of this practice. They may have seen their engagement with it as cultural, but they saw it as religious at its base. On the other hand, the interaction with pork and alcohol reveal a complex relationship between culture and religion as it is worked out in food practice by my informants. While both were firmly placed within category 1 food practices, my informants in France revealed that on the ground there were drastically different approaches to these two practices.

Throughout I discussed some of the main forms of argumentation that my informants gave for their engagement in these food practices. The first argument was that if something was written in the Quran then it must be done. This argument was broken into two sub arguments, namely that anything that is written in the Quran must be obeyed simply because it is in the Quran, and secondly, because there is divine wisdom in everything presented therein. The second argument that my informants gave me for their religious food practice was that beyond there being religiously or culturally significant reasons to engage in such a practice, there were also scientific or health reasons for it. My informants saw their food practices as logically sound, as serving some purpose for their health, and as worthwhile engaging in. Finally, my informants argued that they engaged in a given practice based on habit. It was something that they did in the homeland and since childhood, and as a result it was something that they continued now.

Finally, I closed this chapter with an exploration of the ways in which my informants remained consistent in their food practices and the ways in which they changed them in Paris, in comparison to their practice in their home lands. In contrast to my expectations before entering the field, only two of my informants revealed an increase in food practice in Paris. This increase in practice had nothing explicitly to do with the immigrant experience and everything to do with a new found religious conviction, often long after their move to Paris. For a larger proportion of my informants, consistency was key. Cultural food practices tended to be easier to maintain and were the most consistent practices kept. Overall, the most common trend for my informants in Paris was to decrease their food practices once they were in Paris. Because of the Maghrébine mistrust of the broader French society, many of my informants felt a need to leave some of the

more apparent food practices aside out of fear of creating greater distances between themselves and the non-Muslim, non-Maghrébine French with whom they interacted on a daily basis. Furthermore, informants made the argument that life in France was not conducive to the traditional and religious food practices that were the norm in Maghreb, based on the time it takes to prepare a traditional dish or on the kinds of social food practices they felt were expected of them in Paris. Whatever the case, my informants were changing their food practice in tangible ways from what they lived in the Maghreb. Largely, I presented an overview of the ways that my informants practice their religion in secular France, and addressed how they justify these seemingly problematic practices in light of French laïcité.

Overall, the evidence presented in the last three chapters shows a vast and varied experience of "Islam de France." While some of my informants identified strongly with both sides of that identity, others stressed one side over the other. While some felt firmly within the French national "us," others felt as though they would never be able to claim this side of their transnational identity. While some felt comfortable living out the daily practices of their "French Muslim" identity, others felt the need to leave the "Muslim" side behind and consequently decrease, or re-label, their religious practice in the host-land, often labelling it as cultural in place of religious.

The variety of practice and self-understanding that is present in this community, as I experienced it, becomes telling when comparing it to the fairly homogeneous understanding and approach to practice of the community in Montréal, to which I will now turn.

PART 2: Maghrébine Muslim Experiences in Multicultural Montréal

Chapter 6: Québec's "Distinct in Canada" National Identity: Four Influential Factors in the Montréal Context of Reception

6.1 Introduction

My first week of fieldwork in Montréal was drastically different from that in Paris. While I spent my first week in France reeling from the overwhelming amount of data already at my fingertips, my first week in Québec was quiet. No one was talking about Muslims. There were no signs in the Metro to observe, no conversations about integration to be had, no politics around pork in the school cafeterias, no blatant or subtle prejudice to be witnessed. At least not toward the Muslim community at the time I was there. Since this is a chapter about context, it is important to note that since the time of my fieldwork in Québec there has been a heightened awareness of the Muslim community there and an increased, visible, palpable prejudice towards it. My fieldwork is situated in a pre-Charter of Québec Values (2013).[739]

Since the time of my fieldwork, this proposed Charter for Québec Values, which many viewed as a response by the PQ government to the "problem of the veil," and Islam in Québec in general, was only one example of increased awareness of and prejudice toward Islam in the province. There has also been an increase in verbal and physical altercations between non-Muslim Québécois(es)[740] and Muslims in Québec following various terrorist attacks in Canada and around the world. It seems clear to me, when looking at the history of Québec, and the history of Islam in Québec, that prejudice towards Muslims tends to ebb and flow in the province. There are moments in history where Muslims in Québec feel very uncomfortable, and discriminated against. On the other hand, there are moments in time where Muslims feel quite comfortable living their lives in Québec; they feel as though they can be both Québécois(e)/Canadian and Muslim and that experiences of prejudice are simply not the norm. Unfortunately, at the current moment in time (2016) the situation in Québec, as in much of the

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[739] As I described in Chapter 1, specifically in footnote 149, the Charter of Québec Values, also known as Bill 60, was the then PQ government's attempt to address the issue of "reasonable accommodation" in Québec by emphasizing state neutrality, most specifically through the limiting of wearing "conspicuous" religious symbols in public service postions.

[740] The term Québecois(es) has gone through an evolution over the years. It was first used to refer to people who live in Québec City, then to all francophones in Québec, and more recently it has expanded to include all citizens of Québec.

rest of the Western world, is one of heightened prejudice toward Islam. At the time of my research, there was an ebb in the prejudice felt by many Muslims living in the province. This fact inevitably affects the data I collected and reveals a different view of the relationship between Islam and Québec than what many might assume reading this research at this current historical moment in time.

As I explained in Chapter 2, there are certain historical and contextual aspects of the host society, independent of the ongoing ebb and flow, that inevitably influence an immigrant's daily life, and the food practices in which they engage. There are events, philosophies, policies, and beliefs about self and other that are present in Québec that affect how the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Québec, and in this case, in Montréal, not only interact with the non-Muslim Québécois(es) around them, but also how they view, and present themselves. The experiences of the Maghrébine Muslim in Montréal are quite different from that of the Maghrébine Muslim in Paris. While there are always complicated reasons for differences between groups and individuals, many of the unique aspects of an individual's experience can be traced back to the context within which that individual lives. Simply speaking, Maghrébine Muslims in Montréal are different from Maghrébine Muslims anywhere else in the world because of some very specific elements to Québec history and society that inevitably change anyone living in la Belle Province.

To understand the ways that food plays a role in the working out of religious identity and the integration processes of the individuals of my study I must set the Québec scene. After all, in the province where "Je me souviens" (I remember) is the provincial slogan one must take history seriously. Remarkably the same four historical and contextual factors that I explored in the last chapter are significant here: colonialism, immigration, church/state relations and nationalism. That being said, while there are some similarities between the French and Québec context, the differences in each of these four realms are significant.

In relation to colonialism, France's history as colonizer affects the interaction between Muslim and non-Muslim French, while in Québec its history as colonized, first by the French then by the English, impacts this relationship. The type, duration and quantity of Maghrébine Muslim immigration to France and Québec also differs, which will impact how people respond to the food practices and related identities of Muslim immigrants in Québec—not to mention the effect that the identity of Canada as a "nation of immigrants" has on the way that new

immigrants understand and present themselves. While both France and Québec have a historically complicated relationship with religion, specifically the Catholic Church, the resulting secular policies present in each context are distinct. Québec's break with Catholicism occurred only in the 1960s, and its intercultural form of laïcité differs from the often strict laïcité at work in France. Finally, both contexts have different historical developments of nationalism, and relatedly, national identity. While in both contexts secularism plays an essential role in the national identity, in Québec, which finds itself in the midst of a larger, predominantly English-speaking country, language is also foundational to what it means to "be Québecois."[741]

Also, while food and drink are often representative of French national identity, the multicultural and intercultural[742] nationalism present in Québec, and specifically in Montréal, encapsulates the food traditions of all people from all backgrounds. Keeping these differences in mind, I present Québec's unique history as it relates to colonialism, immigration, secularism and nationalism.

First, I explore the unique experience of colonialism in Québec and how this might impact the Muslim community found therein. While Québec may not have its own colonial relationship with the Maghreb, as France does, its own identity as a colonizer and colonized nation imparts essential characteristics to the context in which my informants live.

Second, I outline the immigration history of Muslims to Canada, and specifically Québec, with a focus on Maghrébine Muslim immigration. In this section I address the reasons that Maghrébine Muslims have immigrated to Québec, alongside the immigration policies in the province that have clear consequences for this community and its foodways. Within this section I demonstrate what is distinct about the Québec approach to immigration compared to the rest of Canada.

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[741] This is especially true in Montréal, where the province's majority of English speakers reside. This tension between English and French speaking Québécois(es) in Montréal was the more obvious tension at work when I was in the field. I heard more about "those darn English" (of which I am one) than "those darn Muslims" during my time in Montréal. I will discuss this tension further below.

[742] Throughout this work, I, at times, use these two terms, multiculturalism and interculturalism, as seemingly interchangeable. While the Québec government and the Québécois population at large tend to firmly reject Canadian "multiculturalism," many scholars have argued that making a distinction between these two concepts is not always straightforward. I will unpack some of the arguments around how these terms differ or are similar in this chapter, but for an excellent, brief overview of some of the main questions around the relationship of the two concepts, see Gerard Bouchard's "What is Interculturalism?" *McGill Law Journal/Revue de Droit de McGill*, vol. 56, no. 2 (2011): 435-468—especially his discussion on pages 462-466.

Third, I provide an overview of the history of church and state relations in Québec and how this history informs the noteworthy approach to secularism that is present in Québec. In this section I explore the most significant events and policies that continue to have an impact on the Maghrébine Muslim experience, including but not limited to, church/state relations before 1960, the Quiet Revolution, the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, rigid versus open secularism and interculturalism versus multiculturalism.

Finally, I close the chapter with an examination of Québec nationalism. In this endeavour, I consider questions such as: What does it mean to be Québécois(e)? What are the orienting principles of that identity? Who can claim it? And especially, can Maghrébine Muslims in Québec call themselves "Québécois Muslims" or Muslim Québecers? In fact, is there such thing as an "Islam du Québec?" All these considerations help us to understand how my informants live out their North African, Muslim and Québécois/Canadian lives in Montréal, and the ways that they interact with the daily practices that shape those identities, namely food.

6.2 The Effect of Colonization on Québec self-understanding[743]

As I mentioned in Chapter 2, the colonization of North America was a part of the first wave of French colonization abroad. This wave and its effects on the Québec colony are the focus of this section. I show how this history has an impact on the self-understanding of the province and will therefore inevitably affect the ways that my informants negotiate their identities in this context of reception; specifically, how they will engage and utilize food as a tool in these processes.

Québec had its beginnings as a colony of France, called New France, in the mid-sixteenth century (1534). The "real beginning of French colonization in the St Lawrence Valley was in 1608, when Samuel de Champlain established a fort at Cap Diamant, the site of Québec City today."[744] French colonization of New France then expanded quickly throughout the seventeenth

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[743] For overviews of the history of France's colonial endeavor in New France, and the founding of Québec see: Claude Couture, "Québec," last modified May 6, 2015, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed February 3, 2016, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/Québec/; John Alexander Dickinson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Québec 4th edition* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008); Marc Lescarbot, *History of New France* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968); Susan Mann, *The Dream of Nation: A Social and Intellectual History of Québec* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

[744] Couture, "Québec." I use Couture's summary of the founding of New France, and its colonial beginnings for the "facts" of the historical founding of Québec as a colony of France. The Encyclopedic treatment of this subject

century, but remained relatively constrained in comparison to the British colonization of the period. By the eighteenth century, while the colonial rivalry between Britain and France was well established, France focused mostly on the European continent while Britain expanded further into other international realms.[745]

Not only did Britain focus its colonial efforts off of the European continent at that time, but the kind of colonization and the settlers who were arriving were starkly different from that of France's settlement. While the British allowed for and even encouraged the settlement of minority religious groups in British North America, the French were much more selective, only allowing for French-born Catholics to settle in New France, significantly restricting their numbers in the North American colony.[746] This sets the stage from the beginning of the Canadian colonial experience for difference between the part of the future nation that spoke French and had a French background and that which spoke English and had a British background. Furthermore, it establishes an ideal of "who belongs" as a part of the Canadian/Québécois people. While British North America was being populated by immigrants from various minority groups, New France was strictly populated by French, Catholic settlers.

Mann suggests that not only did France populate New France with Catholic settlers, but these settlers were a particular type of Catholic. She explains that coming out of the religious turmoil of sixteenth century France, these settlers were "the most extraordinary group of hard-nosed religious zealots: mystics who knew how to run a business; wealthy nobles and bourgeois with an intense longing to change the world for God," and they saw New France as the place to realize all of these dreams.[747] These "mystics" brought money, power and determination with them, which allowed them to "establish a network of clerically administered social institutions that would not only outlive New France but be an enduring feature of Québec society until well into the twentieth century."[748] Because of this type of settlement in New France, the Catholic Church was established as a powerful force, not only because the majority settler population was Catholic but because these Catholics strove to establish a role for the church outside of the

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allows for a certain clarity and simplicity for this introductory paragraph. Where some of these "facts" need to be complicated, I use Mann's *Dream of Nation*.

[745] Couture, "Québec."

[746] Mann, *Dream of* Nation, 2; Couture, "Québec."

[747] Mann, *Dream of Nation*, 4.

[748] Ibid., 4.

building's walls. They believed the church to have a role to play in the larger social structures of their new society.

After the British conquest of New France between 1756 and 1760, Britain finally won control of the French colony in 1763 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. While one might expect that this change in power might lead to an Anglicization of the region of Québec, more complicated politics were at work; not that the British colonial powers did not try to make Québec a proper English colony for thirty years after the Conquest.[749] Because church and landowners stayed in the region after the Treaty of Paris, the British found themselves in an awkward position when they ran into troubles with the American Colonies. To appease the Francophone settlers, and attempt to keep them from joining the American Colonies, the Québec Act of 1774 was passed. It was the "attempt by Britain to keep Québec British without making it English."[750] According to Peter Beyer, this was the "first official act of Reasonable Accommodation of religious diversity in Canada."[751] Not only did French civil law gain legal recognition at this point, but the landowners and Catholic Church were given strong power in the province, which dissuaded the Québécois(es) from joining the Americans in spite of their many invitations.[752] This also laid the foundation for the power of the Catholic Church to grow, which becomes important for us to know when addressing the relations between church and state.

6.2.1 Québec as Distinct in Canada

This recognition of Québec, and those who lived in this area of the colony, as distinctive, as having its own civil law, etcetera, led to the notion that there were two different "nations/societies" in the Canadian colony:[753] the English and the French. The problem in the mid-nineteenth century was not one of the "people" against a government but a conflict between

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[749] Ibid., 33.

[750] Mann, *Dream of Nation*, 36.

[751] Peter Beyer, "Religion and Immigration in a Changing Canada: The Reasonable Accommodation of 'Reasonable Accommodation'?" in *Reasonable Accommodation: Managing Religious Diversity*, ed. Lori G. Beaman (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 13-31.

[752] Couture, "Québec;" Mann, *Dream of Nation*, 37.

[753] Beyer suggests that while Europe is broken up into culturally specific countries, Canada (and the U.S.A) do not have as much variation, unless of course one is talking about Québec in Canada; there one can see two culturally specific contexts within the national setting. Peter Beyer, "Growing up in Canada, the United States, and Western Europe," in *Growing up Canadian: Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists*, eds. Peter Beyer and Rubina Ramji (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 291.

two opposing "peoples": the French and the English.[754] With confederation in 1867, economic control remained mostly in the hands of English companies and thus the situation in Québec was one where, as the popular saying went, "capital speaks English and labour speaks French." The only French speaking institution that seemed to have any real control in the Province was the Catholic Church. It controlled education, social agencies, civil society, hospitals, etcetera. This colonial history firmly establishes two key elements to the Québec self-understanding: language and religion.[755]

What effect might this history have on Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in the twenty-first century? France and Britain have a history of colonial conflict which uniquely affects Québec and its related political policies. The Québec independence movement grew out of frustration with Anglophone political and economic power in province, something firmly established out of the English colonial presence in the country. They opposed the economic backwardness of the province of Québec, where "capital speaks English," and the socio-economic inferiorization of French Canadians. As a result, language policy becomes important; the official language of the market and state determines who has the clearest path to management positions. This then can lead to a stronger emphasis on speaking French above anything else. It is significant, then, that my informants come from French speaking countries of origin, and former colonies of France at that. Both Québec and North Africa were the settings of French colonial effort, and consequently have some shared historical experiences. Furthermore, because of the dominance of the English language in most of the North American colony, any groups that can add strength to the French language in Québec are potentially welcomed.[756]

Like the emphasis placed on language that arose out of the colonial battle between France and Britain, Catholicism also gained an important place in the self-understanding of the

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[754] While the majority opinion tends to be that this colonial relationship, and the conquest of New France by the British, set up francophone Québec as distinct and, more importantly, a minority community in Canada pitted against the Anglophone provinces that surround it, there are other possibilities for viewing this history. Mann suggests that while some see the minority position of French Canadians as an obstacle others see it as a challenge and she argues that those who see it as a challenge emphasize "either healthy competition or interested cooperation between French and English Canadians" (Mann, *Dream of Nation*, 19-20). In short, this history is not always understood as a "conflict between two opposing peoples."

[755] I discuss the importance of the French language and the Catholic religion to national identity in the final part of this chapter. It is simply important to note that this distinction, this difference between "us" and "them," which leads to a strong identity formation, begins in the colonial period. The colonial experience provides the historical fodder for the seeds of national identity to grow.

[756] For more on the effect of colonial history on ethnic/religious minorities: Eid, *Being Arab*; Khan, *Muslim Women.*

inhabitants of New France. Unlike the Protestant majority, and a diverse Protestantism at that, that surrounded them, the settlers of New France, as I've noted, were almost all Catholic. The Québec Act of 1774 only solidified the position of Catholicism in the future province and added to the unique identity of the inhabitants of the region. While the emphasis on Catholicism as an essential part of the Québécois identity has all but disappeared today, a fact I discuss later in this chapter, the colonial period sets up the Catholic religion and the province's relationship to religion as different from the rest of the country. Whether religion plays a significant role in peoples' lives, or in the definition of what it means to be Québécois(es), in Québec now one can still see this influence in the numbers of Québécois(es) who personally identify as Roman Catholic. According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), 87.9 percent of the Québec population declared a religious affiliation, compared to 76.1 percent of the Canadian population. More specifically, 74.6 percent of the population of Québec identified as Roman Catholic.[757] This relationship to Catholicism, which is firmly established in the colonial period, inevitably has an affect on minority religious communities in the province. Maghrébine Muslims are just one of many religious minorities in a heavily Catholic province.

Inevitably, with 74.6 percent of the population claiming one religious affiliation, anyone who is a part of the 25.4 percent non-Catholic community may feel like an "other" in some regard. While one's religious affiliation tends to have more complicated implications for one's acceptance in Québec because of its relationship to secularism, this general Catholicism adds another layer of possible tension for my informants.

French colonization of a different kind also influences the experience of North African Muslims in Québec. The French colonial influence on Québec, as mentioned above, is a significant factor in the reception of North African Muslims in that province. Sharify-Funk points out that "the persistence of a common Francophone cultural and intellectual sphere renders core constructs of French culture and history consequential (though by no means

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[757] Statistics Canada. 2013. *Québec (Code 24)* (table). *National Household Survey (NHS) Profile*. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E (accessed February 4, 2016). A telling comparison, using this data base, is between Vancouver and Montréal. Roughly 1 in 2 people in Vancouver have "no religious affiliation" (288,434 out of 590,205) while 1 in 6 in Montréal have "no religious affiliation" (560,650 out of 3,752,475). So the idea that Québec is rigidly secular, often read, antagonistic toward religion affiliation, does not seem to have a statistical founding. That being said, levels of "practice" are extremely low in Québec, with Catholics in the province participating in far lower levels of religious practice than Canadian Catholics outside Québec. So this identification with Catholicism is potentially one of "cultural" religious identification.

determinative) for Québec."[758] The negative colonial memory and its related perceptions of Muslims in France, as I discussed in Chapter 2, inevitably leak into the French-Canadian context.[759] As a result, Muslims in French Canada may face colonial discrimination on two fronts. They are French-speaking citizens fighting against the English in North America, but they are also immigrants from lower status French colonies which are viewed negatively by the country from which Québec takes many of its policy cues. All these things being considered, Arab Canadians, in comparison to Arabs in France,[760] "have never been historically caught up in a colonialist/colonized relationship with their host society."[761] While Muslims in Québec may have to fight against negative stereotypes and perceptions of their religious tradition, these negative perceptions do not necessarily come from a direct colonial history but from more recent interactions between Islam and the West, from immigration patterns/numbers, and from the relationship between religion and the state in Québec.

6.3 Immigration Patterns and Demographics of (Maghrébine) Muslims to Canada/Québec

The history of Québec as a French colony, and its relationship to British colonial rule, has a direct impact on the immigration patterns and policies that are present in the province today. The emphasis on the uniqueness of Québec in Canada, and its French self-understanding, are essential to the immigration history in the province. Before we can address the specific migration of Maghrébine Muslims to Québec, though, it is important to understand the general patterns of Muslim migration to Canada. Again, like my treatment of this theme in Chapter 2, my focus is primarily on the immigration patterns and policies that are directly related to Muslim and Maghrébine immigration to Canada, and more specifically Québec, rather than immigration patterns and policies in Canada/Québec in general.

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[758] Meena Sharify-Funk, "Governing the Face Veil: Québec's Bill 94 and the Transnational Politics of Women's Identity," *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 43 (2011): 140.

[759] Regarding decolonization and its effect on the relationship between and among France, Québec and Canada, see: Robin S. Gendron, *Towards a Francophone Community: Canada's Relations with France and French Africa, 1945-1968* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006); and David Meren, "An Atmosphere of Liberation: The Role of Decolonization in the France-Québec Rapprochement of the 1960s," *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 92, no. 2 (2011): 263-294.

[760] I acknowledge that not all Arabs are Muslims. But this stands true for Muslims as well. Muslim Canadians, in comparison to Muslims in France, have also "never been caught up in a colonialist/colonized relationship with their host society," since Canada is, at its base, not a colonialist power.

[761] Eid, *Being Arab,* 176.

6.3.1 Three Migratory Movements of Muslims to Canada

Like in France, three phases of Muslim immigration can be seen in Canada since the late

nineteenth century.[762] Sharon McIrvin Abu-Laban breaks down the migration of Muslim families

to North America into three phases: the Pioneer Families, the Transitional Families and the

Differentiated Families.[763] The first phase of Muslim immigration, the "Pioneer Families" as

Abu-Laban labels them, began in the late nineteenth century and lasted until the Second World

War. According to McDonough and Hoodfar, these first Muslims were mostly "traders from

Syria and Lebanon, who wandered selling goods in the newly developing Northwest."[764] These

traders would cross back and forth between Canada and the United States, and thus census

reports in 1871 report 13 Muslims in Canada, while the "1881 census does not report any."[765] By

1901 Canada's Muslim community had "grown" to 47 members, mostly in Alberta and

Saskatchewan.[766] Furthermore, with the implementation of "two restrictive Orders-in-Council

enacted in 1908 by the Canadian government" there was a significant slowing of Arab

immigration to Canada at that time.[767] Moreover, Canada's continuous passage law highly

restricted immigrants from "Asian and Arab lands."[768] Those immigrants who were still making

their way to Canada had a specific demographic profile. Like the early immigration patterns of

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[762] For further sources which give overviews of Muslim immigration to Canada see: Sharon McIrvin Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion among Muslim Immigrants and their Descendants," in *Muslim families in North America,* eds. Earle H. Waugh, Sharon Abu-Laban and Regula Burckhardt Qureshi (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1991); Tina W. L. Chui and John Flanders, "Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada: National Household Survey, 2011," *Statistics* Canada, http://publications.gc.ca.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/collections/collection_2013/statcan/CS99-010-2011-1-eng.pdf—a good source for overall statistics on immigration numbers and patterns as of the 2011 NHS; Eid, *Being* Arab; Kazemipur, *The Muslim Question in Canada*; Patricia Kelly, "Muslim Canadians: Immigration Policy and Community Development in the 1991 Census," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1998): 83-102; Sheila McDonough and Homa Hoodfar, "Muslims in Canada: From Ethnic Groups to Religious Community," in *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada*, eds. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: Pearson Education Canada, 2005); Esmail Shakeri, "Muslim Women in Canada: Their Role and Status as Revealed in the *hijab* Controversy" in *Muslims on the Americanization Path?*, eds. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and John L. Esposito (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 159-178; Zabel, *Arabs in the Americas* - specifically Darcy A. Zabel, "The Arab Diaspora in the Americas: Latin America, the United States and Canada," 1-17; and Zine, *Islam in the Hinterlands.* Although some of these sources are now fairly dated, they do provide good overviews of early Muslim immigration to Canada.
[763] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 13.
[764] McDonough and Hoodfar, "Muslims in Canada," 136.
[765] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 14.
[766] Zine, *Islam in the Hinterlands*, 5.
[767] Eid, *Being Arab,* 3.
[768] Zabel, *Arabs in the Americas,* 8. This law was an amendment to the Immigration Act in 1908 that restricted any immigrant from landing in Canada who did not come directly, on continuous passage, from their country of origin.

Muslims in France, this first wave of immigration to Canada was made up mostly of young, male, unskilled workers. They also believed that their migration was only temporary and they wanted to accumulate as much money as possible and return to their home countries.[769]

Although there are some demographic similarities, there were some differences present in the early North American Muslim immigrant experience from the immigrant experience in Europe as we see represented in Cesari's migratory movements in Chapter 2. First, they were much fewer in number and had no real contact with family or others back in their homeland; "ocean travel was expensive, arduous, and time consuming and letters took a very long time."[770] This made it difficult to set up and maintain communities in their host land. Further, while the French had some interaction with Islam before the first wave of migration in the twentieth century through their colonial efforts in Muslim-dominant nations, Canada's first real interaction with Islam came with these Syrian traders in the late nineteenth century. Islam at that time was a generally unknown tradition, and Muslims were marked as distant outsiders.[771] Because they were viewed as outsiders, and because the maintenance of transnational linkages was difficult in this early phase, the Muslim community began as a fairly unified, pan-ethnic and pan-national tradition in Canada.

The second wave of migration that Abu-Laban outlines is what she calls the "Transitional Families." This phase took place between post-World War II and 1967.[772] It is in this phase that Muslim immigration to Canada increased dramatically. According to Eid, 97 percent of Arab migrants who came to Canada between 1882 and 1997 came after 1950.[773] In comparison to 1901 where there were only 47 members of the Muslim community, by 1951 there were three thousand.[774] While the second phase in France was merely an intensification of the first, with unskilled labourers being brought into the country to fill a labour shortage, the situation was a bit different in Canada. This second phase instead brought a large group of students and professionals onto Canadian soil from Muslim countries.[775] During this time, immigrants from

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[769] Eid, *Being Arab*, 4.

[770] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 15.

[771] Ibid., 14.

[772] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 18.

[773] Eid, *Being Arab,* 7. Arab and Muslim are not synonymous here, but a large portion of those considered Arab migrants would have been Muslim. The point is simply to show that the largest portion of migration from Arab countries (which are highly populated by Muslims) occurred since 1950.

[774] Zine, *Islam*, 5.

[775] Eid, *Being Arab*, 9.

North Africa, the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent came to North America "to study and advance professionally. Most of these newcomers were young, unmarried men from well-established families, potential elites in their countries of origin."[776] Instead of coming to Canada to work and send money back home to their families, they were being sent by well-to-do families to advance in education and career.[777] Like in France, the economic setting was prosperous in Canada at the time and there were abundant job and career opportunities to be had. Abu-Laban suggests that this cohort of immigrants had much to do with introducing a "significant twist in North America's exposure to and understanding of Muslims."[778] Muslims were now seen not so much as outsiders, but as business people, doctors and engineers. Although a large portion of these immigrants were educated professionals, there was also a large portion of refugees coming to Canada from countries torn apart by civil war.[779]

It is essential to take a moment and explore the impact of the 1967 Canadian Immigration Act which highly influenced the type of immigrants coming to Canada before I address the third and final phase of Muslim immigration to the country. Under the 1967 Act, immigrants were now able to "apply for immigration on the basis of a point system based on education, training, skills, status as a refugee based on humanitarian grounds or as sponsored applicants of existing Canadian relatives."[780] This point system is a significant difference between immigration policies in Canada and France, and the resultant Muslim communities in both locales.[781] The most significant difference between the two communities based on the point system of immigration is that Muslim immigrants in Canada tend to be of a higher socio-economic status than those in France.[782] Beyer similarly expresses that

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[776] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 18.

[777] A pattern that continues for Maghrébine Muslims in Québec today.

[778] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 18.

[779] Eid, *Being Arab,* 8. Refugees came from Lebanon, Israel (out of the Arab-Israeli conflicts), Jordan, Syria and North Africa (the Algerian war of independence).

[780] Zabel, *Arabs,* 8.

[781] See Khan, *Of Hockey and Hijab,* 116; Laurence and Vaisse, *Integrating Islam,* x; Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, "Transcending Space: Recitation and Community among South Asian Muslims in Canada," in *Making Muslim Space in North America and Europe*, ed. Barbara Daly Metcalfe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 46.

[782] José Casanova explains the differences between American and European immigration patterns in his article "Religion, European Secular Identities and European Integration," *Transit* 27 (2004), Accessed December 3, 2016, http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-07-29-casanova-en.html. While Québec is closer to the American model outlined in this article, it still shows some influence from the French model. This becomes clear when looking at the case of Muslim immigration to Québec. On the one hand, as is the case in Europe, and specifically in France, most of Québec's Muslim immigrants come from one region of origin, namely, the Maghreb. This is an area where

the non-Christian religious populations of these countries [Canada and the US] are not nearly as dominated by Muslims as is the case in many European countries, even though in each case Muslims still constitute the single largest religious identity among immigrant groups after Christianity. Above all, both North American countries have pursued deliberate immigration policies that have had the effect of favouring more educated people with a greater average amount of human capital on arrival.[783]

While the introduction of the point system had a clear and significant impact on the kind of immigration that would follow in Canada, this change did not happen overnight and the second phase, with a new influx of business people, doctors, and engineers, as I mentioned above, found validation in this system. It was consequently not a hard stop transition between Abu-Laban's second and third phases of immigration. Furthermore, family reunification and refugee immigration continued, and continue, to be important aspects of immigration to Canada after 1967; thus immigrants from all socio-economic statuses and education levels continue to immigrate to Canada alongside those who would enter according to the point system.

The final stage of Muslim immigration began in 1968 and continues to the present day. Abu-Laban labels this cohort the "Differentiated Families." This phase is different in both host and home characteristics. Not only do the Muslim immigrants in this wave come from countries with "different geopolitical social characteristics from those of the previous immigrant eras" but "the receiving societies have altered too."[784] The most important difference between this cohort and early cohorts according to Abu-Laban is a greater sensitivity to normative Islam. Muslim immigrants in this phase of immigration then are "more likely to emphasize the public demonstration of religious beliefs."[785] Eid states that,

> whereas most Arab migrants coming to Canada between 1945 and the early 1970s were secular and highly educated, this new migratory wave included many semi-educated and religious migrants who felt the need to institutionalize their faith through the establishment of mosques and religious organizations.[786]

In France, the third wave of immigration highlighted by Cesari brought about visibility because of an expanded community of Muslim immigrants, while in Canada this third wave ushered in a

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Québec falls in line with the European model. On the other hand, like the American model, Québec's Muslim immigrants come from diverse backgrounds when it comes to socio-economic status.

[783] Beyer, "Growing up in Canada," 293.

[784] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 21.

[785] Ibid., 22. It is with this phase where the issue of the hijab becomes a prominent question, as well as a re-emphasis on food law.

[786] Eid, *Being Arab,* 10.

new public presence because the immigrants themselves "are more willing to stand out as different."[787] Furthermore, in this phase, thanks partially to globalization and technological development, these immigrants are able to maintain transnational connections with greater ease than previous immigrants.[788] As a result, what happens in home countries has a greater impact on what happens in the Muslim communities in Canada because they can now be effected by them in a way that was not possible before.[789]

6.3.1.1 Demographics of Muslims in Canada Today

Considering how recent of a phenomenon Muslim immigration to Canada is, these waves of immigration have led to a significant population of Muslims in the country. Unlike France, which does not document religion in its census information, Canada has a history of doing so. There are some "wrinkles" to this data though, as Kazemipur points out. First,

> the question on religion in the "long-form" census is administered only in every other census (e.g. 1981, 1991, 2001, and 2011). Second, starting with the 2011 census, filling out the long-form was declared optional…This means that the 2001 census offers the last reasonably reliable data available for the purpose of estimating the population of faith groups. In the case of Muslims, an additional problem is that, in 1941, the category "Muslim" was dropped from the Canadian census questionnaire, only to be reintroduced forty years later.[790]

All three of these wrinkles mean that there are significant gaps in our knowledge of the actual numbers of Muslims present in Canada now and in the past. There are none the less some good estimates presented by various groups. Kazemipur states that there were roughly 579,640 Muslims in Canada in 2001 (based on the 2001 census data) and 940,000 in 2011 (according to

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[787] Abu-Laban, "Family and Religion," 23. With new discussions around religion in the public sphere, and specifically Islam in the public sphere, it will be interesting to see if a fourth phase of Muslim immigration to Canada will be delineated.

[788] Vertovec discusses the new changes to transnationalism. He suggests that while migrants have always engaged in forms of transnationalism, globalization, and especially the advancement of communication technology, has allowed for greater impact of homeland on the migrant and migrant on the homeland (Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, 15).

[789] This wave of immigration has an affect in post-Quiet Revolution, and nationalistic Québec. It leads to a heightened concern about the social and cultural influence of immigrants from religious minority groups. According to Adams (2007), there are two specific factors that account for this heightened concern: (1) Québec's own anxiety about preserving their own minority culture and language within the North American setting, and (2) their rejection of "traditional values" in the Quiet Revolution which leads to hesitation about the influx of such values from elsewhere (Michael Adams, *Unlikely Utopia: The Surprising Triumph of Canadian Pluralism* [Toronto: Viking, 2007]). I discuss these factors further later in this chapter.

[790] Kazemipur, *Muslim Question*, 25.

Pew Research Center studies in 2011).[791] He goes on to show that if projected estimates are accurate, the Muslim population, which is currently about 2.8 percent of the total Canadian population, will rise to approximately 6.6 percent by the year 2030.[792] Immigration rates are partially to thank for these large numbers of Canadian Muslims, with high fertility rates in the community being the other. In terms of immigration, again, according to Kazemipur, the proportion of Muslim immigrants in the overall immigrant population in Canada has risen from approximately two percent in 1970 to approximately 20 percent in 2000.[793]

While one may imagine that 2.8 percent of the total population (if one considers the 2011 numbers) would not be felt in a country as geographically large as Canada, it is essential to note that the Canadian Muslim population is unevenly distributed among the Canadian provinces. Ontario houses the largest population of Muslims, at 61 percent (again, using the 2011 numbers, this equates to approximately 573,400 Muslims living in Ontario), with Québec coming in second at 19 percent (approximately 178,600 according to the 2011 numbers). Moreover, the concentration in each of these provinces is largely restricted to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and to Montréal.[794]

6.3.2 Maghrébine Muslim Immigration in Québec

The larger patterns of immigration that I described above are reflected in the situation in Québec, with some important nuances.[795] The immigration of Muslims to Québec followed the same

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[791] Kazemipur, *Muslim Question*, 26.

[792] Ibid., 26. Even with these projected numbers forecasting a significant Muslim population in Canada by the year 2030, these numbers are still lower than the *current* proportion of Muslims in France (currently sitting at 7.5 to 10 percent of the total French population). Furthermore, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, there are approximately 2.4 million Muslims living in the greater Paris area, equating to roughly 24 percent of the total population of that region. According to the 2011 NHS, 9.6 percent of the population of Montréal reported themselves as Muslim. While there is a greater concentration of Muslims in Montréal than in the Canadian population overall, this percentage is still less than half of the proportion of Muslims living in Paris.

[793] Kazemipur, *Muslim Question*, 26.

[794] Kazemipur, *Muslim Question*, 26.

[795] For further reading of sources which address Muslim and Maghrébine immigration to Québec see: Adams, *Unlikely Utopia;* "Canada-Québec Accord relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens," Government of Canada, February 5, 1991, accessed February 5, 2016, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/laws-policy/agreements/Québec/can-que.asp; Joseph H. Carens, "Immigration, Political Community, and the Transformation of Identity: Québec's Immigration Politics in Critical Perspective," in *Is Québec Nationalism Just? Perspectives from Anglophone Canada,* ed. Joseph H. Carens (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 20-81; Jack Jedwab, "The Economic Integration of Immigrants in Canada and the Québec Difference," in *Managing Immigration and Diversity in Canada: A Transatlantic Dialogue in the New Age of Migration,* ed. Dan Rodriguez-Garcia (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 203-222;

waves: a small first wave made up of male, unskilled workers; a second, post-war wave of students and professionals; and a third wave consisting of religiously visible differentiated families, as Abu-Laban labels them. There were also two distinct waves of Muslim immigration to Québec that overlapped with these general patterns found in the rest of the country. First, pre-Quiet Revolution Québec, not unlike the rest of the country at that time, was only interested in certain kinds of immigrant groups taking up residence in the province. While in the rest of the country immigration before the implementation of the point system was often influenced by desires for certain ethnic groups, the Québécois government was not interested in any immigration before the 1960s.[796] As Joseph Carens argues, Pre-Quiet Revolution immigrants were seen as threats to the closed communal identity that existed at the time in Québec, an identity that was imagined as rural, French, and Catholic.[797] With the implementation of the point system of immigration in 1967, and the reimagining of communal identity in Post-Quiet Revolution Québec, the immigration pattern to this province changed. Instead of seeing immigrants as a threat to communal identity, these communities were now seen as full of potential to aide in the nationalist endeavour; francophone immigrants were seen as a potential support to the French-Québécois identity rather than a threat. So, there was a change in "type" of immigrant to Québec post-1960. Like the rest of the country, the immigrants who were arriving in Québec after 1967 were from a relatively high socio-economic status, they were able to gain Canadian citizenship relatively quickly, and immigration was seen as central to nation building.[798] While there were similarities present at this time between Québec and the rest of

Marie McAndrew and Mahsa Bakhshaei, "The Difficult Integration of Muslims into Québec since 9/11: International or Local Dynamics?" *International Journal* vol. 67, no. 4, Canada after 9/11 (Autumn 2012): 931-949; "NHS Profile, Québec, 2011," *Statistics Canada*, http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=24&Data=Count&SearchText=Québec&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=24; Leigh Oakes and Jane Warren eds., *Language, Citizenship and Identity in Québec* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Louis Rousseau ed., *Le Québec après Bouchard-Taylor: Les identités religieuses de l'immigration* (Québec, QC: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012)—especially Fréderic Castel, "Un mariage qui aurait tout pour marcher. Implantation et conditions de vie des Québécois d'origine algérienne," 197-239 and Jean-René Milot and Raymonde Venditti, "C'est au Québec que j'ai découvert le vrai islam. Impact de la migration sur l'identité ethno religieuse de musulmans d'origine magrébine," 241-293; and Luc Turgeon and Antoine Bilodeau, "Minority Nations and Attitudes Towards Immigration: The Case of Québec," *Nations and Nationalisms* 20, no. 2 (2014): 317-336.
[796] Carens, "Immigration," 21.
[797] Carens, "Immigration," 39.
[798] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 933.

Canada, there were some important distinctions that arose at this time, and were only solidified by the Canada-Québec Accord on Immigration in 1991.

Because of the new way of viewing immigration after the 1960s, Québec became interested in gaining control over the immigration to the province. Growing out of the concern to make sure that the distinct society that was growing out of the fertile soil of the Quiet Revolution was nourished and not trampled under foot, the Québec government focused on better selection and integration of immigrants in the province. Not only would immigration strengthen the developing Québécois economy but it had the potential to bolster the population of French speakers in the province, thus enhancing the francophone nature of Québec society.[799] To reach these goals, though, Québec needed more say in the processes of selecting and integrating immigrants—hence the establishment of the Canada-Québec Accord. As stated in the Accord itself, "in order to meet the needs and the particular situation of Québec" the Accord covers

> the selection of persons who wish to reside permanently or temporarily in Québec, their admission into Canada, their integration into Québec society, and the determination of levels of immigration to Québec.[800]

While the federal government maintains control over family reunification and refugee immigration, Québec gains complete control over the selection within the economic immigration category and hence can give high priority to French-speaking immigrants.[801] Not only does Québec gain control over the selection of immigrants but it also gains control of the programs and policies in place to aid in the integration of immigrants to the province. Integration programs can also be streamlined to support the acquisition and development of French.

6.3.2.1 Language

The stress placed on language is one of the two significant distinctions between Québec's approach to immigration and that of the rest of Canada, specifically as it relates to the "skilled worker" category of immigration. While in the rest of Canada one gains equal points for knowledge of French or English as a skilled worker,[802] Québec gives the principal applicant 16

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[799] Carens, "Immigration," 21.

[800] "Canada-Québec Accord Relating to Immigration", http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/laws-policy/agreements/Québec/can-que.asp.

[801] Oakes and Warren, *Language,* 133.

[802] "Six selection Factors: Federal Skilled Workers," *Government of* Canada, accessed 17 June 2016, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/apply-factors.asp.

points for oral and written knowledge of French and only 6 points for knowledge of English.[803] Additionally, in Québec if the spouse of the applicant also knows French then an extra 6 points are awarded, while there are no extra points given if the spouse has a knowledge of English.[804] These factors make a clear statement about Québec's self-understanding as a political community: French is at the heart of its understanding of itself as a distinct society.[805] Because permanent residents have the ability, and right, to leave the province into which they initially immigrate, there have to be specific policies in place that help in the retention of the immigrant community. For Québec, emphasizing French language in the immigrant community makes leaving the French-speaking province to resettle elsewhere in Canada a more difficult task for those who only have knowledge of this official language and not English. This emphasis on French helps to keep the immigrants that the province spent so much time and money on bringing to Québec in the province. According to Carens, to make sure that immigrants in the province add to the Francophone society and do not detract from it,

> Québec should increase the proportion of French speakers among the immigrants, should improve French-language training for others, should strengthen the position of French as a common language and the language of public life, and should ensure that the francophone community is open to the "full participation of people of different origins."[806]

So not only are the numbers of French speaking immigrants increased, but the kinds of language training and support that exists in Québec for immigrants is completely geared toward the French language.

According to Turgeon and Bilodeau, the historical tendency, especially before the 1960s, was for immigrants in Québec to adopt English over French. This tendency occurred for two reasons. First, English was seen as the language of upward mobility and business in North America. So it was the smarter choice for immigrants socially and economically. Second, pre-Quiet Revolution nationalism in Québec was not welcoming of outsiders and thus immigrants

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[803] "Permanent Workers: Selection Factors," *Government of* Québec, accessed 17 June 2016, http://www.immigration-Québec.gouv.qc.ca/en/immigrate-settle/permanent-workers/requirements-programs/index.html. In Carens, "Immigration," the author states that at the time of this publication (1995) Québec gave 15 points for knowledge of French and only 2 for knowledge of English while the rest of the country offered equal points for either language (26).
[804] "Permanent Workers: Selection Factors."
[805] Carens, "Immigration," 29.
[806] Carens, "Immigration," 24.

were encouraged, specifically by the Catholic school system, to attend English schools.[807] Thanks to the policies and practices in place in Québec since the Canada-Québec Accord that I have outlined above, this trend is changing and the situation is now drastically different. Instead of choosing English, "in 2006, for the first time in history, the majority of allophones (51 percent) in Québec tended to use French at home."[808] It would appear that the efforts to encourage the French-speaking nature of Québec society through immigration policies and procedures are working.

6.3.2.2 Immigrant Origins

This emphasis on French immigration and integration policies leads directly to the second major distinction between Québec and the rest of Canada, namely, the origins of immigrants in the province. While in the rest of Canada the linguistic and ethnic background of its immigrant communities are vast and varied, in Québec the majority of immigrants come from French-speaking countries. For example, in Québec between 2006 and 2011, as reported in the NHS, the five most important national sources of recent immigration were Algeria (9 percent of all recent immigrants), Morocco (8.2 percent), France (7.6 percent), Haiti (6.6 percent) and China (5.1 percent); Tunisia provided 1.9 percent of immigration during these years.[809] When examining the overall immigrant population in Québec, not just those "recent" immigrants who arrived between 2006 and 2011, this pattern is also evident. The five most significant countries of origin for all immigrants in Québec according to the 2011 NHS are Haiti (7.1 percent), France (6.9 percent), Italy (5.9 percent), Morocco (5 percent) and Algeria (4.9 percent).[810] It is clear that immigrants are being sought out and are in fact coming to Québec from French-speaking nations.[811]

This trend has a direct impact on the immigration of Muslims to Québec, as North Africa serves as one of the most significant pools from which immigrants come to Québec. In the 1960s as Québec was re-envisioning itself, Maghrébine immigration was sought after by Québec

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[807] Turgeon and Bilodeau, "Minority," 320.
[808] Ibid., 320.
[809] "NHS Profile, Québec, 2011."
[810] "National Household Survey."
[811] Although the majority are coming from French-speaking countries of origin, it is still interesting to note that the percentages of the top five national sources of immigration are quite low. It is not like in France where 43.2 percent of immigrants to France have African origins, as I mentioned in Chapter 2. While in France 25.2 percent (one quarter) of all immigrants come from Algeria or Morocco, in Québec Algeria and Morocco account for roughly 10 percent.

because it fulfilled all the check boxes for ideal immigrant groups, i.e. educated, professional, urban, francophone, and familiar with Western life, thanks to the French colonial presence. In fact, "le mariage entre les immigrants maghrébines et le Québec avait tout pour marcher."[812] It is worthy of note that in the beginning of Maghrébine migration to Québec, Maghrébines were seen as the ideal immigrant community; a situation that might be viewed differently today under new feelings of Islamophobia in the West and the rise of militant forms of Islam around the globe. While the countries of the Maghreb are not entirely made up of Muslims and, as a result, one cannot argue that all Maghrébines migrating to Québec are Muslim, one can make a fairly strong case that the majority would be. For example, Castel argues that if one simply looks at immigrants coming from Algeria, 82 to 85 percent of Algerians in Québec are Muslim.[813] One can imagine similar percentages from Morocco and Tunisia.[814] In fact, according to McAndrew and Bakhshaei, North African Muslims make up 60 percent of all Muslim immigrants to Québec.[815] This in turn leads to a significant North African Muslim community in Québec, and considering that most immigrants to Québec settle in the region of Montréal, this community is mostly located there. According to Oakes and Warren, if we look at 2004 as an example, "nearly 86 percent of new arrivals settled in the greater metropolitan region of Montréal."[816] Castel's work on Algerian immigrants to Québec supports this by stating that out of 13,545 "Québécois(es) d'origines Algériennes" 12,615 (93 percent) live in the Montréal region.[817] Furthermore, 80 percent of specifically North African Muslim immigrants live in Montréal according to McAndrew and Bakhshaei.[818] Finally, if one looks at the 2011 NHS, 9.6 percent of

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[812] "The marriage between Maghrébine immigrants and Québec had everything to work" (Castel, "Mariage," 232).

[813] Castel, "Mariage," 201.

[814] There is a significant Jewish cohort amongst the Moroccan immigrant community.

[815] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 938.

[816] Oakes and Warren, *Language*, 134.

[817] Castel, "Mariage," 224.

[818] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 938. In their article, McAndrew and Bakhsahei explain the actual and projected numbers of Muslims in Québec. They explain that, according to the "2001 census, the last one to include questions on religion, more than 100,000 informants claimed to be of Islamic faith, which amounted to 1.5 percent of the Québec population. Although still low, this figure showed a major increase of 141 percent since 1991. Moreover, taking into account the annual intake of immigrants from Muslim countries, it is estimated that by 2011, the number of Muslim immigrants had almost doubled (to around 180,000), while Statistics Canada predicts that by 2031, there will be more than half a million Muslims in Québec, representing 11 percent of the total Québec population" (937-938). In the 2011 NHS, 3.15 percent of the total population of Québec was Muslim (243,430 people checked this box). This is above the predicted amount presented in McAndrew and Bakhshaei.

the population in Montréal reported Islam as their religious affiliation.[819] All of these studies taken together give the picture of a significant North African Muslim community concentrated on and around the island of Montréal.

6.3.2.3 Maghrébine Immigration to Québec

It is clear why Québec wanted immigrants to come from the Maghreb, but it is important to understand why immigrants from the Maghreb wanted to come to Québec. Looking at Algeria as a case study we can see some of the clear reasons why immigrants from the Maghreb were choosing to not only leave their country of origin but also why they were selecting Québec over France. In his chapter in Louis Rousseau's *Le Québec après Bouchard-Taylor: Les identités religieuses de l'immigration*, Castel presents seven socio-historical conditions to take into account for why Algerians have migrated to Québec over the years.[820]

First, the war of independence in Algeria in the 1960s, as I discussed in Chapter 2, leads to complicated relations between Algeria and France. So those immigrants who wanted to leave Algeria for a variety of reasons could choose Québec to stay in a French speaking location but *not* have to move to the country from which they were trying to gain independence.

Second, the Algerian revolution that comes out of the war of independence leads to nationalist fervour and an Arabization of Algeria. For those not interested in either of these trends, migration to Québec becomes an attractive option. During these first two time frames, the Algerians who were migrating to Québec were mostly workers who came to aid in the construction of major projects like James Bay and the Olympic stadium.[821]

The third socio-historical condition was the Berber Spring and the social crisis of the 1980s. During this time frame the immigrant population was mostly university students,[822] seeking a North American style education.

Fourth, and highly important, is the Black Decade, i.e. the 1990s. During this time a massive civil war occurred in Algeria where, between 1992 and 1997, 100,000 to 150,000 lives were lost.[823] At this time, the type of immigration changes slightly, and while there are still

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[819] "NHS Focus on Geography Series: Montréal," *Statistics Canada*, last modified 23 October 2015, http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Pages/FOG.cfm?lang=E&level=4&GeoCode=2466023.
[820] Castel, "Mariage," 203-208.
[821] Castel, "Mariage," 210.
[822] Ibid., 210.
[823] Ibid., 205.

workers and university students migrating from the Maghreb to Québec, large numbers of refugees also migrate at this time. This coincides with the timing of the Canada-Québec Accord and Québec generally gaining more control over immigration to the province. Thus, migration from Algeria to Québec in the 1990s jumps from 1,130 immigrants between 1986 and 1991 to 8,385 between 1996 and 2001.[824]

The sixth and seventh socio-historical conditions that Castel highlights are the educational revolution and the reimagining of family structure. These two reasons lead to a greater desire by some Algerians to leave the country and attend school and build families in a North American context. Ultimately, many of the Maghrébine immigrants that made their way to Québec between the 1960s and 2001 were actively sought out by the Québec government and came to Québec out of a desire to better their, and their families' lives in a context that allowed for the pursuit of what they saw as the American/Canadian dream.[825]

What awaits immigrants in the host context is often not perfectly aligned with the expectations they have before their migration, and the migration process itself has large effects on the way of life for these immigrants. For example, while many North African immigrants were sought after by the Québec ministry of immigration because of their strength in French and their educational levels, when they arrive in Québec they often found that these two factors did not help them in gaining employment in their field. Unemployment among immigrant groups is high,[826] and this trend is reflected in the situation of Maghrébine immigrants in Québec. In fact, unemployment among immigrants in Québec is higher than the Canadian average for immigrants. According to McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "the unemployment rate for recent immigrants (five to ten years) to Québec is almost double that of Canada overall."[827] They argue, convincingly so, that this higher proportion of unemployment is directly linked to the fact that immigrants in Québec are sought after for the knowledge of French, and yet the labour market in

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[824] Ibid., 210.

[825] This was reflected in my informant group. Many of the people with whom I spoke commented on coming to Canada because they were directly recruited by a government official in their country of origin. Furthermore, many people explained to me that Canada seemed like, and was promised to be, a place where they could use their education and job experience to gain a better situation for themselves and their families.

[826] Jedwab, "Economic Integration," 208-209.

[827] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 937.

Québec, and in Montréal specifically, where we know most immigrants in Québec live, requires bilingual skills.[828]

Beyond the struggle for employment, migration to the Québec/Montréal context can colour the daily experience of immigrants in other ways. Unlike in France, where *communautarisme* among the Maghrébine Muslim community is common based on the immigration patterns and trends to the country, North African Muslim immigrants in Québec do not live in ghettos. Although there is a "Petit Maghreb" in Montréal, this is not actually where Maghrébines live in large numbers. Instead, Maghrébine Muslim immigrants live throughout the region, with slightly higher concentrations (one out of ten people) living in the neighbourhoods "d'Ahuntsic-Cartierville, de Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension, de Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grace, et de Saint-Léonard."[829] As argued by Castel,

> si la société d'accueil québécoise, dans le cadre de sa réalité métropolitaine, ne manifeste pas de tendance à engendrer des ghettos (Manai et Richard, 2010, p.52), les arabo-musulmans Québécois n'ont pas davantage tendance à former d'enclaves.[830]

Unlike the situation in Paris, Maghrébine Muslims in Montréal do not face real issues of physical *communautarisme*.

This lack of geographic concentration often means that there is regular interaction with "the other" on a daily basis, a tendency that my informants spoke about frequently. They tended to live in apartment buildings or neighbourhoods that consisted of families of diverse identities, including long-standing, or "pure laine" Québécois(es). While North African Muslim immigrants in Québec are already dealing with the fact of moving from a Muslim milieu to a non-Muslim milieu, the fact that there are no real concentrated communities in Montréal leads to a heightened feeling of living outside of a Muslim context and perhaps to a heightened feeling of the need to practice one's tradition, as we'll see. While in the Maghreb, practicing Islam is almost inevitable, in Canada, and especially in Montréal where one lives outside of a religious enclave, practicing Islam becomes intentional.[831] All that being said, according to Milot and Venditti the Muslim culture of the Maghreb is one of "Islam à la carte," meaning that depending on the country, the

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[828] Ibid., 937.
[829] Castel, "Mariage," 224.
[830] Ibid., 227. "If the Québec host society, in its metropolitan reality, does not show a tendency to create ghettos…Arab Muslim Québécois do not have a greater tendency to form enclaves."
[831] I address this trend in chapters 7 and 8.

region, the ethno-cultural group, etcetera, immigrants will privilege certain practices over others.[832] As a result, Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Montréal may be "more practicing," but what that "practicing" actually looks like may vary to quite a large extent. This flexibility of "necessary practice" becomes all the more important in a post-Quiet Revolution Québec where the relationship between church and state, and the resultant opinion of religion, is especially complicated.

6.4 The History of Church/State Relations in Québec: Quiet Revolution, Laïcité, Interculturalism and the Bouchard-Taylor Commission

Québec has a distinct approach to secularism and a unique understanding of (often labelled, rejection of) Canadian multiculturalism that creates a distinctive setting within which Maghrébine Muslim immigrants live. To understand Québec's version of laïcité and the province's unique policy of interculturalism, it is essential to explore the history of church and state relations in the province. What is it about this history that leads to a strong rejection of religion in the public sphere, albeit "softer" than in France, and to a general discomfort with particular kinds of religious expression? Furthermore, how does this history influence Québec's approach to multiculturalism, namely, interculturalism? Specifically, how does the province's relationship to "the church" influence the Québec side of the intercultural coin?

The history of the relationship between church and state in Québec is similar to that of France, but simply more recent.[833] Eid states that, similar to France, the Catholic Church, before the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, "exerted a profound influence over most institutions, both in the private and public spheres."[834] Eid goes on to explain how, before the Quiet Revolution in Québec, culture was deeply rooted in religion and it "was impossible to think of the French-

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[832] Milot and Venditti, "C'est au Québec," 241-293.

[833] Concerning Church-State Relations in Pre-Quiet Revolution Québec, see: Adams, *Unlikely Utopia;* Michael D. Behiels, *Prelude to Québec's Quiet Revolution: Liberalism Versus Neo-Nationalism, 1945-1960* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985); Dickinson and Young, *A Short History of* Québec—specifically Chapter 7, Church, State and Women in Capitalist Society, 1890s-1930s" and 8, "From Depression to Quiet Revolution"; and Eid, *Being Arab.*

[834] Eid, *Being Arab,* xi.

Canadian and Catholic identities as separate entities."[835] Even the provincial party in control of Québec between 1944 and 1960, the Union Nationale under the leadership of Maurice Duplessis, was strongly aligned with the Catholic clergy.[836] The government and the church supported one another in their efforts and made it almost impossible to take control away from both powers until Duplessis died in 1959. While Duplessis' tenure as premier was seen as the "La Grande Noirceur (The Great Darkness)"[837] by liberals, similar to that of the Dark Ages before Modernization, many also viewed it as a time of religious and cultural purity in Québec. Duplessis' efforts to suppress many modernizing forces in Québec throughout his years as premier actually added fuel to the fire to modernize in Québec, and after a couple of new leaders tried to take over the Union Nationale after Duplessis' death, the Liberal party, under the leadership of Jean Lesage, was elected, and thus began the Quiet Revolution—normally viewed as the large push in the province to modernize and secularize. As Eid states, "within less than twenty years, the close ties between Québec's Roman Catholic Church and the state had largely, if not completely, been severed."[838] This severing is normally viewed as being a direct result of the Quiet Revolution, to which we now turn.

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[835] Eid, *Being Arab,* 33. Michael Adams in his work *Unlikely Utopia* also makes the connection between pre-Quiet Revolution Pure Laine Québécois identity and Roman Catholicism. He argues that to be "Pure Laine Québécois(e)" at this time was to be both French and Catholic (114).

[836] Donald Cuccioletta and Martin Lubin, "The Quiet Revolution: A Noisy Evolution," *Québec Studies*, vol. 36 (Fall 2003/Winter 2004): 127.

[837] Adams, *Utopia*, 113; Mann, *Dream of Nation*, 298.

[838] Eid, *Being Arab*, xi.

6.4.1 Three Approaches to the Quiet Revolution[839]

While the majority of people view the Quiet Revolution as the moment when the province removed education, health care and social services from the hands of the Catholic Church, there are other factors that were at work and influence what we now label the Quiet Revolution. There have been many works written on the Quiet Revolution and its many aspects; I focus on Gauvreau's categorization of the ways of viewing this event/process, as he provides a summary of the various approaches that others have taken. He suggests that in general the Quiet Revolution has been described by most historians as at base

> a series of political reforms undertaken by the Liberal government of Premier Jean Lesage between 1960-1966. In a larger sense, these historians apply the term to the period extending from 1960-1980, an era which they maintain was characterized by "the triumph of neo-liberalism and neo-nationalism."[840]

While these are the simplest ways of describing what constitutes the Quiet Revolution, Gauvreau goes on to suggest that there are two historiographical currents that dominate the understanding of what actually happened during the Quiet Revolution. These two currents are (1) the orthodox liberal, and (2) the revisionist. I add Gauvreau's own work to this categorization and label his approach as (3) the modern Catholic approach.[841] Briefly, according to Gauvreau, the orthodox

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[839] For various overviews and approaches to the Quiet Revolution, see: Yves Bélanger, R. Comeau and C. Métiver, eds., *La Révolution tranquille: 40 ans plus tard, un bilan* (Montréal: VLB, 2000); Claude Couture, *Le mythe de la modernization du Québec* (Montréal: Editions du Meridien, 1991); Cuccioletta and Lubin, "The Quiet Revolution"—Cuccioletta and Lubin argue that modernity, while given a push by the Quiet Revolution was already well underway prior to it; Dickinson and Young, *A Short History of Québec*—specifically Chapter 9, "The Quiet Revolution"; Pierre Fortin, "Québec's Quiet Revolution, 50 Years Later," *Inroads: A Journal of Opinion*, vol. 29 (Summer 2011): 90-99; Alain G. Gagnon and Mary Beth Montcalm, *Québec, Beyond the Quiet Revolution* (Scarborough, ON: Nelson Canada, 1990); Alain G. Gagnon and Michel Sarra-Bournet eds., *Duplessis: Entre la grande noirceur et la société libérale* (Montréal: Editions Québec Amerique, 1997); Michael Gauvreau, *The Catholic Origins of Québec's Quiet Revolution, 1931-1970* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005)—Gauvreau categorization of the approaches to the QR is what I will be primarily using in this section; Jocelyn Létourneau, "Transmettre la révolution tranquille," in *La Révolution tranquille: un* bilan, eds. Yves Bélanger, R. Comeau and C. Métiver (Montréal: VLB, 2000), 79-88; Mann, *Dream of Nation*, specifically Chapter 19, "Noisy Evolution," where Mann shows that the Québec government of the 1960s during the Quiet Revolution "appropriated the strength of three key institutions that had gone into the making of French Canada: religion, language and the family" (301), thus establishing a strong basis for nationalism; Fernand Ouellet, "La révolution tranquille, tournant révolutionnaire?" in *Les Années Trudeau, La recherche d'une société juste,* eds. T.S. Axworthy, and P.E. Trudeau (Montréal: Le Jour, 1990), 333-362; Gilles Paquet, *Oublier la Révolution Tranquille* (Montréal: Liber, 1999); and Ronald Rudin, *Faire de l'histoire au Québec* (Sillery: Septentrion, 1998).

[840] Gauvreau, *Catholic Origins,* 3.

[841] Gauvreau, in his work *Catholic Origin* gives a label to, and an overview of, the first two. His own work is an example of the third, which I have labelled "modern Catholic" here. So this categorization is a combination between his and my own.

liberal view argues that the Quiet Revolution is a fight between modernization and traditionalism. He argues that people who hold this view see the Quiet Revolution as being at its base a war between a Catholic Duplessis State and the secular middle class, which ends up winning the battle.[842] A large component of this fight is economic in nature. Since Duplessis' government "maintained that solutions to social and economic problems were private rather than public issues," Québec became placed on the peripheral of the North American economy.[843] Add to that "Québec's cultural division of labour," i.e. that Anglophones held a "disproportionately large number of the province's higher-status positions, while Francophones tended to be clustered in lower-paying positions," and you have the perfect breeding ground for revolution, quiet or not.[844] In this we see the "duopoly" that existed in the province before the Quiet Revolution: "Anglos ruling commerce, the Church ruling the people, and the politicians brokering between the two."[845] The importance of taking back the economy, from Anglophones and the Church, and becoming "maîtres chez nous,"[846] was consequently essential in the revolutionary process according to many orthodox liberals.

The second current that Gauvreau outlines in his work is the Revisionist current. Instead of seeing the Quiet Revolution as an abrupt break between Church and State and an abrupt modernization of the province, Revisionists view Québec's state and social structure as being fully modern as early as the 1840s; the Quiet Revolution is only a gradual outworking of processes already at play.[847] While it may be gradual, it still ends up in the same place as the orthodox liberal camp, that is, with the strict separation of church and state based on severe anticlericalism.

Finally, debating against these two currents, which both firmly view Catholicism as an object that is being acted upon, with no agency of its own in the modernization process, Gauvreau suggests that there is another way to view what happened during the Quiet Revolution. Instead of Catholicism being the "repository of tradition" and thus innately unable to be in line with the modernization process at work in the province, Gauvreau suggests that for three decades

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[842] Gauvreau, *Catholic Origin*, 6.
[843] Gagnon and Montcalm, *Québec,* 41.
[844] Ibid., 44.
[845] Adams, *Utopia*, 114.
[846] Adams, *Utopia*, 113; Gagnon and Montcalm, *Québec*, 25.
[847] Gauvreau, *Catholic Origin,* 6. This is the stance of Cuccioletta and Lubin, "The Québec Quiet Revolution."

there was a growing ideological diversity in the church that prepared it to modernize alongside the other institutions in Québec.[848] He argues that, in fact,

> the Quiet Revolution was not, as both the "orthodox liberals" and "revisionists" have cast it, about the evisceration of Catholicism from Québec society and state. Rather, it was an attempt through a variety of institutional strategies to make Catholicism coterminous with aspects of modernity, and in so doing, to anchor it more firmly in Québec public culture.[849]

For Gauvreau, the anticlericalism that came out of the Quiet Revolution did not equate to antireligious sentiment.[850] One can see the possibility of a Gauvreauian view of the Quiet Revolution at work in the province when looking at the numbers from the 2011 NHS. As I mentioned above, in this survey 74.6 percent of the population of Québec identified as Roman Catholic.[851] So, in spite of what the orthodox liberals and revisionists may want to believe about what happened during the Quiet Revolution, it is clear that Catholicism, as Gauvreau puts it, is firmly anchored in Québec public culture even fifty years after the fact—a different, more modern Catholicism, but Catholicism nevertheless.[852]

While we may be able to see the historical possibility of the third, modern Catholic option, this does not remove the influence of the first two on the general public's opinions and understandings of history. While it might be well intentioned and argued that the Quiet Revolution was not necessarily a stark break between traditional Catholicism and modern society, and that Catholicism itself was not the paragon of tradition but was instead engaged in the process of modernization on the level of lay belief and practice, the general understanding of history by most Québécois(es) seems to reflect the opposite. The most prevalent idea in the common imaginary is that of the orthodox liberal view: that the Quiet Revolution represents a hard fought, and abrupt, battle between the secular state and the traditional church, which ultimately resulted in the strict separation of church and state and the fear of any return to clerical/religious power.

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[848] Gauvreau, *Catholic Origin*, 7-9. Mann makes a similar argument in her work, suggesting that the "Catholic Church may even have given the state a helping hand" in the modernization and secularization process (301).
[849] Gauvreau, *Catholic Origin*, 12-13.
[850] Ibid*.,* 354.
[851] "National Household Survey."
[852] Géraldine Mossière provides an overview of some of the ways that Catholicism still exists as an important identity in Québec, but is also transformed by religious diversity in the province in her "Religion in Québec and Otherness at Home: New Wine in Old Bottles?" *Québec Studies,* vol. 52 (Fall/Winter 2012): 95-110.

The closeness of this past, of the overarching power of the Catholic Church and the fight to gain independence from it, makes the notions of separation of church and state especially prevalent in Québec. Because of this, any group that represents a challenge to this hard-fought separation is viewed with great suspicion, and even, hostility. It is not difficult to see how observant Muslims would be one such group that challenges this notion. In fact, they were

> seen as an affront to the secular and hedonistic kingdom of post-Quiet Revolution Québec, free at last from the iron grip of the Catholic Church. The kippa and the hijab and the strict sexual code of some Jews and Muslims reminded Québecers of the religiosity they had rejected decades ago.[853]

So, any ethnic or religious community that is seen as a possible threat to the separation of church and state is seen as just that, a threat. Religious symbols, of which food can be one, in this context can, as a result, become political.

The nearness of this history of battle between the church and the state in Québec is an important element of which to take note. Unlike in France where the death knoll of the pervasive power of the Catholic Church rang out over one hundred years ago,[854] the end of this power in Québec is much more recent. Québécois(es) who were a part of this fight are still alive and still personally remember the power that the church once had. They remember the nuns on the street and in the corridors, with their headcovers and eyes pointed to the ground. Thus, the response to Muslim immigrants is perhaps differently motivated for Québécois(es) than for the French. Québécois(es) remember what it was like to be under the power of the Catholic Church and any group that threatens such a pervasive influence of religion over both public and private life is seen as a risk to a return of such an existence in Québec. This history directly impacts the province's understanding of secularization and the integration of immigrants to this secular society. I now turn to Québec's unique approached to both secularization and immigrant integration.

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[853] Haroon Siddiqui, "Muslims and the Rule of Law," in *Belonging and Banishment: Being Muslim in Canada,* ed. Natasha Bakht (Toronto: TSAR, 2008), 7.

[854] Bowen, *Headscarves,* 21. During the Third Republic, c. 1905 with the passing of the law of separation of church and state.

6.4.2 Laïcité /Interculturalism in Québec

With a mix of influence from Canadian multiculturalism policies and France's colonial and secular past, Québec provides a unique case in the debates about secularization, immigration and the consequent integration of immigrants. In this section I explore how Québec has interacted with France's notion of laïcité, resulting in its own "laïcité à la Québécoise." I then briefly address Québec's view on Canada's multiculturalism policy and how this too influences the integration of immigrant communities in this province.[855]

Founded as a colony of France, the influences of French history and policy are evident in Québec. As mentioned above, Sharify-Funk suggests that "close historic ties with France are an additional influence on attitudes toward minority cultures in general, and toward Islam and Muslims in particular."[856] These historic ties affect what Sharify-Funk calls the "unique circumstances of Québec," and she points out two factors as being particularly influential: France's colonial history in North Africa and laïcité.[857] She suggests that while Québec generally settled the secular/religious debate with the Quiet Revolution in favour of secularism, France has had a much more and continued "tumultuous struggle for a secular state."[858]

6.4.2.1 Open vs Rigid Secularism in Québec

While some see the secular/religious debate as settled in Québec post-Quiet Revolution, the situation appears to be more fluid than many imagined. In fact, there seems to be a wavering, or

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[855] For further reading on laïcité/interculturalism see: Jean Baubérot, *Une laïcité interculturelle: Le Québec, avenir de la France*? (France: Editions de l'Aube, 2008); Gérard Bouchard, *Interculturalism: A View from Québec* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015); Gérard Bouchard, "What is Interculturalism?" McGill Law Journal, vol. 56, no. 2 (2011): 395-468; Sarah Jean DesRoches, "Québec's Interculturalism: Promoting Intolerance in the Name of Community Building," *Ethics and* Education, vol. 9, no. 3 (2014): 356-368—argues that Québec's interculturalism reinforces intolerance in Québec's public sphere; Richard Harris, "Interculturalism," in *Multicultural America: A Multimedia* Encyclopedia, ed. Carols E. Cortés (Sage Publications, 2013); Micheline Milot, "Dualisme des conceptions de la laïcité au Québec et en France," *La revue Tocqueville*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2013): 17-42; François Rocher, Micheline Labelle, Ann-Marie Field, and Jean-Claude Icart, *Le concept d'interculturalisme en contexte québécois: généalogie d'un néologisme* (Saint-Lazare, QC: Gibson Library Connections, 2008); François Rocher and Micheline Labelle, "L'interculturalisme comme modèle d'aménagement de la diversité: Compréhension et incompréhension dans l'espace public Québécois," in *La diversité québécoise en débat: Bouchard, Taylor et les autres*, ed. Bernard Gagnon (Montréal: QuébecAmérique, 2010), 179-203; Sharify-Funk, "Governing the Face Veil," 135-163; and Charles Taylor, "Interculturalism or Multiculturalism?" *Philosophy and Social Criticism,* vol. 38, 4-5 (2012): 413-423.

[856] Sharify-Funk, "Governing," 140.

[857] Ibid., 140. Baubérot agrees with Sharify-Funk and presents a historical overview of the influence of France's concept of laïcité on Québec in his work *Une laïcité interculturelle.*

[858] Sharify-Funk, "Governing," 140.

even a conflict, between two different ways of being secular in the province. Adelman and Anctil in their work *Religion, Culture and the State* break down these two forms of secularization in Québec.[859] They suggest that there is a difference between open and rigid secularism based on how the state prioritizes a set of four key principles that are essential to any model of secularization. These four principles are: (1) freedom of conscience and religion, (2) the right of individuals to religious and moral equality, without discrimination (direct or indirect), based on convictions of conscience or religious convictions, (3) separation of church and state and (4) state neutrality towards religion.[860] According to Adelman and Anctil rigid secularism prioritizes the third and fourth principles over the first two and can lead to a "greater restriction of the practice of religion in the name of neutrality."[861] This is the model that seems to be operative in France. Open secularism, on the other hand, prioritizes the principles in the opposite direction and is "based on the protection of freedom of religion, even if this calls for the relativization of the principle of neutrality."[862] At the level of the state, this second, more open secularism is what is active in Québec.

According to the findings of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, which I discuss in detail below, there are three important characteristics of open secularism. The first is that open secularism is

> an institutional arrangement that is aimed at protecting rights and freedoms. State neutrality towards religion and separation of church and state are not seen as ends in themselves, but as means to achieve the fundamental twofold objective: respect for religious and moral equality, and freedom of conscience and religion.[863]

In this, the Bouchard-Taylor Commission is in line with the definition of open secularism as outlined by Adelman and Anctil above, namely, that the first two principles of secularism are the goal and the second two, the means to achieve that goal.

Second, unlike rigid secularism, which may erode religious belief in the population, open secularism does not "serve to neutralize or erase religion as an identity marker."[864] This is an

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[859] These two forms of secularization are similar to Fetzer and Soper's categorization of strict and soft laïcité in France that I discussed in Chapter 2.
[860] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion, Culture, and the State,* 87.
[861] Ibid., 87.
[862] Ibid., 87.
[863] Ibid., 91.
[864] Ibid., 91.

important characteristic of the form of laïcité that is present in Québec, that is only furthered by the policy of interculturalism which I address below.

In an open secular state, one can maintain one's religious identity publicly alongside one's other various identities. This is because of the third characteristic of open secularism as found in the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, namely, that "open secularism is directed at state institutions but not at individuals who use these institutions or even work in them as employees."[865] While this idea has been challenged many times in Québec, especially with the proposal of Bill 60 (the Charter of Québec Values) by the Parti Québécois in 2013, Bouchard and Taylor highlight the importance of applying secularism to institutions and not people. It is these characteristics which highlight the difference between the secularism that is found in France and that in Québec. While in Québec, individuals can maintain their religious identities in public, even to the point of wearing symbols of those identities in various public institutions, in France the importance of state neutrality over individual rights is stressed. We can see an example of this in the ban on headscarves in public schools in France.

6.4.2.2 Québécois Interculturalism

Baubérot furthers the discussion of French versus Québécois laïcité and posits that the Québec model of laïcité both deviates from and moves closer to the French model. It is the interaction of laïcité with Québec's interculturalism that makes it distinct and Baubérot suggests that Québécois laïcité is "une laïcité interculturelle."[866] It is the crisis of reasonable accommodation which will be looked back upon as the key moment in the constructions of such an intercultural laïcité.[867]

Before exploring the intercultural side of this laïcité, it is important to briefly address the multiculturalism against which it is pitted in the rest of Canada. While rigid laïcité encourages the suppression of cultural diversity, multiculturalism in Canada has the exact opposite goal in mind. In fact, according to Karim, Canada "is the only one (country) to have a law recognizing the cultural diversity of its population."[868] The multicultural character of Canada allows ethnic,

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[865] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 91.
[866] Baubérot, *Laïcité interculturelle*, 233. I explore this intercultural laïcité below, when discussing interculturalism in Québec.
[867] Baubérot, *Laïcité interculturelle*, 248.
[868] Karim "Crescent Dawn," 268.

racial, religious identities to not only be recognized but to have an active role in the Canadian public sphere. It follows that Canada's multiculturalism policy prevents strict laïcité from being a viable policy option.

Multiculturalism has some potential negative connotations for minorities. By allowing different groups to maintain their unique identities, multiculturalism, according to Cesari and McLoughlin, "reinforces the exceptionality of Muslim immigrants without providing them with a means for real social advancement."[869] This is only one of the many potential drawbacks of multiculturalism, outlined by critics of the policy.

According to Leroux, Québec has six reasons for rejecting multiculturalism.[870] The second half of these critiques is the most important for the purposes of this study.[871] These unique rejections come from the idea that (1) multiculturalism is a political strategy to neutralize the Québécois identity, i.e. to put it on level playing field with all other ethnic identities in the country, and consequently not recognize its place as a founding nation,[872] (2) multiculturalism is a "post-national ideology that challenges the relative hegemony of any national group," and (3) multiculturalism is alien to Québec's own model of cultural pluralism.[873]

Whereas multiculturalism restricts the kind of secularization that is viable in most of Canada, Québec's approach to multiculturalism, different from the rest of the nation according to many in Québec, results in a different working out of secularization and leaves open the door for the possibility of a unique laïcité to be at work in the province. Eid in his work on Arabs in Montréal elucidates this difference:

> whereas Canadian multiculturalism pursues a politics of recognition of cultural differences, Québec's politics of immigration attempts to achieve a difficult balance between two objectives: accommodating cultural diversity while integrating ethnic minorities in the French-speaking community.[874]

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[869] Cesari and McLoughlin, *European Muslims,* 3.

[870] Darryl Leroux, "Québec Nationalism and the Production of Difference: The Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the Herouxville Code of Conduct, and Québec's Immigrant Integration Policy," *Québec Studies* 49 (Spring/Summer 2010): 109.

[871] The first three critiques that Leroux outlines are common critiques of multiculturalism. These are that (1) multiculturalism is seen as being an elite discourse, coming from above (something that Québec firmly rejected with the Quiet Revolution), (2) multiculturalism is held up as an ethical norm, and (3) that it is pushed as a historical necessity. (Leroux, 2010, 109).

[872] This critique is also highlighted in Tim Nieguth and Aurélie Lacassagne, "Contesting the Nation: Reasonable Accommodation in Rural Québec," *Canadian Political Science Review* 3, no. 1 (2009): 13.

[873] Leroux, "Québec Nationalism," 109.

[874] Eid, *Being Arab*, 189.

To achieve this balance the Québec government adopt a policy of interculturalism.

Sharify-Funk states that "multiculturalism has always been contested in the province of Québec," because of the fear of the "erosion and eventual erasure of Francophone identity and culture."[875] Rather than a policy which protects various identities, the French view multiculturalism as a policy which in facts endangers identity. To protect the Québécois identity that is seen as possibly under threat by the multicultural model the policy of interculturalism tends to be preferred in Québec. Sharify-Funk effectively lays out the differences between multiculturalism and interculturalism in her article analyzing the Bouchard-Taylor report. She states that,

> while both ideals are founded in the ideal of pluralism, they differ in that multiculturalism allows difference to exist side by side (which, in its worst form, may lead to ghettoization), while interculturalism assumes that people of different cultures will interact with, and be transformed by, encounters with each other while maintaining some basic social values.[876]

Those who immigrate to Québec, or who are part of an ethnic or linguistic minority group, then are expected to adopt a Québécois identity while at the same time maintaining their many and various other identities which are respected in a country such as Canada. Interculturalism respects differences and accommodates pluralism but expects a common culture to be promoted and maintained in the province.[877]

What is the base of the promoted common culture? Language. According to Adelman and Anctil, while multiculturalism is allegedly language blind, interculturalism is language bound.[878] While language is often seen as the most significant characteristic of the common culture, Gérard Bouchard presents seven components of Québec interculturalism as "integrative pluralism," of

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[875] Sharify-Funk, "Governing," 140.

[876] Sharify-Funk, "Muslims and the Politics of "Reasonable Accommodation," 543-544. Both multiculturalism and interculturalism are ideals, which are often more similar to the other than their proponents might argue. The key difference is that, on the whole, intercultural Québec and its resultant culture is less diverse than the rest of multicultural Canada. This means that the "transformation" as Sharify-Funk calls it, or the "accommodation" that must take place in Québec for members of minority communities is clearer and more straightforward. As Charles Taylor suggests in his foreword to Bouchard's *Interculturalism: A View from Québec*, interculturalism is best suited to a context where there is a historic cultural majority. As I note below, Québec has a clear cultural majority (with 70% of Québecois claiming French ancestry, speaking the French language and having family heritage in Québec, which makes it distinct from the situation outside of Québec which is much more diverse in ancestry, language and heritage.

[877] Oakes and Warren, *Language*, 41.

[878] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 4.

which language is only one.[879] Those seven components are: (1) "respect for rights, in a spirit of democracy and pluralism"; (2) "promotion of French as the main language of civic life and shared culture"; (3) consideration of the Québec nation as made up of (a) a francophone majority and (b) ethnocultural minorities; (4) an emphasis on integration; (5) "promotion of interactions, rapprochement and intercultural exchanges as means of integration"; (6) the development of a shared culture with contributions from the majority culture and minority cultures; and (7) "the promotion of a Québec identity, sense of belonging, and national culture" made up of the majority culture, the minority cultures and the shared culture mentioned above.[880] Interculturalism is at its foundation, tolerance and respect for differences within a French language setting.[881] What is noteworthy is that, although language is considered the crux of the common culture in Québec, the crisis of reasonable accommodation which erupted in the mid-2000s was not based primarily on language accommodations, but on religious ones.

6.4.2.3 The Bouchard-Taylor Commission

As Québec's official policy with regard to cultural pluralism, interculturalism gets clarified and made more specific through the reasonable accommodation debates and the Bouchard-Taylor Commission.[882] This commission was meant to clarify exactly what is reasonable accommodation and how this process was being worked out in intercultural Québec. The call for the commission, and the need for clarification of reasonable accommodation and interculturalism, came out of a series of events that were reported in the media throughout 2006 and into early 2007. These included but were not limited to, a young girl wearing a hijab to play soccer, requests for worship spaces in public facilities, a young Sikh man wearing a kirpan to school, requests for separate swimming times in public pools to accommodate gender segregation, and a YMCA in the Montréal neighbourhood of Outremont tinting its windows at

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[879] Bouchard, *Interculturalism: View from Québec*, 32.

[880] Bouchard, *Interculturalism: View from Québec*, 32-33.

[881] Leroux, "Québec Nationalism," 107.

[882] For further explorations of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission and its effect see: Adelman and Anctil, *Religion, Culture, and the State*; Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation, Report (Québec: Government of Québec, 2008); Patrice Brodeur, "La Commission Bouchard-Taylor et la perception des rapports entre "Québécois" et "musulmans" au Québec," *Cahiers de recherche sociologique* 46, (September 2008): 95-107; Leroux, "Québec Nationalism" 107-126; Nieguth and Lacassagne, "Contesting the Nation," 1-16; Louis Rousseau, "Découvrir le fil religieux de la conscience identitaire au Québec," in *Le Québec après Bouchard-Taylor: Les identités religieuses de l'immigration*, ed. Louis Rousseau (Québec, QC: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012), 1-32; and Sharify-Funk, "Muslims," 535-553.

the request of the Hasidic Jewish community across the street.[883] The final straw came with the infamous town of Herouxville introducing its town charter. Despite being 100 percent French speaking, 96 percent Catholic and with no Muslims, Jews or Sikhs living there at the time, the town introduced a code of behaviour for immigrants that included forbidding women from being stoned, carrying a weapon to school, and covering one's face.[884] The media representation and public opinion around these events led people to believe that society had perhaps "gone too far" in accommodating immigrant communities in the province.[885]

Although the accommodation crisis was mostly a crisis of perception,[886] it none the less led premier Jean Charest to appoint a two-man commission to investigate the issue of reasonable accommodation in Québec; this would become known as the Bouchard-Taylor commission.[887] After ten months, more than 900 briefs and more than 240 testimonies during 31 days of public hearings, Bouchard and Taylor found that in general Québec was doing alright with the issue of reasonable accommodation and that the perceived increase in accommodation cases was just that, a perception.[888] In fact, when considering the French definition of "*accommodement*," negotiations which use compromise and goodwill, the commission found that on the ground "*accommodements*" were already happening, and that these "issues were easily resolved if left to the good sense of the Québécois *within* civil society."[889]

Curiously, the Bouchard-Taylor Commission itself may have led to an increase in anxiety about, and resistance to, "other" cultures. A study conducted by Leger Marketing for the Association of Canadian Studies one year after the Bouchard-Taylor commission showed that 40 percent of Francophones viewed non-Christian immigrants as a threat to Québec society, compared to 32 percent in 2007.[890] Furthermore, and especially relevant to this study, only 40

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[883] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 5. It is important to note that all these accommodations are by no means a threat to the French language that is thought to be at the base of the common culture.

[884] Jasmin Zine, "Unsettling the Nation: Gender, Race and Muslim Cultural Politics in Canada," in *Islam in the Hinterlands: Muslim Cultural Politics in Canada*, ed. Jasmin Zine (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012), note 8, 58.

[885] Sharify-Funk, "Muslims," 538.

[886] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 13; Sharify-Funk, "Muslims," 539.

[887] Bouchard and Taylor, "Building the Future." For excellent summaries of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission see Adelman and Anctil's *Religion, Culture and the State: Reflections on the Bouchard Taylor Report* and Sharify-Funk's "Muslims and the Politics of Reasonable Accommodation."

[888] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 31.

[889] Ibid., 114.

[890] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 100. Language is a significant factor in this. While the Leger study showed an increase in anxiety and resistance among Francophone Québécois(es), non-Francophones showed significantly

percent of Francophones had a positive attitude toward Muslims (down from 57 percent before the Bouchard-Taylor Commission).[891] In light of these hesitations or perceptions, one may expect an increase in negative behaviours towards members of minority groups, especially Muslims, in Québec. But instead, the Bouchard-Taylor Commission found that one's belief and one's practices are not always in line. In fact, "one might carry negative stereotypes about a group as an abstraction that shapes your attitudes, but in day-to-day practice, those attitudes do not affect behaviour."[892] So, although the majority Francophone culture may report some negative perceptions of some minority immigrant groups, particularly Muslims, the situation on the ground is often one of cordial relations between neighbours, especially if those neighbours speak French.

Keeping all of these intricacies of the Québec setting in mind, Malak suggests that, "despite its acknowledged imperfections, Canada remains the best space and environment for Muslim culture and identity to flourish in a pluralist, secular state."[893] While Muslims, and other immigrants, in Québec must integrate amidst some deeply held political and social policies, there are also policies that are in place to allow these immigrants perhaps more of an opportunity than in a country such as France, to create and live out a "Québécois Islam"—as long as "Islam du Québec" strengthens, rather than weakens, the French-speaking national identity.

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smaller numbers. For example, in regards to non-Christian immigrants, only thirty-two present of non-francophones harboured the same fears as francophones, and this was a decline from thirty-four percent in 2007. Another example of this difference between francophone and non-francophones post-Bouchard-Taylor was that "only 25 percent of Francophones thought they had a responsibility to make a greater effort to accept minority groups' customs, while 74 per cent of non-francophones thought they should make a greater effort." (Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 101).

[891] Ibid., 101.

[892] Ibid., 104. This seems to continue to be the case on the ground in Québec up until the introduction of Bill 60, and moreover, the increase in sensationalized terrorist attacks around the globe with the creation of ISIS. My fieldwork occurred in a pre-Charter of Québec Values and pre-ISIS Québec and is reflective more of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission Québec.

[893] Amin Malak, "Towards a Dialogical Discourse for Canadian Muslims," in *Belonging and Banishment: Being Muslim in Canada,* ed. Natasha Bakht (Toronto: TSAR, 2008), 75.

6.5 Québécois Nationalism

Starting as a colony of France, an island in a sea of British colonies, Québec has a long history of national identity politics and negotiations.[894] The questions of "what does it mean to be Québécois(e)?" and "who can claim this identity?" are always at the forefront of the discussion in Québec. As a minority culture, trying to maintain its culture amidst the encroaching Anglo-Canadian and Americanized cultures that surround it, is a difficult and persistent aspect of life in the province. While the Québec "nation" may be a minority within North America, the culture itself is fairly homogeneous. For example,

> in Québec, fully 70 percent of the population claim French ancestry, have French as their mother tongue, *and* have family heritage in Québec stretching back three generations or more. This is a province that, although diverse, has a dominant ethnic and linguistic majority—a "nous."[895]

When comparing this to the rest of Canada, which has no clear majority and is in fact made up of multiple minorities, there arises a different understanding to what it means to be a part of the "nous." While in the rest of the country, what makes you different is what makes you part of "us," there is the potential for a different working out of the national "nous" in Québec. According to Turgeon and Bilodeau, newcomers who speak a different language and profess a

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[894] For further reading on Québecois nationalism see: Cory Blad and Philippe Couton, "The Rise of an Intercultural Nation: Immigration, Diversity and Nationhood in Québec," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 35, no. 4 (2009): 645-667; Joseph H. Carens, ed., *Is Québec Nationalism Just? Perspectives from Anglophone Canada* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995); Jean-Francois Caron, "The Exclusive Nature of Québec's Contemporary Nationalism: The Pitfalls of Civic Nationalism," *International Journal of Canadian Studies,* vol. 47 (2013): 221-238; Eid, *Being Arab*; Gilles Gougeon, *A History of Québec Nationalism,* trans. Louisa Blair, Robert Chodos and Jane Ubertino (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1994)—presents the facts of Québec nationalism across four historical periods through interview with historians. Part 4, exploring nationalism between the 1960s and 1990s is especially useful here; Richard Jones, *Community in Crisis: French-Canadian Nationalism in Perspective* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972)—while dated, still an excellent exploration of how "the French Canadian looks at himself" which Jones argues is as a member of a colonized minority; Michael Keating, *Nations Against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Québec, Catalonia and Scotland*, 2nd edition (New York: Palgrave, 2001)—specifically Chapter 1, "Nation, Nationalism and the State," and Chapter 4, "Québec"; Darryl Leroux, "Entrenching Euro-Settlerism: Multiculturalism and the Politics of Nationalism in Québec," *Canadian Ethnic Studies,* vol. 46, no. 2 (2014): 133-140; Jocelyn Maclure and Alain G. Gagnon, eds., *Repères en mutation: identité et citoyenneté dans le Québec contemporain* (Montréal: Québec-Amerique, 2001); Mann, *The Dream of Nation*; David Meren, *With Friends Like These: Entangled Nationalisms and the Canada-Québec-France Triangle*, 1944-1970 (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012); Nieguth and Lacassagne, "Contesting the Nation," 1-16; Oakes and Warren, *Language, Citizenship;* Jose Santiago, "Religion, secularisation and nationalism in Québec and the Basque Country: A Comparative Approach," *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 21, no.1 (2015): 120-138; Garth Stevenson, *Parallel Paths: The Development of Nationalism in Ireland and Québec* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006).
[895] Adams, *Utopia*, 125.

different culture may be viewed as a threat to the minority nation. If one adds to that the fact that newcomers are more likely to express loyalty to the central state than the minority nation,[896] one can understand the potential hesitancy to include such newcomers in the national "nous."[897] But what is this "nous" based on in Québec?

First, the very idea of a Québécois "nation" is something that must be addressed. There are two different possible meanings to the word nation in Québec, according to Adelman and Anctil. First, nation is simply the citizenry of a country of a state. One is a part of the nation if one has citizenship in that locale and "citizenship in its classical sense refers to certain duties and rights associated with one's membership of the polity."[898] One is part of the Canadian nation because one is a Canadian citizen. While some may argue that Québec is, or should be, a separate country, with separate citizenship, most do not intend this meaning of "nation" when referring to Québec. It is the second definition of nation which becomes the focus in Québec, namely that nation can also refer to a "distinct people characterized by common descent and an accrued shared history that includes a common language and culture."[899] Considering the quotation describing the "ethnic and linguistic nous" above which clearly highlights ancestry, language and culture, we can assume that this second understanding of nation is what is generally at work in Québec.[900] The Québécois people do not see themselves as citizens of a separate country (though many would wish that to be the case), but instead as a distinct type-two nation located within a type-one nation, a nation within Canada.[901]

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[896] Can see this trend in my data, where my informants claim Canadian identity over Québécois identity.

[897] Turgeon and Bilodeau, "Minority Nations," 317.

[898] Oakes and Warren, *Language*, 18.

[899] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 75.

[900] We can see the first definition of nation at work in the province when we examine the two referenda for independence in Québec. In these referenda, all Québec citizens voted, i.e they were part of the national community. Other French Canadians who would share the ethnic national identity, as outlined by Adelman and Anctil, with Québécois did not have the right to vote. So there is, or has been, clearly some presence of the first definition of national identity at work in the province.

[901] Jasmin Zine, "Introduction," in *Islam in the Hinterlands: Muslim Cultural Politics in Canada*, ed. Jasmin Zine (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012), 26. My data reveals a complex interaction between these two types of nation as outlined here for my informants. The difference between the two types of nation are made evident in the claims to nationhood that my informants make in Montréal. In fact, my informants seem to separate the two into separate categories of citizenship and nationality. Furthermore, a third "national" identity becomes highlighted, especially for 2nd generation people in Montréal, and that is Montréal identity itself (Oakes and Warren, *Language*, 146).

6.5.1 Characteristics: Language, Economy, Religion

While the idea of the Québécois nation was firmly rooted in both Catholicism and the French language before the 1960s, the Quiet Revolution changed this root system as did the establishment of the independentist movement and the Parti Québecois. The secularization and consequent removal of the Catholic side of the national identity leads to a heightened emphasis on French as the distinguishing factor of Québécois nationalism. As Adams states, with a poetic flourish, "with the communion host now absent from the tongues of Québec Catholics, the tongue itself became a preoccupation."[902] In fact, the "French Fact" becomes the absolute crux on which Québec nationalism rests, post-Quiet Revolution. It is the defining characteristic, the main form of attachment to the Québec nation and the "indispensable tool of integration."[903] As I argued in the section on immigration above, in an effort to maintain the uniqueness of the Québec nation, all new members of the nation must speak French. This "French Fact" was highlighted with the introduction of The Charter of the French Language (famously known as Bill 101) in 1977. This Charter not only made French the language of commerce and business in the province, but it also restricted access to English schools to a small population of people, namely those children who had a parent who received most of their education in an English language school in Québec.[904] This article on the Language of Instruction effectively removed the right of immigrant children to attend English language schools and forced education in French upon all immigrant communities.[905]

Carens argues that with French as the ultimate and sole focus of the nationalist agenda, the door opens for a clear form of multiculturalism in the province, even if the Québécois people choose to reject that term in favour of interculturalism. The fact remains that if the collective is defined "with almost an exclusive emphasis on the French language as the shared cultural commitment" and with a general de-prioritization of the specific culture, ethos, history and way

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[902] Adams, *Utopia*, 116.

[903] Oakes and Warren, *Language*, 94.

[904] Gagnon and Montcalm, *Québec*, 183. Chapter VII of the Charter addresses Commerce and Business, and Chapter VIII addresses Education, or the Language of Instruction as it is called in the Charter. "Charter of the French Language," last modified January 1, 2016, accessed February 16, 2016, http://www2.publicationsduQuébec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=2&file=/C_11/C11_A.html. A later Supreme Court of Canada decision extended this to children who had a parent who received most of their education in an English language school anywhere in Canada.

[905] My husband, the child of two immigrants from France, remembers as he puts it, "being kicked out of English school" with the implementation of Bill 101 in the province.

of life that used to define "Francophone Québecer," then Québec will begin "to look more and more like a French-speaking version of English-speaking, multicultural Canada."[906] If the "French Fact" is the only fact on which the nation is defined then one can see the possibility for Carens' thesis to play out on the ground in Québec.

The problem is that, as I outlined when discussing interculturalism and the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, the shared culture that minorities are expect to integrate into clearly has more than language as its base. Language plays a key role in Québec nationalism, but it is not the sole concern.[907] One example is the significance of progressivism to Québécois nationalism. Québécois pride themselves on being more progressive than the rest of Canada, especially regarding social services, peace activism, feminism, human rights, labour rights, environmentalism, etcetera, many of which really grew out of the Quiet Revolution. Progressivism, as reflected in these realms is a large part of the Québécois national identity, which is reflected in their willingness to pay extremely high taxes to support many of these initiatives.[908]

While the push towards secularization, and the resultant emphasis on the French language and progressivism in the national identity are some of the largest effects of the Quiet Revolution, there were also significant reforms in the economic realm of the province at the time. With the expansion of Hydro Québec by Québec Premier René Levesque, Québec's economy grew exponentially and was seen as a symbol of the strength and initiative of the provincial government to complete ambitious projects. Furthermore, while Catholicism was removed from the national identity, a secularism swept in to take its place. It was not enough to simply remove Catholicism to the private sphere and redefine the Québécois nation based on economy and language, but a secular, anti-clerical, character was adopted. These economic and social innovations of the 1960s Quiet Revolution, which strengthened the Québec identity and society, led to an increase in nationalistic fervor and began a push toward sovereignty. In fact, the neo-nationalists who arose out of the Quiet Revolution were committed to reformulating and redefining "traditional French-Canadian nationalism so as to reflect their intense commitment to

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[906] Carens, "Immigration," 68, 72.
[907] Again, Bouchard outlines 7 components to Québec interculturalism (Bouchard, *Interculturalism: View from Québec,* 32-33).
[908] This emphasis on progressivism may have an impact on Muslims living in the province. Islam is often painted as a tradition that is a threat to progress, which would not sit well with the national self-understanding of many in Québec.

building a modern, secular, Québécois nation-state in the province of Québec."[909] It becomes clear how the Quiet Revolution and the neo-nationalism that grew out of it provided fertile ground for the development of the sovereignty movement and specifically the development of the Parti Québécois (PQ).

The PQ was formed in 1968 under the leadership of René Levesque and in less than 10 years went from "registering less than 10 percent of the vote" to winning the provincial election in 1976.[910] While this first PQ government failed in its attempt to gain sovereignty for Québec, it did advance many policies (economic, cultural and linguistic) that helped Québécois nationalism to flourish. As Keating states, "given the electoral pendulum in Québec, it was only a matter of time before the PQ returned to power, and this duly occurred in 1994."[911] This time around the PQ government did not wait long before proposing another sovereignty vote and leaders of the "yes" side used nationalist doctrine to support the drive for sovereignty and vice versa. Lucien Bouchard, leader of the federal Bloc Québécois party, even called sovereignty the "magic wand" for Québécois solidarity.[912] For many in the province, then, the nationalist agenda was not only linguistic, but also firmly economic, secular and political—a Catholic form of secularity, but secular nevertheless. At the time, Québec became the most socially-progressive province in Canada, including strong support for gender rights, among the many others I described above.

The influx of individuals/communities that threatened any aspect of this nation could be seen as problematic for those who held a "not just about French" notion of what it means to be Québécois(e). In this there is an important generational divide. Those who lived through the Quiet Revolution and feel as though the battle for secular, socially-progressive Québec was fought in their backyards tend to highlight the secular nature of Québec nationalism over their children's generation. This fear over the death of a national culture, whether linguistically or otherwise based, can lead to a greater need for feeling secure and, as a result, to the potential for what Jasmine Zine calls "paranoid nationalism" in parts of Québec.[913] This type of nationalism can lead to fear of any group that may be viewed as wishing to remain distinct. While the majority of Muslim Canadians (57 percent) believe that most Muslims in Canada wish to adopt

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[909] Behiels, *Prelude to Québec's Quiet Revolution,* xi.
[910] Keating, *Nations against the State*, 81.
[911] Ibid., 84.
[912] Ibid., 85.
[913] Zine, "Unsettling," 55.

Canadian customs, non-Muslim Canadians tend to think (again 57 percent) that Muslims wish to remain distinct from society at large.[914] This makes the potential for a "Québécois Islam" particularly difficult.

6.5.2 "Québécois Islam" Definitional Issues[915]

Unlike the situation in France where there is clear discussion of the possibility, or lack thereof, of an "Islam de France," the need to define a "Québécois Islam" or "Islam du Québec" is not a pressing issue in the province. With the operative principle of interculturalism at work, the idea that there would be an "Islam du Québec" would only highlight the principle itself, namely that both one's minority identity is respected while at the same time being fully integrated into the common culture that I described above. For many Québécois(es), the presence of an "Islam du Québec," would be a triumph of the intercultural model. The question becomes, on the ground, do Muslims in Québec feel as though they can claim the Québécois national identity that is outlined above? Do they feel that they can live their Muslim identity to the fullest extent while at the same time integrating into the "shared Québec cultural identity"? Do they feel as though they can claim both the "Québécois" and the "Muslim" side of a possible "Islam du Québec?"

In Québec, the situation is often seen as being similar to that of France when it comes to this "national" form of Islam. While for many being French-speaking is the key factor in the process of becoming Québécois(e), Eid suggests that the

> Frenchification process amounts to more than mere language acquisition; it also entails, in keeping with a Republican ideology *à la Francaise*, that immigrants eventually blend in, identify with, and participate in, Québec's dominant French-speaking culture.[916]

This French-speaking culture is inevitably made up of more than just the language, no matter how people may argue otherwise. Being French-speaking may be the most fundamental and important characteristic of the Québec national identity, but it is not the *only* characteristic, as I

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[914] Adams, *Utopia*, 93.

[915] For insight into some of the various ways that Muslims interact with "being Muslim" in Canada see: Natasha Bakht, ed., *Belonging and Banishment: Being Muslim in Canada*. For the purposes of the discussion around "Québécois Islam" see especially Haroon Siddiqui's chapter "Muslims and the Rule of Law," in this anthology. For other sources on Islam in Canada and Québec see: Beyer and Ramji, *Growing up Canadian*; Karim, "Crescent Dawn," 262-277—"the particular challenge that Muslims in Canada, as well as those in other Western countries, face is the perception of essential difference from other groups" (274); Muhammad Nimer, *The North American Muslim Resource Guide: Muslim community life in the United States and Canada* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Zine, "Unsettling," 41-60.

[916] Eid, *Being Arab*, 190.

argued above. To protect the shared culture of the "nation," especially in Québec where it is seen as under threat from outside forces, certain "foreign" cultural practices are expected to be kept separate from the French or Québécois identity. This is why, although mostly French-speaking, Muslim immigrants to Québec may still feel as though claiming both sides of the "Québécois Muslim" identity is a difficult thing to do.

6.5.3 "Québécois Islam" Identity Issues

The Republican mindset can be seen in Québec's policy of interculturalism which I discussed above. Groups are not expected to ignore their unique identities,[917] but they are expected to unite around a common Québécois identity. In contrast to Canada's policy of multiculturalism, which critics in Québec suggest has been "the main contributor to the crystallization of fragmented ethno-cultural communities undermining social cohesion," interculturalism insists on some level of assimilation, similar to the French Republican model.[918] Immigrants are expected to "interact with, and be transformed by, encounters with each other while maintaining some basic social values (finding a middle ground between 'mosaic' and 'melting pot')."[919] Sharify-Funk explains that the perceived need to preserve the founding, official culture of Québec leads to this need for and emphasis on interculturalism in Québec.[920] After all, "how can the French-speaking majority welcome others when it is uncertain about its own future and what its parameters have become under pressure from mass culture, globalization, and the abandonment of traditional modes of life?"[921] This uncertainty not only leads to a strong forms of nationalism, but to heightened pressure to leave aside possibly threatening identities to the "official culture" of Québec. The question then arises, because of this emphasis on preserving the Québécois culture: Is it possible for Muslims to be publicly both "Québécois(e)" and "Muslim"?

Because of the complicated dance between *communautarisme* and individual rights that exists in all of Canada, especially in Québec, the awkward response to this question is "both yes and no." While Muslim immigrants in the province are expected to adapt to, and adopt, the

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[917] The unique identities apply also to the variations of Muslim identities present in Québec. There is not one sole "Muslim identity" in the province, but instead, a great diversity of sectarian and interpretive approaches to Islam. This means that there is not one sole way that Muslims in the province interact with the Québécois identity.
[918] Eid, *Being Arab*, 190.
[919] Sharify-Funk, "Muslims," 544.
[920] Ibid., 544.
[921] Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 11.

French-speaking Québécois identity, their individual identities, whether religious or otherwise are inherently respected based on the policy of pluralism that exists in the province. The fact that Québec is understood to be a pluralist society, as clearly indicated in the policy statement made by the Québec government in 1990 called *Let's Build Québec Together: Vision: A Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration*, means that any strong version of cultural assimilation is not possible.[922] So while French serves to bind those living in Québec in a common culture, there are limits to this binding—at least according to the official democratic and pluralist policies at work in the province.

Whether or not the official policy indicates that one can hold on to and live out one's various identities alongside the "Québécois" identity, public opinion on the matter can vary dramatically. One may assume that as long as immigrants speak French and thus aid in the continuation of the French-speaking culture they would be not be seen as a threat, and in fact would be a benefit to the Québécois communal identity. There is an fascinating diversity of opinion that arises when considering this idea. For example, as I discussed in the section on immigration earlier in this chapter, the largest population of immigrants to Québec comes from North Africa and is consequently both French-speaking and Muslim. In fact, "in 2010, approximately 37% of immigrants admitted to Québec were from Africa (the majority being from Maghreb)."[923] Furthermore, unlike in other cases of immigration, where knowledge of French is low, this is not the case for Maghrébine immigrants, especially Algerian immigrants, of whom about 97.7 percent know French.[924] According to the "French Fact" of Québec national identity and the official policy that exists in the province, this immigration should be seen as ideal. In fact, when the government proposed to restrict any one continent's contribution to immigration to 25 percent,[925] the general population rejected this proposal wholeheartedly as this would restrict the influx of French-speaking North African immigrants to Québec.[926] This seems like a clear preference for immigrants who speak French no matter what other identities they hold. Yet, there is a "significant degree of anti-Muslim prejudice in Québec (as in other parts of

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[922] Carens, "Immigration," 47.

[923] "The Changing Face of Québec Immigration," Canada Visa, accessed February 16, 2016, http://www.canadavisa.com/the-changing-face-of-Québec-immigration.html.

[924] Castel, "Mariage," 219.

[925] Some sources say 30%.

[926] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 943.

Canada and the West more generally)."[927] Nieguth and Lacassagne explain that in spite of giving priority to immigration from the Maghreb out of a desire for French-speaking immigrants, fear of the Muslim "other" plays into "the notion of a "self" whose very identity is under threat and therefore needs to be protected all the more vigorously."[928] For many in Québec, they did not fight hard to defend their cultural identity against the English that surrounded them, or fight hard to develop a socially-progressive culture, just, in their eyes, to have another threat come in and not only take the Anglophones' place but drive gender and sexual identity rights back a century.[929]

This means that the Muslim side of a Muslim immigrant's hyphenated identity may be more restricted than one may imagine. In fact, "visible cultural difference" continues to be an issue in Québec, as is made evident by the proposal of Bill 94.[930] There is an understanding at work in many Western locations, in Canada, and especially in Québec, that "if one holds Muslim identity he/she is seen as immediately having divided loyalties, between which he/she must choose."[931] The same does not necessarily apply to Catholic Québécois(e), which is telling.

As I suggested in Chapter 2, it is important to note the conflation of the term Islam, or Muslim, with many other identity labels, usually ethnic or national. In Québec, "Arab" and "Muslim" are sometimes seen as expressing the same thing.[932] As noted by Eid, "because prejudicial representations of Islam often fuel Western perceptions of Arabs, it becomes harder for Canadian Muslims of Arab origin to dissociate their religious from their ethnic identity."[933]

This fusing of ethnic and religious identity can lead to frustration. Zabel expresses the frustration behind such a situation for someone whose religious/ethnic identity is seen as "other." She states: "I got tired of feeling that I could only be either Arab (and therefore foreign) or Canadian (and therefore 'normal'). I got tired of having to demonstrate that I could be both and still be 'normal.'"[934] That being said, other studies have shown that there is a distinction to be

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[927] Nieguth and Lacassagne, "Contesting," 10.
[928] Ibid., 10.
[929] Ibid., 10.
[930] Sharify-Funk, "Governing," 137.
[931] Zine, "Introduction," 18. While this may seem like specifically anti-Muslim sentiment, the situation in Québec has more nuance than other Western locations. It appears that Québec's enthusiasm for Bill 94, or a general head scarf ban, or a Charter of Québec Values "seems to be more about their feeling culturally threatened by minority groups than specific anti-Muslim sentiment" (Adams, *Utopia*, 120).
[932] Eid, *Being Arab*, 187.
[933] Ibid, xiii.
[934] Zabel, *Arabs*, 212.

made between ethnic and religious identity markers in Québec, with ethnic identities being more respected and liked than religious ones.[935] McAndrew and Bakhshaei show that language does in fact matter in the perception of Québécois(es). According to McAndrew and Bakhshaei, a 2010 study showed that when the word Arab or Muslim was used, the response by Québécois(es) was more favourable than when the word Islam was used. In fact, 41 percent of Québec informants said they had a very unfavourable opinion of Islam, followed by 21 percent having an unfavourable opinion of Judaism.[936] The problem seems to be religion in general, rather than ethnicity or even religious individuals[937]—but in the case of Islam, the antipathy to public expressions of religion, which remind the older Québec population of the time when priests and nuns walked the streets and met with political leaders behind closed doors, is aggravated by the perceived socially regressive nature of Muslim immigrants.

One may wonder if this negative attitude toward religion in general, and Islam in particular, has an impact on the practices of, and feeling of belonging of Muslims in the province. I was surprised to learn that, according to a 2003 study, "Muslim immigrants in Québec do not exhibit a high degree of religious identification, or practices—much less in fact than their counterparts in the rest of Canada."[938] Specifically, this study showed that only 55 percent of Muslims in Québec considered religion important, compared to 64 percent in Canada overall, and only 13 percent defined themselves as strong religious believers, compared to 31 percent in Canada overall.[939] It is hard to know if this difference in religious identification and

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[935] This is most likely an outworking of the secularization of the Quiet Revolution which leads to a hesitation about any religious identity out of fear of a return to the pre-Quiet Revolution church state relationship.

[936] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 940.

[937] Other studies show that Québécois(es) believe "Muslims," not just "Islam," are problematic. For example, Adams expresses that out of all Canadians, Québécois(es) are the most likely (at 67 percent) to believe that Canadian Muslims want to remain distinct from the larger society, something that is undesirable in intercultural Québec (Adams, *Utopia*, 119). In line with the study cited above by McAndrew and Bakhshaei, Québécois(es) are the least likely of all Canadians to express concern about terrorism according to Adams. He suggests that this nervousness about Muslims wanting to remain distinct is more about "feeling culturally threatened by minority groups," and religious ones at that, "than specific anti-Muslim sentiment" (Adams, *Utopia*, 120). Overall, it becomes clear that there is a discomfort in Québec around Islam, and Muslims, but the reasoning behind that discomfort tends to be more nuanced, directly influenced by Québec's form of nationalism, than it may be outside of Québec.

[938] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 939. It's important to note that this study was conducted in 2003 and there is a very good chance that these numbers would be significantly different in 2016, especially considering more recent trends in religious identification and practice as well as heightened anxiety around religious extremism.

[939] McAndrew and Bakhshaei, "Difficult Integration," 939.

practice is a result of the cultural context in Québec compared to the rest of Canada, or if it is attributed to the fact that the Islam of the Maghreb is an "Islam à la carte," or if it is merely a matter of reporting, but Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in the province potentially de-emphasize this side of their hyphenated identities for any or all of these reasons. What might this reveal about the general feeling of belonging in the province?

As Zine argues in her introduction to *Islam in the Hinterlands*, "far from being isolationist, Muslims in Canada feel an allegiance to the nation and a sense of pride as Canadians"[940] This general feeling of belonging and allegiance to Canadian identity is reflected in my data set as well, as I demonstrate in my Québec data chapter. While my informants did not so much claim Québécois identity as they did Canadian identity, Baubérot shows that the same feelings of belonging and identification with the national Québécois identity are present among Muslim immigrants in Québec as well. According to his 2008 study,

> les nombreux migrants que j'ai interviewés m'ont à peu près tous livré le même message: jusqu'à présent, nous sommes bien au Québec (bien par comparaison avec d'autres territoires, bien malgré les difficultés), nous nous sentons Québécois, nous ne demandons pas mieux qu'être parmi les artisans du Québec de demain. Mais attention, si le Québec dérape, si son "nous" n'est pas inclusif, nous irons ailleurs.[941]

For the Muslims in Baubérot's study, and potentially others, Québec has an inclusive "nous" of which they feel comfortable being a part. They feel comfortable being both "Québécois(e)" and "Muslim" and as a result feel comfortable engaging in practices that reflect both of these identities.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the four orienting principles active in Québec that may affect the Maghrébine Muslim immigrant community in the province, namely, colonialism, immigration, secularization and nationalism. I interrogated what restrictions or aides might be in place to hinder, or to help, Muslim immigrants in Québec in their identity negotiations and integration

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[940] Zine, "Introduction," 7.

[941] "The numerous immigrants that I interviewed for the most part all gave me the same message: up until now, we are comfortable in Québec (especially in comparison to other places, even in light of the difficulties), we feel Québécois(e), we don't ask anything more than being part of the artisans of Québec of tomorrow. But rest assured, if Québec skids, if its "us" is not inclusive, we will go elsewhere" (Baubérot, *Laïcité interculturelle*, 250).

processes. I examined these contextual particularities to set the stage, so to speak, for the everyday experience of my informants in Québec, especially their interactions with food and food practices.

In this endeavour, I asked the question: Can Muslims in Québec feel comfortable claiming both sides of their "Québécois Muslim" identity? The answer that I provided throughout this chapter is a complicated "both yes and no." This is due in part to the colonial history in the province, which I showed firmly establishes French and Catholicism as orienting characteristics of the common Québec culture. I argued that this inevitably affects the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study as they directly feed into one aspect of this culture while in the same moment detract from, or remain on the outside of, the other. While their culture and language are familiar, thanks in part to both Québec and North Africa being former colonial enterprises of France, their religious traditions are seen as foreign and threatening to the minority nation that was started as a French colony in a sea of English. It follows that any food practices that highlight this difference, or that seem to threaten the self-understanding of the minority nation, may be considered problematic. On the other hand, those food practices that feed into this separation, this uniqueness, this common Québécois culture, may be lauded and encouraged.

This common Québécois culture, which finds its beginnings in the colonial experience, consequently affects the immigration policies of the province. In the second section of this chapter I outlined the various migratory movements of Muslims to Canada and then the specific immigration of Muslims to Québec. I showed that for the Québec government, who hold a large degree of control over the immigration to the province with its own ministry of immigration, maintaining French as the language of society is essential in its selection and integration of immigrants in their province. These resultant immigration policies directly affect my informants as they belong to the most prominent community of immigrants to the province, namely Maghrébines. While in the rest of Canada immigrant linguistic and ethnic backgrounds are vast and varied, I showed how in Québec, the largest immigrant communities to the province are from French-speaking countries of origin. After discussing the reasons that Maghrébine immigration has been historically attractive to the Québec government and society, I presented Castel's argument for why immigration to Québec might be attractive for the Maghrébine immigrant him/herself. I then concluded this section of this chapter by showing how various

immigration policies might affect immigrants on the ground level in Québec, namely through a brief exploration of unemployment and the lack of ghettoization in Montréal. Overall, while one may assume that the linguistic similarity and strength offered by the influx of Maghrébine Muslim immigrants to Québec would provide a comfort for both sides, it becomes clear that this is not always the case, due to the complicated relationship between religion and the state found in the province.

Because of this fact, I then explored the history of secularization and its implications for minority religious communities in Québec. In pre-Quiet Revolution Québec, Catholicism was foundational to French Québécois self-understanding as a distinct nation within a nation, and the affect of this religious culture can still be felt in the province today, making anyone who holds a religious affiliation outside of Catholicism potentially feel on the outside. These feelings of "otherness" are only increased with the arrival of the Quiet Revolution and the laïcité that sprung from it. While on the policy level, differing religious identities would be welcome in the collective culture post-Quiet Revolution, the situation on the ground is often different. I presented the three possible approaches to the Quiet Revolution as found in Michael Gauvreau's work *The Catholic Origins of Québec's Quiet Revolution, 1931-1970.* Gauvreau suggests that alongside the orthodox liberal and the revisionist modes of understanding the Quiet Revolution, which see the Quiet Revolution as ending in the evisceration of Catholicism from Québec society, one may also see it as a means of making Catholicism coterminous with modernization and therefore taking up an important place in Québec common culture. While it is possible to see this continuation of Catholicism in Québec post-Quiet Revolution, the more common experience is one of hostility toward religion in the public sphere. Those Québécois(es) who "fought the good fight" to remove religion from the public sphere are as a result hesitant to allow for any religious manifestation in public, leading to the possible restriction of public displays of one's religious identity in the province, including one's engagement with distinct food practices, as we will soon see. For many Muslims, who may not see the same degree of separation between their public and private lives, this approach to religious life may inherently conflict with their self-understanding. On the flip side, the image of Islam as a religion which inevitably wants a say in public life, including discussions concerning social policies, may lead post-Quiet Revolution Québécois(es) to question the acceptability of Islam in the Québécois nation. For them, religious practice is meant to be kept in the private sphere, and thus requests for halal food in public

institutions, or any other expression of religious food practice in public, may be met with hostility.

After addressing the Quiet Revolution in Québec, I continued by exploring the resultant policies of secularization and interculturalism that emerged in the province. First, I presented Adelman and Anctil's open versus rigid secularism, of which they argue that open secularism is what is active in Québec, in comparison to France which practices rigid secularism. Based on the protection of "freedom *of* religion," in comparison to "freedom *from* religion," neutrality is not necessarily the end goal of the laïcité that is active in Québec. I showed how this allows for religion to remain as an identity marker for people in the province, as long as that identity is in conversation with and transformed by, to some extent, the common Québecois culture. This is the basis of the province's policy of interculturalism, which I tackled next. In this section I show how, according to Gérard Bouchard, interculturalism can be understood as integrative pluralism within a French language setting. This intercultural self-understanding becomes important in the development of Québecois nationalism.

The idea that there exists a unique Québec nation adds another contextual element within which immigrants to the province must interact that is not present in other provinces of Canada. While a Muslim immigrant to Ontario or Manitoba or British Columbia, or any other province or territory, for that matter, may feel as though they are simply part of the multicultural mosaic that makes up the Canadian nation, a Muslim immigrant to Québec must negotiate their identity within a specific "national" understanding, not based on the multicultural mindset but an intercultural one. The fact that there is a common "national" culture with which any immigrant is expected to interact, and be changed by, makes the situation in Québec distinctive.

After exploring the characteristics of the common national culture in Québec, namely, language, economy and religion, I examined the possibility of a "Québecois Islam." I claimed that with the operative principle of interculturalism at work, the idea that there would be an "Islam du Québec" would only highlight the principle itself, namely that both one's minority identity is respected while at the same time being fully integrated into the common culture that I described in this chapter. For many Québécois(es) the presence of an "Islam du Québec" would be a triumph of the intercultural model. That being considered, I posited whether Muslims in Québec felt as though they could actually claim both sides of a potential "Québécois Muslim" identity. I showed that while Muslims in Québec, who are by and large French-speaking, thanks

to the immigration policies I addressed above, feed into one aspect of the Québec common culture, they are also seen as a threat to the secular, socially-progressive characteristics of that common culture as well.

How might this affect minority immigrant communities' food practices? In the rest of the country, the immigrants' distinct food practices are celebrated not only as evidence of Canada's multicultural mosaic, but as part of the very foundation of Canadian food culture. In Québec, the one province that has some understanding of a "national" food culture, immigrants may feel more pressure to adjust their food practices to fall in line with "common culture." Overall, considering that the common culture, and thus, "national" identity is based on the French language and a secular self-understanding, the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study may feel both part of and yet inherently separate from the "Québécois" identity and food practices will often reflect this tension. The next two chapters address these questions and show how the four factors I presented in this chapter affect the daily experiences of my informants in Montréal.

Introduction to the Montréal Case Study: Food as Bridge for the Transnational Immigrant

I pulled my car into a snow bank that should have been a parking spot, cursing the Montréal winter in which I found myself, while trying to maintain my researcher composure. I was outside of an apartment building in the east end of Montréal, a neighbourhood I had never been to, but appeared to be like many of the other neighbourhoods in the city. I had been in Montréal for a couple of weeks and had been struggling with the snow, the narrow streets of my Plateau neighbourhood, which only became narrower in the depths of winter, and the unfamiliar accents all around me. After months away in France I was "at home" in my own country, but feeling incredibly out of place, acutely aware of my outsider Anglophone Ontarian status in the heart of a Francophone Québécois neighbourhood. As I turned off my car, I prayed that I could get to the door without having to have a conversation with a Québécois-speaking local, an experience that always left me devastated and unsure that I had actually learned any French at all in my six visits to France. Luckily the snow was keeping most people at bay on this particularly wintery day and I made a smooth transition from my car to my informant's door.

As soon as my informant opened the door, welcomed me with French kisses and spoke a simple sentence of greeting, I took a deep breath in, my shoulders relaxed and I felt at ease. This drastic difference in feeling from the loneliness I had been experiencing, to immediate familiarity and ease, revealed to me just how comfortable I had become in the Maghrébine community in France. For the first time since arriving in Montréal I felt "at home." Sitting in her living room, drinking mint tea and talking French with a French/Maghrébine accent was so refreshing to me, so familiar, so comfortable.[942] As much as I was not fully an insider in the Maghrébine community in Paris, I apparently became more integrated there than I could have anticipated.

Chatting with that Algerian woman in Montréal put me at ease. I felt safe and happy. I loved talking about France and colonialism with her. I loved speaking about Islam and food. I felt as though I could have been in Paris in one of my Maghrébine informants' living room that afternoon, other than the mounds of snow outside. It struck me as funny that my own research seemed to apply to my own experience in the moment. I write about Maghrébine immigrants

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[942] Here we can see the effect of memory on the data-gathering process. As I described in Chapter 1, my memories of my time in the field in Paris were providing me with some semblance of insider status in the Montréal community right from the beginning. Furthermore, this jolt back into comfort was thanks to my own embodied forgetting. See Coleman, "On Remembering and Forgetting," 220.

who use food to connect to homeland, to connect with their broader transnational community, to feel at home—and that is exactly what food was doing for me on that day. By drinking mint tea, I was transported to Paris, to the café at the Grande Mosquée, to a place of comfort and security. I am not North African. I am not Muslim. But when I drink mint tea or eat a plate of couscous I feel a part of that community, and at that moment, it felt like home to me, strangely enough, much more so than the Canadian context I was living in.[943] I wondered how similar that feeling was for my potential informants in Montréal.

The arguments made in the next two chapters are based on the data I collected during my six-month fieldwork in Montréal, Québec, in 2013. These chapters explore three important themes that arose from my data analysis of my interviews and participant observation in the Maghrébine Muslim community in Montréal, namely: identity, transnationalism, and practice. Within each of these themes I explore the role that food and food practice play, and show how, for the group of Maghrébine Muslims whom I studied in Montréal, food is an important field of entry and understanding into more overarching areas of one's lived experience as an immigrant. Food, in fact, is one of the main realms within which my respondents negotiated their transnational immigrant identities in the context of secular Québec.

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[943] This experience similarly happened to me with the Eid Al-Adha. I had not eaten Maghrébine food in a couple of months and had generally been out of the loop of that community for that time. I wrote in my journal from that day: "We started with tea, coffee and sweets as people joined "la fête." I had forgotten how delicious, how comforting, mint tea is. As I sipped at the tea and heard my friends speaking a mix of Arabic and French around me I felt at home" (Oct 15, 2013). Furthermore, this experience continues to happen to me. With every couscous that I make, with every pot of mint tea, I am immediately taken back to so many afternoons in my informants' living rooms, and I immediately feel a sense of "home," which equates to the feeling I get when I smell my mother's apple cider cooking on Christmas Eve.

Chapter 7: "Tout le monde est chez soi ici"[944]: Food as a Lens into Identity Negotiations and Transnational Efforts in Montréal

7.1 Introduction

As I mentioned in the introduction to these Montréal case study chapters, the ability of "familiar" food, smells, and tastes, to transport, transform, and identify was evident from my first day in the field in Montréal. The essential nature of food not only for myself, but also for my informants, framed all my work in this community, from that first afternoon in that informant's living room, until the celebration of the Eid Al-Adha eight months later in another's home.

As transnational Muslims in Québec, my informants experienced similar things to the situation I describe above on a daily basis in their lives in Montréal. Throughout this next chapter I reveal how food helped to identify them in the dominant non-Muslim Québec context. It served as a means of distinction between "us" and "them," which is essential in any identity negotiation. For the informants in my study these differences were made evident in not only "what" but "how" one ate. Not only did my informants see themselves as distinct from the non-Muslim Québécois(es) because they did not eat pork, drink alcohol and only consumed halal meat, but also because they were ingredient checkers, did not eat to excess, did not waste food, ate communally and would not so easily eat at restaurants. These approaches to food were both culturally and religiously important to many of my informants and were what they saw as distinguishing marks between their identity group and the "others."

While the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study in Montréal saw themselves as distinct in many ways, for the most part they also saw themselves as similar to other Canadians; they were comfortable in their transnational identities. For this reason, I spend the second half of this chapter addressing the role that food plays in how my informants created and maintained their transnational connections. I argue that not only did eating specific things in specific ways allow them to cross the border between home and host-land, but it allowed them to create home in host-land as well. For many of my informants, food was the access point to memories of the homeland and thus to the home identity. Because of the large distance between Québec and the Maghreb, these transnational actions were especially important for my Montréal informants since

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[944] 130727_001—"Everyone is home here."

physically traversing the distance was difficult and expensive. What is critical to note here is that by being free to express the Maghrébine and Muslim side of their transnational identity, these informants were often more excited to make efforts toward claiming and presenting the Canadian/Québécois side of their transnational identity as well. My Montréal informants were adamant about maintaining traditional religious and cultural food practices from the Maghreb and yet also engaged with and produced cultural food items and experiences from Québec. Integration was not about assimilation; it was not necessary to leave one's culturally and religiously specific practices aside, but one could hold them alongside the Québécois common culture.

7.2 The National, Transnational and the Religious: Identity Negotiations Among Maghrébine Muslim Immigrants in Montréal

As I stressed in Chapter 3 on Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in France, identity negotiation and consolidation are foundational to the immigrant experience. When trying to find one's place in a new setting, one must explore from where one has come and the kinds of identities that one wishes to hold, or inevitably will hold. This applies in the Québec case as well. As it was for my informants in France, identity negotiation is complex and multivalent for my Québécois(es) informants, and therefore I cannot apply a perfect typology of identity negotiation to their experience. While in the France case study, good examples of all four of Salman Akhtar's typology of identity negotiations were present. In Québec, the identity negotiation and presentation process was fairly consistent, with most of my informants falling into a hybrid category between Akhtar's Ethnocentric and Bi-Cultural categories that I call "Transnational" identity negotiation. I return to how this identity negotiation process is illustrated through my informants' food practices later in this chapter.

To begin, it is important to note some simple statistics on how people identify themselves when asked a straightforward question about their identity. As I suggested in chapter 3, when asked, "comment voulez-vous que je vous identifie,"[945] a person's first response is often telling of the primary identity that they hold. In the case of my informants in Montréal, the group was fairly evenly split between religious and national primary identity. Of my 32 informants, 12

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[945] "How would you like me to identify you?"

claimed Muslim identity first (38 percent of informants), 19 claimed national identity (59 percent), whether Canadian (nine informants) or nation of origin (ten informants), and finally, one informant claimed gender as her primary/first identity (3 percent).[946] There was no real consistency in how people stressed primary identity based on country of origin. Whether someone was born in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia or Canada, the responses were spread across the board between national and religious identifications, and between Canadian and Maghrébine. Gender, on the other hand, did appear to have an affect on which identity is claimed first. For women, 46 percent claim Muslim identity first whereas only 20 percent of the men interviewed claimed Muslim identity as their first identity. Instead, 50 percent of male informants claimed Canadian identity first and 18 percent of females did. For those claiming one of the Maghrébine identities first, gender did not appear to play any significant role, with 32 percent of females claiming this and 30 percent of males claiming Maghrébine identity first. Overall, while in Paris there were a great variety of responses to the identity question, in Montréal there was much more consistency, with people generally professing religious or national identity as their first, and often primary, identity.[947]

7.2.1 "All Canadians are Immigrants": National Identity Claims

When it comes to national identity only 11 of my informants in Montréal did not claim Canadian identity to some extent. Only 11 people specifically stated that they were "not Canadian." The other 21 informants all gladly professed this national identity, or professed their desire to claim it, even if not all of them actually held Canadian citizenship. There may be multiple explanations for the ease with which my informants claimed this identity, in comparison to the French situation that I described in Chapter 3 where national identity seemed to be a much more difficult and often unclaimed identity for immigrants. First, the fact that there is no colonial history between Canada and the Maghreb may be an underlying reason why Maghrébines in Canada may have less inner conflict in claiming the national identity than they would in France. One

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[946] It's important to note that none of my informants claimed "Québécois" identity as their primary identity. In fact, only two of my informants claimed this identity at all. I address the idea of "Québécois" identity, and the way that my informants interact with it, below in section 5.2.1.1.

[947] It is possible that there are other identities that my informants may see as primary, which they did not profess here. Or they may see one of the identities that they proclaimed later in their list as their primary identity. Furthermore, how one identifies oneself may change dependent on what stage of the immigration trajectory they are currently at, and/or what identity is contested or important to them at that moment in time.

informant in Montréal explained to me that during colonization by the French in Algeria native Algerians were given identity cards that said "Français(e) musulman(e)." They were not considered Algerians and they were not considered just French.[948] As I presented in Chapter 2, Muslims in Algeria were labeled as "Français(e) musulman(e)," an act that may understandably lead to the lack of desire of claiming "French Muslim" identity now. Canada does not have this same history with the Maghreb so there may be less hesitation in claiming a "Canadian Muslim" identity.[949]

Beyond the simple lack of a colonial history in Africa, the general openness to diversity and to religious and cultural difference in Canada (or at least the perceived openness) is another possible reason for people's desire to profess a Canadian identity. One informant expressed to me that he was proudly Canadian, and it was because of the diversity of Canada that he saw as the "richesse du Canada—une diversité qui fait que c'est un pays qui est riche, et ça donne de beaux mélanges, une mixité."[950] For many like him, this diversity of Canada, and more importantly the acceptance of this diversity, as often represented by "open secularism,"[951] is what made them proud to hold this national identity. One woman explained to me at great length about an anecdotal experience that she and her children had undergone that led to a greater pride in Canadian identity. She explained how her son had gone to a school barbeque, and after explaining why he could not eat the meat that was being prepared the teacher went and bought him, and the other young Muslim students present, halal meat so they could enjoy the barbeque with everyone else. She went on to express how this solidified not only her own Canadian identity but also that of her son.

> C'est un barbecue pour tout le monde, tu manges, tu manges, tu ne manges pas, allez-y. Mais ce geste-là, ça lui fait une marque à l'intérieur jusqu'à maintenant. "Tu te rappelles

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[948] Personal correspondence with the researcher, Feb 8, 2013. Also, Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization,* 2.

[949] I return to the comparison of historical backgrounds and their effect on the Maghrébine Muslim immigrant, in the conclusion to this dissertation.

[950] 130727_001—"The richness of Canada. A Diversity that makes it a rich country and that gives beautiful blends, a mix."

[951] The anecdotal experiences that I describe here are an excellent vignette into the "open secularism," defined by Adelman and Anctil, at work in Montréal. As I discussed in Chapter 6, in a context governed by open secularism, one can hold religious identity publicly alongside other identities, as under this type of secularism the protection of freedom of religion is primary "even if this calls for the relativization of the principle of neutrality" (Adelman and Anctil, *Religion*, 87).

l'année passée?" Donc maintenant, il cherche l'halal, il mange l'halal. Mais il sait qu'il est canadien. Il défend son pays.[952]

For this woman, and her son, this proof of acceptance of difference is what made them feel like there was nothing standing between them and claiming the Canadian identity. Throughout my time in the field in Montréal, I heard many other examples like this one, of Québécois(es) going out of their way to make sure that everyone in the group was accommodated, no matter their cultural or religious background. For the informants who delivered these stories, it was clear that these anecdotal experiences had a large effect on their own understanding of who they were and how they could relate to the broader Canadian national identity.[953] These experiences gave the necessary evidence to my informants that Canadian identity was for all, no matter one's origins and practices.[954]

Unlike in France, where there seemed to be a difference between French citizenship and French nationality in my informants' approach to claiming that identity, in Québec the response was much more straightforward. One simply claimed or did not claim Canadian identity regardless of one's actual citizenship. For example, of the 16 informants who had Canadian citizenship, 13 claimed the identity, two did not, and one claimed Québécois identity.[955] On the other hand, of the 14 informants who did not hold Canadian citizenship, eight consequently did

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[952] 130518_001—"It was a barbeque for everyone, you eat, you eat, you don't eat, go on. But this gesture, that made a mark in him up to this day. 'You remember last year?' So now, he looks for halal, he eats halal, but he knows that he is Canadian. He defends his country."

[953] See Valerie Amiraux and Javiera Araya-Moreno, "Pluralism and Radicalization: Mind the Gap!," in *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond*, eds. Paul Bramadat and Lorne Dawson (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2014), 92-119. Amiraux and Araya-Moreno suggest that anecdotal experiences have more power to change perceptions than grand, overarching stereotypes. In this, not only might the Muslim immigrant change his/her opinion of the "other" but the "other" may change his/her opinion about the Muslim immigrant within these interactions. In order for these anecdotal experiences to happen, there must be interaction among and between groups. A problem arises from the uneven distribution of Muslims in Canada. As I discussed in Chapter 3, the majority of Muslim immigrants in Québec live in Montréal. For a study such as mine, which is situated in Montréal proper, this is good news: there is plenty of opportunity for a Muslim immigrant to interact with non-Muslim Québécois. These anecdotal experiences are simply less possible in other regions of Québec, where Muslim populations are practically non-existent, allowing for the potential for overarching stereotypes to remain unchallenged.

[954] These findings directly contradict the findings by Margarita Mooney in her study of Haitian immigrants in Miami, Montréal and Paris. She suggests that because of Québec secular nationalism "private religious belief and practice are tolerated, yet public religious expressions and faith-based service institutions" are not, and therefore the incorporation of immigrants is weakened there (Mooney, "Religion as a Context of Reception," 100). Because Québec nationalism was generally missing from my informants' experience, and Canadian nationalism was more prevalent, the data that I collected presents quite a different picture from Mooney's of immigrant incorporation in Québec.

[955] I return to the difference between Canadian and Québécois identity below.

not claim the identity, while four did and two suggested that they would like to. Finally, of the two informants in the process of gaining Canadian citizenship, one already claimed the identity and the other did not. Overall, people simply claimed the identity if they felt like it was one with which they identified. There was no real extra thought put into whether one could claim this identity or whether one would be accepted as Canadian or not, by the "non-immigrant" Canadians that surround them. In fact, the idea of the accessibility of the Canadian identity to anyone who wanted it was supported by the very fact that there is no such thing as "non-immigrant" Canadians, according to many of my informants. For these informants, Canadian identity was accessible and claimed easily because "everyone is an immigrant" in Canada. As one informant suggested,

> c'est vrai, on se sent chez nous. Je me sens chez moi. Et quand on discute avec des gens, on dit, oui, tout le monde est chez soi ici.… Même pour un canadien de souche…il a des ancêtres qui étaient immigrants. Donc nous avons les mêmes droits.[956]

This view that "everyone is an immigrant" in Canada leads to a stronger emphasis on the cultures and identities of origin for many recent immigrants, but also for Canadians in general, according to my informants.

Because everyone is Canadian, the need to express this identity is not as visceral as the need to go back in family history and experience to explain how one came to the nation full of immigrants. When explaining to me why one's national identity of origin held such an important place in one's politics of identity, one young woman explained it to me as follows:

> Parce qu'en général quand tu rencontres des gens ici, ce n'est pas important pour eux de savoir si tu es canadienne ou pas, parce que tu finis par l'avoir, mais ils veulent plus savoir: tu es de quelle origine? Jusqu'à date, avec la plupart des gens avec qui je parle, on vient vraiment plus parler de ton origine. Les gens demandent plus ton origine. Parce qu'on finit tous par être des canadiens, parce que dans le fond les canadiens, ce sont tous des immigrés. Depuis 400 ans, c'est tout le monde qui a immigré. (Elles rigolent.) On s'entend qu'y en a qui ont leurs grands-parents, ça fait 200 ans, 300 ans, mais l'origine, si tu demandais à leurs arrières, arrières, grands-pères, ils vont te dire: on vient de… puis ils vont donner un autre pays.[957]

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[956] 130727_001—"It's true, we feel at home. I feel at home. And when we talk with people, we say 'yes, everyone is home here.' We do not have the right to say, even for a Canadian born, even he was an immigrant once. He has ancestors that were immigrants so we all have the same rights." Note that in this quotation and the following one, Aboriginal Canadians are excluded from the discussion, although, strictly speaking, even their ancestors were also once immigrants, but the time clock is set further back.

[957] 130615_003—"Because in general when you meet people here, it is not important for them to know if you are Canadian or not because you finish by having it [Canadian citizenship], but they want to know more what your origins are. Up until now the majority of people that I speak with, we really just talk about your origins. People ask

She and others viewed this as true for multi-generational Canada-born Canadians as well.[958] For my informants, this is a distinct difference between the Canadian situation and the French situation. While in France the things that make you similar are the things that you must stress to show your national identity, in Canada it is the origins that make you different that ultimately make you fit with the national identity.

7.2.2 (Almost) Non-existent Québécois(e) Identity

Considering the complex history of Québec within Canada, a history that I explored in Chapter 6 of this dissertation, one may wonder how the context of Québec may influence the national identity that immigrants to Québec may hold. While Québécois national identity is a prevalent issue on the ground in Québec, it was largely missing from my informants' answers to the question of how they would identify themselves. In France, many of my informants would be quick to explain the historical and cultural influences behind their desire and/or ability to claim French national identity, but this was not the case in Québec.

I was quite surprised by this finding. Having become aware of the fact that there was a different national identity expressed in Québec than in the other provinces in Canada that I had visited, I expected that this would be a distinction that would be engrained in my informants as well. I was uncomfortable on many occasions during my fieldwork in Québec, based on the fact that I held Canadian and not Québécois identity. Based on this experience and what I knew about the importance of professing a Québécois identity against a Canadian one, I predicted that, instead of Canadian identity, my informants would claim Québécois identity as an effort to fit in

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more about your origins. Because we all finish by being Canadians, because in the end Canadians are all immigrants. For 400 years, everyone is an immigrant. [they laugh]. We agree that there are some, they have their grandparents here for 200 years, 300 years, but their origins, if you ask their great, great, grandparents, they will tell you 'we come from...,' and they will give you another country." Another informant similarly expressed: "Et c'est comme ça que ma procédure à commencer. Ici, on ne reconnait pas les vrais canadiens des autres. Parce que c'est un monde qui est riche de toutes les cultures. Mais les gens disent, une fois que tu as la citoyenneté, ça y est, je suis canadienne, mais quand on pose la question on voit que l'on est tous venu un peu de partout" (130703_004).

[958] When the former informant was explaining her understanding of the situation of overarching Canadian immigrant identity to me, I was taken back into my own history and experience with defining myself as a Canadian. I remembered explaining to other Canadians when I was growing up in rural Ontario, not that I was Canadian, but that I was German and English. My Canadian identity was a given, and innately in that identity my former immigrant identity was also a given, so the interest immediately turned to what made me different from those other immigrant Canadians around me and not what made me similar.

with the culture that was immediately surrounding them. Instead, only two informants[959] really

claimed a Québécois identity. One in particular explained his national identity to me as follows:

> Et bien, puisqu'on est au Québec, le nationalisme canadien, on ne le sent pas vraiment. Je pense qu'on ne voit pas beaucoup de drapeaux canadiens à Montréal. Donc, je ne veux pas mentir en disant que je me sens pas Canadien parce que tous les Québécois, ben [et bien], la plupart des Québécois ne se sentent pas Canadiens. …Ben, disons que je me sens plus Montréalais, à la limite Québécois, que Canadien.[960]

What is important to note here is that this informant was my one and only second generation

Maghrébine in my Québec case study. It was clear from this response, and other conversations

between this informant and myself, that this "born-Québécois" identity had a significant effect

on how he viewed his national identity. He was acutely aware of the distinction between

Québécois and Canadian identity and consequently saw the need to state this difference.

First-generation Maghrébines, on the other hand, either did not acknowledge the

difference, or simply did not think it applied to them. For example, one young woman also

explained that there was a distinction between Québécois and Canadian identity. In response to

my question about identity she responded that after being Muslim and Tunisian she was

Canadian. In fact, she stated,

> je dirais plutôt Canadienne. Je ne me vois pas avec la culture Québécoise, honnêtement. J'ai toujours vécu au Québec, je n'ai jamais été ailleurs au Canada mais si quelqu'un me demande si je suis plus Québécoise ou Canadienne, je dirais plus Canadienne.[961]

This young woman was, in fact, the only other informant to make a clear distinction between

Québécois and Canadian national identity in her interview.[962] What is noteworthy about this is

that she had lived in Québec for most of her life. She was born in the Maghreb but came to

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[959] 130806_004; 130807_001.

[960] 130807_001—"Well, since we are in Québec, Canadian nationalism, we don't really feel it. I think we do not see many Canadian flags in Montréal. So, I do not want to lie by saying that I don't feel Canadian because all Québécois(es), well the majority of Québécois(es) do not feel Canadian…Well, let's say that I feel more like a Montréaler, borderline Québécois, than Canadian."

[961] 130517_001—"I would say more Canadian. I do not see myself with the Québec culture honestly. I have always lived in Québec, I have never been elsewhere in Canada but if someone were to ask me if I was more Québécois(e) or Canadian, I would say more Canadian."

[962] One other informant mentioned both the Canadian and Québécois identities as separate identities that one could hold, but clearly distinguished them as national and provincial identities, not two separate national identities: "Oui, j'ai déjà la nationalité. Y a deux ou trois jours ma fille ma posé la question: 'Maman est-ce que je suis Canadienne ou Marocaine ou Québécoise?' Je lui ai dit: les 3. (Elles rigolent.) Elle a 6 ans et demi et elle m'a posé cette question il y a deux ou trois jours. Maman je suis quoi? Je lui dis: les 3. Si on te pose la question tu vas dire, je suis Canadienne, comme on habite au Canada, mais on habite la province du Québec, donc tu es Québécoise, et tu es Marocaine d'origine. Donc, tu dois parler des 3" (130529_003).

Canada while she was still a baby and all her siblings were born in Québec. While she is technically a first-generation (some would call this the 1.5 generation) Maghrébine in Québec, she was for all intents and purposes raised in Québec. This may explain her awareness that "something must be said about the difference between Québécois and Canadian identity," yet she still saw herself as more Canadian than Québécoise.

7.2.2.1 Food as Symbol of Québécois Identity

Although most of my informants did not speak about a distinct Québécois identity, or a notion of "Québécois(e)" being equal to "Canadien(ne)" in their responses about their own identities, they did seem to acknowledge the Québécois identity in subtler ways, especially as it related to food practice.[963] For example, many informants would speak about Québécois food, often in opposition to Maghrébine or Muslim food. Food was not only central to their understanding and presentation of who they were as Maghrébines but also in their understanding of who and what made someone Québécois(e). "I'm not sure what you Québécois(es) eat or consider Québécois food, but if you are Algerian (or Moroccan, or Tunisian) you eat this" was a common perspective that my informants offered to me. In fact, I had informants suggest that "people eat their own food," whether Chinese or Muslim or Québécois.[964]

Food is one way to present your identity to others, and many informants would tell me stories of experiencing Québécois(es) presenting Québécois identity through food experiences. For example, one woman told me an elaborate story of her cousin's Québécois wife wanting to make the family a "Québécois meal" in an effort to show them her traditions and who she was. This informant explained how this young woman had put such an effort forward to demonstrate Québécois food, but the Maghrébines at the table had a difficult time appreciating the sugary, bland dishes placed in front of them. In spite of the relative disaster of converting the Maghrébines to Québécois eating, it was a time of learning, a time of laughter, and a time of appreciating the other. As my informant said, "C'est là où on a découvert d'ailleurs le Québec…Et pour te dire que nous aussi on a découvert la cuisine Québécoise comme ça."[965] She

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[963] The argument for the role of food in marking identity was made in the first chapter of this dissertation.
[964] 130401_001.
[965] 130401_001—"In fact, it's there that we discovered Québec…and to tell you that we also discovered the Québec cuisine in that manner."

stressed to me that it was in the process of sharing this meal that she discovered what Québec was. It was not just about Québec cuisine, but Québec itself.[966]

7.2.3 Home Country (Nation of Origin) National Identification

The second major identity category that my informants claimed was their nation of origin: Algerian, Moroccan or Tunisian.[967] Food played an essential role in defining this identity for my informants. In fact, food was sometimes seen as the principal way of presenting oneself. For some of my informants, the discussion about identity was a secondary process. The first process was to present oneself, or meet the other, via food practice. Discussion of those identities then followed. For example, one young woman expressed that,

> en premier lieu, la première chose que l'on peut faire pour présenter notre pays, c'est avec la nourriture, et avec nos habillements parce qu'on a des habits traditionnels. Et après ça, c'est autour de la discussion que l'on peut se connaître. On est comme ça…, nos traditions sont comme ça, on pense comme ça. C'est après le couscous et le tajine.[968]

Not only is food a primary means of presenting one's home national identity, but it is also an enduring means (even for those who are not born in the country with which they are trying to identify). My second-generation Tunisian informant expressed this fact to me when he spoke about maintaining traditional food practices of the "homeland" in the host land. He suggested that "je crois que c'est important de garder la nourriture, qu'elle soit santé ou non, parce que ça

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[966] The possible role of food in Québécois identity became particularly poignant during my fieldwork with the emergence of "Pastagate" in Québec (http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2013/02/21/Québec-italian-ban-pasta_n_2733882.html). The importance of how we name food, the language of food for French Québécois identity came into focus. Food almost became an outworking, a symbol of French language identity that plays such a significant role in Québécois identity formation. The OQLF (Office Québécois de la langue francaise), in an attempt to make sure that only French was found throughout the province, turned its focus to the food/restaurant industry. Members of the OQLF investigated restaurants, particularly Italian restaurants, and demanded changes to non-French names such as pasta, caffe, botteglia di vino, etc., to reflect the French words for these products. The OQLF quickly reversed itself on this request, but the fact that they had made the request in the first place, with support from the opposition political party, raised concerns.

[967] One may, rightly, assume that the current politics of the home context have a significant effect on the identity politics of immigrants from those locations. For example, one may assume that the events of the Arab Spring would impact the ways that my informants understand themselves as individuals from the countries directly involved in, and impacted by these events. What is remarkable is that none of my informants discussed these events with me when addressing their home identities.

[968] 130615_002—"In the first place, the first thing that we can do to present our country, it's with food and clothing because we have traditional garments. And after that, it's around discussion that we can get to know one another. We are like that … our traditions are like that, we think like that. It's [That discussion comes] after the couscous and the tajine."

fait partie de l'identité d'un peuple."[969] Food is part of a communal identity that must be protected.[970]

The focus on one's nation of origins was evident in the engagement with the home context national identity. In fact, 10 of my informants responded with this identity first, while all 32 informants claimed it to one degree or another. It was the most overarching identity in this case study. For the 10 informants who claimed this identity first, it was fairly straightforward: a simple statement of "I am Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian," etcetera. For the rest of my informants, this identity was relegated more to the realm of origins. In fact, 11 of my informants used the words "d'origine algérienne," "marocaine," or "tunisienne."[971] What is worth noting is that those who specifically used the words "d'origine…" all emphasized their Canadian identity to a large extent. It was either the first identity they mentioned, or it was the one they stressed. As I mentioned above, it seems as though many of my informants thought that to be Canadian is to have "origins" elsewhere. It followed that those informants who wanted to highlight their Canadian identity often claimed their Maghrébine identity in this "of origins" kind of way.

7.2.4 "Être musulman(e)": Religious Identity Negotiations

The third and final identity that was significantly expressed[972] was one's religious identity, namely the Muslim identity. Thirty of my 32 informants claimed Muslim identity with ease. For these informants, no matter the manifestation of this identity, Islam was one of their central orienting worldviews and self-understandings. For the other two informants, Islam was a minor identity, a cultural identity, and one that was present in their lives but not one that they felt particularly attached to as an identity per se. One spoke of it as a culturally inevitable identity,[973] while the other viewed it as a religious identity and as such something that is private and not "un critère d'identification pour moi."[974] This informant went on to explain to me that even if she did not claim that identity herself, other people would inevitably label her as Muslim because she

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[969] 130801_001—"I think that it is important to protect the food, whether it is healthy or not because it is part of the identity of a people."

[970] My informants were engaging in what can be called "Gastronationalism" in relationship to their home national identities. On this issue see DeSoucey, "Gastronationalism," 432-455.

[971] "Of Algerian, Moroccan or Tunisian origins."

[972] Gender was the only other identity claimed by my informants, and only one informant emphasized this type of identity.

[973] 130731_003.

[974] 130706_001—"A criterion of identification for me."

was Algerian. The idea of being "born Muslim" came into play. One other informant also spoke of this "born Muslim" identity, saying that "musulman, en fait c'est une appartenance à une religion. Mais nous, on l'est par naissance."[975] He agrees with the previous informant that one's Muslim identity is not so much an identity as an affiliation, yet explains how one "is" a Muslim simply by consequence of where one is born.

Unlike the situation in France where many informants spoke of a "born Muslim" identity, in my Québec case study, this religious identity was much more of a chosen identity; it was not something someone was simply born into but something someone chose. One young man explained it to me as follows. He said, "Je suis musulman par naissance, donc je n'ai pas changé quelque chose, je n'ai pas changé en fait. Mais, après, maintenant je le suis par choix. Plus qu'avant."[976] For this informant, being Muslim was not just a simple matter of being from the Maghreb and inevitably being Muslim. It was not a cultural identity that one could not escape, but instead it was a religious identity that was chosen by and professed for oneself.

Ultimately, for many of my informants, being Muslim went beyond just being "born Muslim" or just doing one's prayers, or another variation of singular action that led to identity. Instead, "being Muslim" was more than just prayer and the veil, it was also the things of everyday. It is a mix of belief and practice, personal and practical connection, not just one or the other.

> Notre religion ne se limite pas seulement à la prière et au voile. C'est un tout: ce que l'on mange, ce que l'on fait, notre relation avec le voisinage, avec notre environnement; c'est-à-dire, tenir un environnement propre, ça fait partie de notre religion. Ne pas faire mal aux gens, ça fait partie de notre religion. Notre religion c'est notre vie. C'est-à-dire, du lever du jour jusqu'au soir, c'est ça la religion. Ce n'est pas uniquement faire la prière et porter le voile, c'est un tout. C'est ça la religion.[977]

Since religion is seen as the stuff of the everyday, food takes up an important place in the Muslim identity for my informants.[978] After explaining to me that to be a Muslim is to get

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[975] 130806_005—"Muslim, in fact it's a religious affiliation. But we, we are it [Muslim] by birth."

[976] 130806_004—"I am Muslim by birth, therefore I did not change anything, I did not change in fact. But, afterwards, now, I am [Muslim] by choice. More than before."

[977] 130520_002—"Our religion is not limited to just prayer and the veil. It's a totality: what we eat, what we do, our relationship with our neighbours, with our environment; that's to say, maintaining a clean environment is part of our religion. To not harm others, that is part of our religion. Our religion is our life. That means from sunrise to night, that is religion. It is not only to do the prayers and to wear the veil, it's a totality. That is the religion."

[978] We can see McGuire's definition of lived religion at work here. Again, McGuire argues that "lived religion is *constituted by the practices* people use to remember, share, enact, adapt, create, and combine the stories out of which live. And it comes into being through the often-mundane practices people use to transform these

married, one young woman went on with her explanation of what it means to be a Muslim in the following way:

> Être musulmane aussi c'est: ne pas boire du vin et de l'alcool...C'est aussi faire le carême, un minimum d'un mois par année. Mais il y a d'autres jours où l'on peut faire ça...On ne mange pas bien le porc. Par exemple, on a une liste bien précise. On ne peut pas manger des animaux qui sont morts avant que la personne les égorge. C'est très important [qu']on doit vider l'animal du sang qui n'est pas bon pour la santé. C'est dans notre religion… Vous avez un autre point de vue que l'on respecte, bien sûr, mais c'est dans notre religion.[979]

For this informant, and many like her, food is central to what makes someone "Muslim," including what distinguishes Muslims from others.

One of the distinctions that arose within the Muslim identity category related to one's outward religious practices. Although there were some who considered themselves "not great practitioners," it seemed as though there was a larger population of informants who engaged in a significant number of religious and cultural Muslim practices in Montréal than I encountered in Paris. Because of the immigrant experience in Canada, and the fact that Islam is not the majority religious identity in the country, practice and the understanding of oneself as a practicing Muslim increases for many of my informants. For example, one man explained to me how he saw himself as more of a practicing Muslim in Canada than in the Maghreb.

> J'ai remarqué q'ici au Canada, j'ai pratiqué ma religion plus qu'au Maroc. Bien sûr je fais ma prière, je fais le ramadan, les fêtes, les deux fêtes que l'on a. La fête du ramadan et la fête du mouton, le sacrifice. Je pratique ma religion quotidiennement parce que je cherche les produits halal. Je dois me comporter comme un vrai musulman parce que je trouve que c'est une responsabilité. Ce n'est pas comme au Maroc, parce que [où] la plupart, puisque 99,99%, sont musulmans. Mais ici je dois pratiquer ma religion jour par jour, heure par heure, par mon comportement, parce que je dois donner l'exemple aux autres.[980]

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meaningful interpretations into everyday action" (McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 98). Here my informants show how food is one of the central mundane practices that they use to transform their stories into action.

[979] 130430_004—"To be Muslim is also to not drink wine and alcohol...it is also to do the fast, a minimum of one month a year. But there are other days where we can do that as well...we do not eat pork. For example, we have a very precise list. We cannot eat animals that were dead before a person slaughters them. That is very important. We have to empty the animal of its blood, which is not good for one's health. That is in our religion...You have another point of view that we respect of course, but it is in our religion."

[980] 130430_006—"I noticed that here in Canada I practiced my religion more than in Morocco. Of course I do my prayers, I do Ramadan, the festivals, the two festivals that we have. The festival of Ramadan and the festival of the lamb, [or] the sacrifice. I practice my religion daily because I look for halal products. I have to behave like a real Muslim because I find that it is a responsibility. It is not like in Morocco because the majority there, almost 99.99%, are Muslims. But here I have to practice my religion day by day, hour by hour by my behaviour because I have to give an example to others."

For this informant, his identity as "practicing Muslim" was only highlighted in the Canadian context; it would not have been an identity that he stressed in Morocco, as there would have been no need to do so in that context.

In Jennifer Selby's work on Muslim communities in the suburbs of Paris, in Petit Nanterre, we can see that some of her informants reflected the same kind of pattern in their experiences.[981] Her informants express, like mine do, how in the Maghreb you do not need to emphasize certain things, because there everyone does them, but in France you have to emphasize these practices because they are what make you distinct.[982] While for Selby's informants this trend is represented in prayer, dress, family values, etc., for my informants this emphasis on religious identity is signified by food practice. This is again reflective of the "minority status effect" that I discussed in Chapter 3. I argue elsewhere that "minority identity status can lead to certain aspects of identity becoming more prevalent in the immigrant location than they might be in one's homeland" and that "food and food practice may be one area where this minority status effect may be evident."[983] I explain there, like I do throughout this work, that while not eating pork, not drinking alcohol, fasting for Ramadan, or one's engagement with any other commonly understood "religious" food practice, may not be essential to one's Muslim identity in a Muslim-majority context, in a context where one's Muslim identity is the minority these kinds of practices take on a more symbolically important role in identity presentation.

Not only was it a matter of "needing to practice" more in Canada than in the Maghreb, but it was also a matter of ease. Comparatively, people in Canada seemed to feel freer to be a practicing Muslim. Rubina Ramji similarly found that many of her informants felt freer to be Muslim in Canada than they did in their "home" countries.[984] For my Montréal informants, there did not appear to be the same pressure to change one's practices, especially food practices, as there was in France. From what I gathered in talking with Maghrébines in Montréal, keeping a strict practice seemed easier than it was for my informants in France; it was simply out of the question for them to eat pork, drink alcohol and violate rules around halal meat.

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[981] Selby specifically addresses the expectation placed on young women, who migrate from the Maghreb to marry men in Petit Nanterre, to be even more practicing than they were in the Maghreb.
[982] Selby, *Questioning French Secularism,* 164-165.
[983] Brown, "'Tell me what you eat," 45.
[984] Rubina Ramji, "A Variable but Convergent Islam: Muslim Women," in *Growing up Canadian: Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists*, eds. Peter Beyer and Rubina Ramji (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 115.

For my Montréal informants, one is meant to maintain these traditions. My informants would argue that they felt free to maintain their religious practice and as a result they did exactly that. I wonder if the fact that Canadians in general put less emphasis on food might be a reason for this. For example, here in Canada it is not often that lunch is provided in businesses and schools. Instead people bring their own lunches to school and work and can bring what they want to eat. In France, on the other hand, lunch is often provided both in the schools and in businesses. Life revolves around food and consequently differences in food practices become more evident. One of my informants mentioned to me that sometimes it is difficult when she is at school and people want to eat all together and she has to ask whether or not something is halal or not.[985] However these communal meals at work are not as common in Canada as they are in France.

Although the distinction between levels of practice existed and was commonly engaged by my informants in Montréal, it seemed to be much more complicated than in Paris. On the one hand, in Paris the differences often revealed complex and variant interactions between one's self understanding as a "cultural" and/or "religious" Muslim, and revealed the many ways in which my informants in Paris lived out their Muslim identity through their practices. In Montréal, on the other hand, many of my informants would call themselves "non-practicing," and yet would engage in most of the commonly understood "religious obligations," from the five pillars, to keeping halal, not eating pork, not drinking alcohol, etcetera. There was a great deal of consistency in practice among my Montréal informants.

Beyer and Ramji address these issues by presenting a ten-point scale on which they base their three categorizations of Muslim identity among their respondents in their study. These three categories are the "highly involved," the "moderately to somewhat involved" and the "non-religious." Beyer in his chapter in their book suggests that while the "highly involved" adhere to a consistent standard of Muslim orthodoxy, usually based on the five pillars, "the highly involved Muslims showed great variation on virtually every one of the details that composed their otherwise common 'orthodox' model of Islam."[986] The "moderately to somewhat involved" Muslims "used the same standards [as the highly involved] but did not feel that they had to

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[985] Personal communication, Field journal, April 24, 2013.
[986] Beyer, "Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism," 60.

conform to them as strictly"; their religion was just one factor among many in their lives.[987]
Finally, the "non-religious" rejected identification with Islam in general, or as Muslims.[988]

While my informants in France would have fit into all categories across Beyer and Ramji's ten-point scale, my Montréal informants would be concentrated in the "highly involved" category that Beyer describes. There was a great deal of consistency in practice, and Islam was a central identity in their lives, but there was also a great deal of variation presented within that understanding of orthodoxy. For example, "non-practicing," or better yet "not a great practitioner" in Montréal were often used as a self-identity label when one compared oneself to exceptionally devout Muslims, or simply when one felt like there was always more that they could do. One of these informants explained it to me as follows:

> Je suis pratiquant, mais je ne suis pas un grand pratiquant. Mais je fais de mon mieux pour faire notre rite…Je fais ma prière. Nous avons un rite de 5 fois par jour. Ça nous permet aussi de nous laver chaque fois qu'on le fait. Le ramadan on fait un mois dans l'année. On fait le jeûne une fois par année. C'est tout. Comme je vous l'ai dit, je suis juste pratiquant—pas plus que ça.[989]

In the standards that were set out by many of my informants in Paris, this man would have been considered a highly practicing Muslim without question or quantification, but in Montréal there is a feeling that the idea of "practicing" must be qualified.

Even those who claim that they are fully practicing Muslims sometimes show a different level of practice in their actions. For example, one of my informants in Montréal professed that she only ate fish when she ate outside of her home, but one afternoon when we were out for lunch she ordered a chicken curry dish. This experience made me wonder how many people tell me that they keep strictly halal and yet eat differently in their everyday lives. What did it actually mean to them to keep halal? To be practicing?[990]

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[987] Beyer, "Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism," 60.

[988] Beyer, "Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism," 60.

[989] 130517_002—"I am practicing but I am not a great practitioner but I do my best to perform our rites…I do my prayers. We have a rite of five times a day. That permits us as well to wash ourselves each time that we do it. Ramadan we do one month in the year. We do the fast once a year. That's it, like I told you, I am just practicing, not more than that." This informant gave this answer in response to my question "Donc vous avez dit que vous êtes musulmans. Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire pour vous? Et est-ce que vous avez des pratiques spécifiques que vous faites?" (So, you said that you were Muslim/ What does that mean to you? Do you have specific practices that you do?)

[990] Here we can see the benefit of being in the field, seeing lived religion in action. As Orsi states, being in the field "forces an acknowledgement of and engagement with something messier than the controlled marshalling of

While for some of my informants "non-practicing" was an identity label that they would give themselves, it also functioned as a tool used by others to make sense of those people who claim Muslim identity but who "are not quite Muslim enough" by their standards. In fact, it was an identity label used by some of my informants to help explain how someone could be a Muslim and yet still engage in "non-Muslim" behaviours and practices, specifically as they related to alcohol and pork.

> Oui, il y a des musulmans. Ce n'est pas tous les musulmans qui sont pratiquants. Je ne connais pas, mais je vois. Je vois des musulmans qui prennent de l'alcool, qui mangent le porc. Peut-être, tu me dis, un pratiquant; je te dis oui, Rachel, il ne va pas prendre l'alcool, il ne va pas prendre le porc. Mais un musulman, je te réponds: non.[991]

For this informant, a practicing Muslim would not consume alcohol, but a non-practicing Muslim would be able to and still claim the identity of "Muslim." After all, according to another informant,

> ce n'est pas tous les musulmans qui sont pratiquants parce qu'il y a des musulmans qui boivent. Et peut-être, je ne sais pas, je n'en ai pas rencontré mais peut-être il y a des musulmans qui mangent le porc, et pourtant ils sont musulmans et c'est des non pratiquants.[992]

For this informant, a Muslim who drinks alcohol or even eats pork is still a Muslim, but by his/her actions firmly places him/herself in the non-practicing camp. They would perhaps place an individual such as this in Beyer's "moderately to somewhat involved" category; not removing their Muslim identity from them, but also making sense of how they, as a "highly involved" Muslim, could claim this identity alongside someone who does not hold to the same orthodoxy. Another informant explained how food practices, such as the consumption of alcohol, could be clear illustrations into the debate over what it means to claim Muslim identity, to "be a Muslim."

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letters on a page, something less predictable, and demands a different kind of attentiveness. The world of the text is really not the world" (Orsi, *Between Heaven*, 164).

[991] 130518_001—"Yes there are Muslims. It is not all Muslims who are practicing. I do not know them, but I see [them]. I see Muslims who consume alcohol, who eat pork. Maybe, if you say to me, a practitioner, I would tell you yes, Rachel, he would not consume alcohol, he will not take pork. But a Muslim, I would respond no." Another stated, "il y a des musulmans qui mangent même le porc. Avant d'être des musulmans ce sont des êtres humains. Il y a des musulmans qui ne pratiquent pas. Il y a des non musulmans qui ne mangent pas le porc, qui ne boivent pas l'alcool. Ce n'est pas la religion, ça dépend de la conscience de la personne. Est-ce qu'il est pratiquant, est ce qu'il n'est pas pratiquant? C'est ça" (130430_006).

[992] 130612_001—"It's not all Muslims who are practicing because there are Muslims who drink. And maybe, I don't know, I haven't met any, but maybe there are Muslims who eat pork and yet they are Muslims and they are non-practicing."

When responding to my inquiry whether there were Muslims who drank alcohol, he gave me the following response:

> On va dire oui, ils se disent musulmans parce que… là on va rentrer dans c'est quoi la définition d'un musulman. Parce qu'un musulman, il ne devrait pas boire. Parce qu'un musulman qui va boire, il ne peut pas faire la prière pendant 40 jours, tandis qu'un musulman, il doit faire sa prière 5 fois par jour. Là, on doit se questionner: est-ce que c'est vraiment un musulman, parce qu'il ne peut pas faire sa prière en ayant bu. Puis il ne peut pas la faire pendant 40 jours. Dans les 40 jours, comment on peut le nommer? Est-ce qu'il est toujours musulman? C'est ça, mais il y en a qui se disent musulmans, mais on va dire que ce sont des pécheurs…Donc oui, on va dire musulman non pratiquant, pécheur. Je ne sais pas exactement comment le nommer mais je mets un point d'interrogation sur sa situation pendant la période.[993]

For this person we can see that one's drink practice, or lack thereof, is foundational to the very discussion of what it means to be a Muslim in the first place. Furthermore, "non-practicing Muslim" can serve as an identity label that practicing Muslims can place on others whom they feel are not fully able to claim the "authentic" Muslim identity.

Whatever the case, whether one claims this identity as religious or cultural, born or chosen, imposed or implied, food and food practices play a significant role in what it means to "be Muslim." While the classic food practices that are representative of Muslim identity are Ramadan, pork, alcohol, halal, these were not the only ones mentioned as being essential to one's identity as a Muslim in Canada.

In a context such as Canada where these relatively well known practices are not so contested as in some other locations, other practices move to the forefront of practice and identity. For example, the issue of gelatin came up for many of my informants when speaking about Islam and food.[994] For these informants, the avoidance of gelatin is a part of one's religious

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[993] 130615_003—"We will say yes, they call themselves Muslims because… there we are going to enter into what is the definition of a Muslim. Because a Muslim should not drink. Because a Muslim who is going to drink, he cannot do his prayers for 40 days, but a Muslim has to do his prayers 5 times a day. We have to ask, is he really a Muslim? Because he cannot do his prayers having had a drink. As a result, he cannot do his prayers during 40 days. So in the 40 days, what can we call him? Is he still a Muslim? There it is, but there are some who call themselves Muslim but we say that they are sinners…so, yes, we will say: non-practicing Muslim, sinners. I do not know exactly how to label them but I put a question mark on that situation in place of a period."

[994] The avoidance of gelatin was important for many of my informants in Montréal because gelatin is often made from pork; since one cannot consume pork, one cannot consumer gelatin, or so the argument goes. Note that not all gelatin comes from pork: cows (and other animals) are also sourced. This fact would not remove the problem for believers such as this person because the dead cows that are used to gather this collagen would typically not have been slaughtered according to halal (or kosher) standards. There are vegan alternatives to gelatin such as agar-agar, guar gum, and pectin. A related issue for Muslims in Canada is the rennet found in cheeses. That too has traditionally been animal-based, though there are now lab-based and vegetable-based alternatives available.

food practice, and a part of what makes them Muslim in Canada. In responding to my question about the relationship between Islam and food many informants immediately brought up gelatin. For example, here's one answer that uses the slippery slope argument:

> Oui, seulement de la viande halal, et on ne mange pas les yoghourts avec la gélatine. Il y a des personnes qui disent, ok c'est un petit pourcentage. Mais même ça, ça vient du porc, donc on ne mange pas la chose là où l'on trouve de la gélatine, par exemple. Parce que cette fois, si c'est une petite quantité, l'autre fois on va dire: Ok, pour la gélatine il n'y a pas de problème, pourquoi on n'essaie pas autre chose? Donc il vaut mieux acheter ce qui est halal.[995]

For many informants, this mention of the avoidance of gelatin was one of the first, if not the first, link between Islam and food that they would bring up.[996] Furthermore, because of this focus on taking the identity of practicing Muslim to the next level, many of my informants had become obsessive ingredient verifiers, making sure that every single ingredient in every single product they purchased was halal. They became the community of "ingredient checkers" in a world surrounded by those laissez-faire shoppers who throw anything in their cart:

> On a un problème de lire les ingrédients. Quand on est sur un rayon, on trouve des gens qui prennent les produits et les jettent dans le chariot. Nous, il faut les lire. S'il y a de la gélatine, s'il y a des produits qui sont péchés, alors c'est normal. Parce que la gélatine c'est la peau du porc qui se transforme en forme gélatine pour donner cette forme aux ice creams, aux yogourts pour lui donner cette forme, pour ne pas que ça se fende. Mais en réalité, c'est très déconseillé pour la santé.[997]

Whereas in a place like France the fact of keeping halal or not drinking alcohol was enough of a contested practice as to distinguish a specific identity, it was almost as if, in Canada, my informants needed something even finer with which to identify themselves, something more distinct to draw the line between "us" and "them."[998]

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[995] 130430_004—"Yes, only halal meat, and we do not eat yoghurt with gelatin. There are people who say, ok it's only a small percentage. But even that, that comes from pork, and so we do not eat things where we find gelatin for example. Because this time it's a small quantity, the next time we will say: O.k, for gelatin there is no problem, why don't we try something else. So it is better to buy what is halal."

[996] 130430_005; 130505_001; 130519_001; 130520_001; 130529_003; 130615_003.

[997] 130615_001—"We have a problem of reading ingredients. When we are in an aisle, we find people who take products and throw them in their shopping cart. For us, we must read. If there is gelatin, if there are products that are forbidden, so it's normal. Because gelatin is pig skin that they transform into gelatin to give this form to ice cream, to yogurt to give it this form, so that it doesn't split. But in reality it is highly discouraged for one's health."

[998] This directly challenges Phillip Connor's conclusions about the effect of welcoming versus less-welcoming contexts of reception on the religious outcomes of Muslim immigrants in his work *Immigrant Faith*. I will return to this in Chapter 9 when I address Connor's findings in more depth.

7.2.5 Classifying "Us" Against "Them" as a Means of Identity Construction

Ultimately, whether one claimed Canadian, Maghrébine or Muslim identity (and often all three), food played a significant role in defining what it meant to be any of these given identities. This is because the process of identity formation is grounded in a basic need to categorize oneself and the people around oneself into groupings of "us" and "them." As I have argued previously, this form of othering often works itself out through food; food serves a dual function of solidarity and separation.[999] This was very obviously the case in Montréal. My informants spoke about the differences between themselves and the non-Maghrébine/Muslim Québécois(es) who surrounded them in food practice. They posited that barriers or boundaries between the groups were made obvious in food preferences and practices. Finally, on the positive side of the spectrum, they spoke about the ability of food to bridge the gap between "us" and "them" and allow for a deeper level of connection and understanding between the various identity groups.

7.2.5.1 "We" eat differently than "they" do: Food as Distinguishing Symbol

As I discussed in the previous section, the kinds of foods that one eats often mark one off as a member of a particular group and not another; they mark who is a part of the collective "we." My informants gave many examples of things that they did or did not consume as examples of opposition to the things that non-Muslim Québécois(es) may eat. Furthermore, this process of "othering" through food was also prevalent among the non-Muslim Québécois(es), at least according to my informants.

One informant explained an anecdote to me that reveals this possible separation of "us" and "them" via what people eat. He spoke about the fact that when the word "halal" is placed on a storefront it pretty much automatically prevents non-Muslims from entering the store. He suggested that Québécois(es) do not actually understand what halal refers to. They think that they cannot eat halal meat, that it is "not for them." He said that, moreover, when non-Muslim Québécois(es) enter a halal butcher shop they feel out of place because the other people in the store often let them go ahead of them and watch what they purchase, etcetera. Although they do

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[999] Anderson, *Everyone Eats*, 125; Fischler, "Commensality," 529; Harvey, "Respectfully Eating," 39-40; Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 5.

this out of hospitality and curiosity, it often leaves the non-Muslim customer feeling awkward and out of place, and reinforces the notion that halal butcher shops are only for Muslims.[1000]

Alongside the consumption of "our meat," the abstention from pork and alcohol are the most commonly cited examples of the food practices that are appropriate for "us" but not "them." These examples are well documented above and will be further discussed below, but what is significant here is that my informants went further than the question of "what do 'we' eat?" to the question of "how do 'we' eat?" in an effort to distinguish Maghrébine Muslim identity from the majority non-Muslim Québécois identity surrounding them. In this effort, five differences in "how" one eats were brought to the fore.

First, in comparison to "them" many of my informants spoke of the fact that "we" do not eat to excess.

> Ils nous conseillent de ne pas manger, sauf si on a faim, et quand on mange de ne pas manger jusqu'à en avoir mal au ventre. C'est-à-dire, manger jusqu'à s'assouvir, donc manger juste ce que l'on a devant nous et ne pas manger plus qu'il en faut. On ne mange pas sauf si on a faim, et quand on mange il ne faut pas en abuser.[1001]

This was an important distinguishing factor mentioned by many of my informants that was grounded in both cultural practice and religious conviction. I had multiple informants explain to me that part of "being Muslim" was to not eat to excess, and in fact there was a formula to make sure that one respected this distinguishing factor. That formula was that one should consider the stomach as broken into three parts: one for liquid, one for food and one for air. One should never overfill the part that is reserved for food because then one would be taking away from the essential space for the other two.[1002] This way of eating was not only a strictly cultural practice but was given more weight by being tied to a saying of the Prophet.[1003]

> Par exemple, le Prophète Muhammad, que la paix et le salut soient sur lui, a dit: Il y a pas pire réservoir à remplir que l'estomac. Donc, il faut éviter de trop manger. Mais si quelqu'un ne peut pas, au moins qu'il varie entre un tiers de nourriture, un tiers de l'air et

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[1000] Personal correspondence with researcher, Field Journal, Feb 22, 2013.

[1001] 130517_002—"They counsel us to not eat unless we are hungry, and when we eat to not eat to the point where we have stomach pain. That means, to eat just until one is satisfied, so to eat just what is in front of us and to not eat more than we need. We do not eat unless we are hungry, and when we eat one must not abuse it." Other informants who also stressed "not eating too much": 130520_001; 130529_003.

[1002] 130430_002; 130501_001; 130615_003.

[1003] Specifically, there's a hadith that states: "I heard the Messenger of Allah say: 'A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must [fill it], then one third of food, one third for drink, and one third for air" (Ibn Majah, Book 29, 3349, as found at http://sunnah.com/urn/1274570).

un tiers de liquide. Parce que ça remplit plus rapidement avec le liquide… des trucs comme ça.[1004]

The formula for guaranteeing that one can maintain this vital practice is laid out by the Prophet and thus is given great emphasis as a distinguishing mark for those who belong to this insider group.

This was not the only way of eating that Muhammad emphasized, according to my informants. Another prophetic injunction that many of my informants mentioned, and the second difference in "ways of eating" that was mentioned by my informants, was the fact that, "unlike 'they,' who can eat with any hand they desire, 'we' should only eat with our right hand."[1005] For example,

> Oui, la façon de manger: vous, par exemple, vous mangez [et] vous n'avez pas de problème à manger avec la main gauche. Nous, on mange avec la main droite. Même avec les fourchettes on doit manger avec la main droite. (Il rit.) C'est très important pour nous.[1006]

This informant, like many others, clearly uses the "we" and "they" language when speaking about his food habits. He is quick to mention that these practices are "important for us," insinuating that there is a "them" for whom they are not important. Identity comes through comparison.

A third distinguishing way of eating, which has grounding in the Quran, is an emphasis on not wasting food.[1007] The importance of "ne pas gaspiller" (to not waste) was mentioned throughout the interviews. The practice of "not wasting" became prevalent for my informants in

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[1004] 130807_001—"For example, the Prophet Muhammad, peace and salvation be upon him, said: there is no worse tank to fill than the stomach. Thus, one must avoid eating too much, but if one cannot, at least he should vary between one third of food, one third of air and one third of liquid. Because that fills more quickly with liquid, stuff like that."

[1005] This may be related to hadith that state that Muhammad ate with the three fingers of his right hand, and commanded others to do so as well. One of these hadith states: "When any of you intends to eat [meal], he should eat with his right hand, and when he [intends] to drink he should drink with his right hand, for Satan eats with his left hand and drinks with his left hand" (Sahih Muslim, 2020, as found at http://sunnah.com/muslim/36/139).

[1006] 130430_006—"Yes, the way of eating: you for example, when you eat you do not have an issue with eating with the left hand. Us, we eat with the right hand. Even with forks we must eat with the right hand. [He laughs]. That's very important for us." This distinction was also clearly mentioned by 130731_002.

[1007] Specifically, the verses which state: "It is He who has produced gardens, both trellised and untrellised, and date palms and field crops, all varying in taste, and the olive and the pomegranate, both similar and dissimilar. Eat their fruits when they bear fruit and give away what is due of them on the day of their harvest. Do not waste anything. He does not love the wasteful" (6:141); "O Children of Adam, dress yourself properly whenever you are at worship: and eat and drink but do not be wasteful: God does not like wasteful people" (The Quran, 7:31).

the Canadian context where people waste food often and in large quantities, according to my informants. The ease with which Canadians ignored the essential practice of avoiding waste was sometimes attributed to the fact that in Canada there was not the same level of poverty as other places in the world. One informant explained that, in Islam,

> il est interdit de gaspiller. On tient à toujours avoir en tête qu'il y a des êtres humains qui meurent de faim. Puisque l'on est dans cette abondance, surtout ici au Canada, on mange mais on ne doit pas oublier qu'il y a d'autres gens, pour ne pas gaspiller.[1008]

In comparison to those who may, in the presence of abundance, ignore the fact that there are those who do not have food, Muslims do not forget this fact. This relationship with food is such an essential element of one's food practice that one could be judged if one did not uphold it.[1009] Even if there was not a specific prophetic injunction against wasting food, many of my informants still saw this as an essential food practice that separated them, that marked them as Muslim, in a context where "others" behave differently—or so they imagine. Note that the comparison that is drawn here is not value neutral, i.e. it's not "we do this and they do that," but "we are more careful with our food and they are less careful." The "they" is generalized and the "we" is idealized.

The next "way of eating"—the fourth in my sequence here—that was argued to be different for my informants is the practice of eating communally. This could mean simply an emphasis on eating as a community, on sharing food, but it could also mean specifically the kind of plate on which a meal is served. Eating from communal plates is seen as essential to building feelings of closeness and bonding within the group, and is a totally different approach than one may find in the "modern world." For example, one middle-aged man suggested that this practice is an essential differentiating practice for his community. He said: "Il y a aussi comme des normes—toujours en se référant à l'Islam. Par exemple, quand on mange dans un seul plat, [une] chose que l'on trouve rarement ici avec la civilisation moderne [où] chacun mange dans son

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[1008] 130430_002—"It is forbidden to waste. We have to try to always have in our minds that there are people who die of hunger. Since we are in this abundance, especially here in Canada, we eat but we must not forget that there are other people, so we do not waste." The importance of not wasting food was also mentioned by 130430_004.
[1009] 130615_003—"Parce qu'on est vraiment jugé pour ça. Si toi tu manges et le restant tu le jettes dans la poubelle et puis y a un autre, même s'il n'est pas à coté de toi mais y a un autre qui meurt de faim, tu es jugé pour ça. Parce que c'est quand même la responsabilité de chaque personne de penser aux autres aussi. C'est vraiment au niveau de l'Islam."

plat."[1010] This practice was not just a culturally specific practice in the mind of some of my informants, but also one that was seen as essential in Islam.[1011] I had other informants explain to me the importance of communal eating, as most ideally represented by eating from one plate, in the many meals that I shared with members of the community. The feeling of "partager" (sharing) is given a visceral aspect around the communal plate.[1012] Here we see a North African cultural practice being universalized to Islam.

The final—and fifth—"way of eating" that my informants explained to me as differentiating them from others was strictly modern and cultural, although often based on religious obligations. The practice of eating at restaurants, or rather, not eating at restaurants, was a significant marker of difference for the community that I was studying. The discourse of "for 'you' it is not an issue but for 'us' it is" was prevalent in this regard. For example, one informant explained this difference as follows:

> On se prive de plusieurs choses…pour vous c'est une activité d'aller au restaurant, d'aller je ne sais pas, c'est normal pour vous de passer par la route et de passer par McDonald et prendre un hamburger. Pour nous, on n'y pense même pas. Donc pour manger, soit on prépare à la maison soit on doit chercher les restaurants qui font de la viande halal. Ça fait un peu "mind working."[1013]

The inability to go to a non-halal restaurant is just one of the reasons why "restaurant-going" was used as a mark of distinction between my informants and the larger "you" of the non-Muslim Québécois group that they envisioned around them. Another reason was simply that if one went to a restaurant, specifically a non-halal restaurant, there would be things that one could not eat and this would make one feel alienated from the group. Therefore, it was not a worthwhile experience for them.[1014] Whatever the case, this inability to eat at the same place as certain "others" was another means of distinguishing those who were in the group from those who were

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[1010] 130430_002—"There are also standards, as always, with reference to Islam. For example, when we eat from one plate, something we find rarely here, with modern civilization, each person eats from his own plate."
[1011] Perhaps finding its significance in Hadith such as "The messenger of Allah said: 'Eat together and do not eat separately, for the blessing is in being together" (Ibn Majah, 3287, as found on http://sunnah.com/urn/1273950)
[1012] Participant Observation, July 13, 2013.
[1013] 130615_002—"We deprive ourselves of many things…for you it's an activity to go to a restaurant, to go, I don't know, it's normal for you to go along the road and to pass by McDonald's and to get a hamburger. For us, we don't even think about it. So, for eating, we either prepare at home or we have to search for the restaurants that use halal meat. That makes a bit of 'mind working.'"
[1014] 130807_001.

outside of the group; it was one of the clear examples of barriers between "us" and "them" that many of my informants felt.

These barriers, or boundaries, between "us" and "them" as evidenced not only by what, but where and how, one eats were one clear realm where my informants professed some tension between their identity group and those that surrounded them. Whether one could go to a restaurant was just one example of these subtle boundaries that were in place. While a meal out at a restaurant was easy enough to avoid for many of my informants, meals shared together at school or at work made the difference more prominent.

> C'est vrai. Des fois quand on est dans des, par exemples, dans les universités et il y a comme un dîner communautaire, c'est vrai, des fois je sens une grande gêne. C'est pas que je sens de la pression mais c'est une pression comme indirecte. C'est parce que tout le monde est content, tout le monde a ramené un plat, et pour demander à l'autre "je m'excuse, mais qu'est-ce que tu as mis dans le plat?"… c'est pas tout le monde qui comprend ça. Alors ici, c'est vrai, ici … j'essaie d'éviter ce type de situation, sauf si la personne elle est déjà consciente que nous, on [ne] mange pas [ça]…oui ça je vais manger, mais si je ne suis pas sûr, non, je ne le mange pas. C'est parce qu'en même temps j'ai peur de brimer la personne qui est avec moi, "Ah qu'est-ce que tu as fait?"…j'aimerais pas poser ce genre de question, mais ça c'est difficile.[1015]

One's food practices may affect the kinds of social interactions one has and affect one's group involvement and identification. "They" are the ones who can go to a potluck at school or work, whereas "we" are the ones who cannot. "They" are the ones who can eat at anyone's house, "we" are the ones who cannot. Another informant explained,

> par exemple, le fait que je ne peux pas manger de porc, le fait que je ne peux pas manger de viande qui n'est pas certifiée halal, ça me bloque. Je ne peux pas m'inviter, je ne peux pas manger chez eux...je n'irais pas manger, c'est sûr.[1016]

[1015] 130424_001—"It's true. There are times where we are, for example, at a university and there is like a communal dinner, it's true, sometimes I feel a great discomfort, and it's not that I feel pressure but it's an indirect pressure. It's because everyone is happy, everyone brings a dish. Then to ask the other: 'Pardon me, but what did you put in the dish?' … because not everyone understands that. So here, it's true, … I try to avoid that kind of situation unless the person is already aware that we do not eat [certain foods]…yes then I will eat but if I am not sure, no, I will not eat. It's because, at the same time I am afraid of insulting the person who is with me, 'What did you do?'…I would prefer not to pose this kind of question but it is difficult."

[1016] 130430_005—"For example, the fact that I cannot eat pork, the fact that I cannot eat meat that isn't certified halal, that blocks me. I cannot be invited, I cannot go eat at their house…I will not go eat that is certain."

While my informants would invite me in to their homes for meals,[1017] helping me to bridge the boundary between "us" and "them," the fact that they felt that they could not go and eat at a non-Muslim's home was a boundary marking behaviour.

It is not simply a matter of feeling like one cannot eat, or does not want to ask the question and make the situation awkward, but it is also a matter of feeling that people may be presenting a subtle notion of what it means to identify with a certain identity by what is the offering on the table.

> Ça, je l'ai remarqué une fois. A mon lieu de travail, il y avait le party de Noël et ils ont voulu organiser un dîner de Noël dans un restaurant. On était dans les services 4 ou 5 musulmans. On avait de la difficulté. Finalement on n'est pas allé. Mais ça faisait partie du menu, l'alcool…et c'est comme s'ils essayaient d'imposer leurs idées.[1018]

According to this informant, by eating in places with particular menu items, the organizers of the event may be presenting ideas about who they are and who one is expected to be to be a part of the group: "eat/drink this and you are one of 'us.'" Having frequently been on the other side of this equation (the "them"), it is fair to say that non-Muslim Canadians rarely if ever determine menus to deliberately exclude others; exclusion rather comes typically through carelessness, compounded by ignorance of how deeply food issues can matter to those in the minority (halal, kosher, vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, diabetic, etc.). This reality, however, is perceived differently by my informants.

Overall, my informants went further than the traditional Muslim food practices when distinguishing what made them different from others in relationship to food, so that it was not only a matter of what one ate, but how.[1019] In this, they presented five different "ways of eating" between their group and the imagined "other." My informants suggested that "we" are different from "them" because "we" (1) do not eat to excess, (2) only eat with our right hand, (3) do not waste food, (4) eat communally and (5) do not eat at restaurants. These were barriers that were in place, whether real or imagined, between "us" and "them."

[1017] Unlike in Paris where I only shared meals with five of my informants in their homes, in Montréal I was invited to share food in 22 of my 32 informants' homes (68.75%).

[1018] 130520_001—"That I noticed one time. At my place of work, there was a Christmas party and they wanted to organize a Christmas dinner in a restaurant. We were 4 or 5 Muslims in the service. We had difficulty and in the end we did not go. But that was part of the menu, alcohol…and it was as if they were trying to impose their ideas."

[1019] Douglas, "Deciphering," 66; Fischler, "Commensality," 529; Harvey, "Respectfully Eating," 39-40; Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 5.

7.2.5.2 Food as Bridge Between "Us" and "Them"

The idea that food places boundaries or barriers between "us" and "them" was countered by the idea that it could also be a bridging element for those very boundaries.[1020] I had informants suggest that, in fact, "they" were sympathetic of "our" foodways. Unlike some of the previous informants, who suggested that there was a boundary between "us" and "them" because they could not go to a restaurant together, that their approach to restaurant eating was different than other, more dominant approaches in Montréal, there were also informants who suggested that eating together was a common practice in Montréal. This was the case because "they" understood "us," "they" were accepting of "us."[1021] The meeting of cultures, of different groups, can occur over food. There may be two separate groups, and what or how they eat may define these groups to some extent, but this difference can also be a point of entry, a place where meeting can occur. As Fischler argues, commensality "counteracts the essential, basic, biological, 'exclusive selfishness of eating' and turns it into, at the very least, a collective, social experience."[1022] In fact, he posits that eating together creates bonding, a bonding that is possible because it promotes equality among commensals.[1023]

This is particularly true in Montréal, where curiosity and openness toward the other is common. For example, one informant explained to me the bridging power of food and its prevalence in Montréal:

> Ici au Québec, les deux cultures sont en train de se chevaucher, et c'est très bien. Il y a pas mal de point commun. Quand on découvre de plus en plus les Québécois, on commence, je ne dirais pas à les aimer mais à les apprécier…Et honnêtement, je les apprécie maintenant dans leurs… même dans leurs habitudes. Parfois, au début, je trouvais que c'était anormal qu'ils fassent ceci ou cela mais avec le temps je commence à les connaître. Et je pense qu'eux aussi commencent à nous connaître sur nos traditions,

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[1020] It is important to note that these binaries between "us" and "them" are imagined and not real. There are many different non-Muslim subgroups, especially in a context such as intercultural Québec, which have various ways of addressing the question of who eats what and with whom? Many of these binary statements serve a larger psychological role than a real means of distinguishing between groups.

[1021] 130517_001—"Je n'ai jamais trouvé de tension, je n'ai jamais trouvé de problèmes. J'ai plusieurs amis québécois et quand ils sortent faire une fête, ils savent que je ne bois pas; donc ils respectent vraiment mon choix. Quand on va dans un restaurant, ils savent qu'ils ne doivent pas me commander du porc ou de la viande. Ils me considèrent végétarienne. Ils savent que c'est du poisson ou du poulet, un plat végétarien. Je n'ai jamais trouvé qu'il a des tensions." (I have never found tensions, I never found problems. I have many Québécois friends and when they go out to celebrate, they know that I do not drink, so they respect my choice. When we go to a restaurant, they know that they should not order me pork or meat. They consider me vegetarian. They know that it is fish or chicken, a vegetarian dish. I never found that there are tensions.)

[1022] Fischler, "Commensality," 531.

[1023] Ibid., 534.

nos plats, etc. C'est de bons augures. Et enfin je pense que la nourriture est l'un des vecteurs qui peut tisser un lien fort entre des populations, parce que dans la culture, d'une façon générale, la nourriture est un élément essentiel, très important.[1024]

For this informant, and others like him, food is one of the essential tools for building bridges over the boundaries that are placed between communities. It is through sharing food that bonds are created, between groups rather than within groups at the expense of excluding the "other." As another informant explained to me when presenting the centrality of food,

parfois on ne comprend pas ce que dit l'autre, mais on mange avec lui; donc on commence à comprendre. Et chez nous, du point de vue culture, quand tu manges avec quelqu'un, c'est partager son repas, il devient presque un frère pour nous.[1025]

This informant suggests that while there are two different groups present in this sort of exchange, eating together breaks down some of the barriers between these groups. Food becomes an access point to "them."[1026]

While this access to the "other" through food is a possibility in any setting, it is particularly successful in a place such as Québec/Canada where a national food culture is not as restricted as a place such as France. Québécois(es)/Canadians are seen as particularly good at approaching the other through food because "we" do not have our own, distinct food culture that we are trying to protect.[1027] One informant told me the following story as an example of this fact.

Il y avait un monsieur et deux femmes. Ils ont avoué ça. Ils ont dit: "le plus beau en nous, c'est que l'on a accepté les autres cuisines et on a goûté de tout."...Après, je leur ai dit "moi j'en connais rien de votre cuisine" et ils m'ont dit, "nous, on n'a pas grand-chose." (Elle rigole.) C'est ça qu'ils m'ont dit. "Notre cuisine ça ne goûte rien. C'est ça la cuisine

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[1024] 130517_002—"Here in Québec, the two cultures are in the process of overlapping and that is really good. There are many common points. When we discover more and more the Québécois(es), we begin, I won't say liking them, but appreciating them…and honestly, I appreciate them now in their… even in their habits. Sometimes early on, I found it abnormal that they did this or that but with time I begin to know them. And I think that they as well begin to know us through our traditions, our dishes, etc. It's good omens. And in the end I think that food is one of the vectors that can build a strong bond between populations. Because in culture, in a general sense, food is an essential element, very important."

[1025] 130727_001—"Sometimes we do not understand what the other said but we eat with him and we begin to understand. And for us, from a cultural point of view, when you eat with someone, it's sharing his meal, he becomes almost like a brother for us."

[1026] "Pour approcher, il découvre des choses qu'il n'a pas goûté avant et comme ça, ça donne l'occasion à des discussions, pour s'ouvrir sur des autres cultures, sur des autres idées, sur des autres religions. C'est comme une occasion" (130612_001).

[1027] Many Québécois(es) would argue that Québec does have more of a food culture than the rest of Canada. Using foods such as poutine, pate chinois, the food at the cabin au sucre (tarte au sucre, baked beans, pork dishes), tourtieres, smoked meat, Montréal-style bagels, St-Hubert rotisserie chicken, pouding chomeur, etcetera, as examples.

canadienne, elle ne goûte rien. Heureusement que l'on a ça, on a accueilli les autres cultures. Donc on a goûté de tout."[1028]

Embedded in this response is stereotypical Canadian humility ("our food is tasteless compared to yours") and openness to other tastes, but the response clearly pleased this informant, who felt that his food traditions were honoured—needed, even, to enrich the broader culture. It might be "their" food, but in light of Canadian multiculturalism it becomes a part of "our" identity. This is reminiscent of Fischler's statement that "if eating a food makes one become more like that food, then those sharing the same food become more like each other."[1029] The Canadian/Québécois(e) may integrate "their" food practices as a means of understanding the Canadian/ Québécois "us." As a result, this lack of concern for protecting a type of food culture allows for a protection of the food cultures of the "other."

Many of my informants consequently told anecdotal stories of non-Muslim Québécois(es) going out of their way to make sure that they would have cultural and religiously appropriate food to eat, thus allowing them to continue their abundant food practices from back home.[1030] This consequently served as one effective means of maintaining their transnational identities.

7.3 A Split Centre of Gravity: Navigating Transnational Belonging for Maghrébine Muslim Immigrants in Montréal

Although I have discussed the various identities that my Montréal informants hold separately above, these numerous identities interact as a part of my informants' overarching transnational identity. Before addressing the transnational identities and practices of my informants in Montréal, specifically their transnational food practices, I would like to briefly address my use of transnationalism here. First, as I discussed in Chapter 4, I take Vertovec's definition of transnationalism as the base of my own understanding of the term so that transnationalism

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[1028] 130703_004—"There was a man and two women. They confessed just that. They said 'the most beautiful thing about us is that we accept other cuisines and we taste everything.' …After I said to them 'I myself do not know anything about your cuisine' and they said to me, 'we do not have much.' (She laughs.) That's what they told me. 'Our cuisine tastes of nothing. That is Canadian cuisine, it tastes of nothing. Luckily we have that [the fact], we welcome other cultures. So we have tried everything.'"

[1029] Fischler, "Commensality," 533.

[1030] 130518_001; 130615_002; 130731_002.

encompasses "sustained cross-border relationships, patterns of exchange, affiliations and social formations spanning nation-states"[1031] I would like to develop this further, and discuss why I use transnational instead of diaspora in this context. Vertovec describes how "diaspora" can refer to three things: "(a) the *process* of becoming scattered, (b) the *community* living in foreign parts, or (c) the *place* or geographic *space* in which the dispersed groups live."[1032] For the purposes of my exploration below, I am using Vertovec's second definition of diaspora.

When trying to determine whether a group should be labeled as transnational or diasporic the principal orienting question that I ask is "Where is the identity's centre of gravity?"[1033] In considering this question, I would argue that individuals and groups who profess a strong longing for home, with their identifying centre of gravity firmly located in the homeland, are individuals and groups on which one can place the identity of "diasporic." On the other hand, transnational individuals and groups have a comfort with many homes, moving between those homes (whether physically or psychologically) with none necessarily claiming one's identity more than the other. While there was some presence of the "myth of return" in my informants' experiences (one informant explained to me that many Maghrébines keep houses in the Maghreb even though no one lives there,[1034] or some profess a desire to retire in the Maghreb[1035]), most were quite comfortable in their Canadian home, while still feeling as though they were connected to a "home" at a distance. Their feet were firmly placed on either side of the transnational fence, with their identity strongly placed in both the Maghreb and Canada. Canada had become "home" but the Maghreb (whether Morocco, Algeria or Tunisia) was still their orientating "homeland."[1036] In agreement with Peggy Levitt, I see transnational migrants as "individuals

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[1031] Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, 2.

[1032] Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, 130.

[1033] Parts of this section are published in Rachel Brown, "Bread Beyond Borders: Food as a Lens into Thomas Tweed's Theory of Religion," *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* (forthcoming 2017).

[1034] Personal correspondence with the researcher, April 1, 2013.

[1035] Personal correspondence with the researcher, March 1, 2013.

[1036] For some the homeland was specific to one of the countries of the Maghreb, but for others, all three countries acted as an orientating homeland. In a context such as Canada, where the distance between homeland and host-land is large, similar regional identities can begin to act as national bonding factors. For example, in Paris there are large communities of Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian immigrants and as a result in that context one can easily maintain a specific national identity; the immigrant is surrounded by enough of his national compatriots to solidly support his national identity. In Montréal, on the other hand, the Maghrébine community is much more interlaced, with regional Maghrébine identity sometimes taking on more importance in one's transnational practice. Following from this regional identity, the Algerian immigrant can make not only an Algerian dish to feel connected to the homeland but also a Moroccan dish. His identity's centre of gravity is in Canada, Algeria and more broadly the Maghreb.

who live aspects of their social, economic and political lives in at least two settings."[1037] Another essential reason why I have chosen the word "transnational" and not "diasporic" to describe the Maghrébine Muslim community in Montréal is simply because of the self-understanding of my informants. I would argue that most of my informants, and the people with whom I interacted more generally in my field work, would not see themselves as part of a diasporic community (they are not praying "next year in Algiers"). Instead they were comfortable with the fluid movement between various identities and places that is essential to transnational identity.[1038]

7.3.1 The Many Means of Bridging the Gap Between Homeland and Host-land

While my informants move between both homeland and host-land, there is still a gap both physically and psychologically that must be bridged. There are various ways that this gap is traversed. Before exploring the role of food in the transnational agenda, I briefly explain how my informants bridge this gap.[1039] While in France the need to recreate homeland in host-land was less prevalent, because of the closer distance of France to the Maghreb and frequent trips back "home" this need was much greater in Montréal. In Québec, where distances are much farther than between France and the Maghreb in terms of space, climate and culture, the transnational effort is much more important and deliberate. Canada seems more foreign, not having a colonial relationship to the Maghreb, and there is less overlap in culture and experience, making the two sides of the transnational land that the immigrant straddles quite distinct. Because of this, the action that the individual or group must take to bridge the two sides of one's transnational identity may be much more deliberate than consequential in Montréal. Levitt posits that one deliberate way that that migrants maintain connection to their sending communities via religion is to "engage in informal, popular religious practices that affirm their continued attachments to a

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[1037] Levitt, "You know, Abraham," 850.

[1038] Levitt posits that diasporic studies tend "to treat migrant and nonmigrant religious life as discrete entities rather than as occurring within the same transnational social field and influencing each other" (Levitt, "You know, Abraham," 848). Because I focus specifically on the migrant's religious life in his/her host context, Levitt would most likely argue that I am in fact conducting diasporic studies and not transnational studies.

[1039] I already mentioned the "myth of return" above. This means of staying connected to the homeland, with an ideal of returning one day, is a powerful means to cross the psychological boundary between homeland and host-land. The transnational migrant may not be able to physically bridge the large gap between the Maghreb and Montréal, but envisioning a "one day" where they may be able to do so helps him/her to feel connected to that homeland in the here and now. Even if one hopes to retire in the Maghreb, there is also a strong sense that one will stay in Canada, and this desire to "return home" is more a psychological trope than an actual plan (Personal correspondence with the researcher, Field Journal, April 1, 2013).

particular sending-country group or place."[1040] These informal actions take on an important role in the migrant experience.

One of these deliberate actions that many of informants took in Montréal was to organize and construct their living spaces in ways reminiscent of their living spaces in the Maghreb. One evening during a meal with an informant she explained what houses in the Maghreb are like and proceeded to tell me how immigrants set up their homes in the host-land as a result. She explained that Maghrébines like to have all the rooms closed off from one another. Most importantly they like a closed kitchen, which proves difficult in Canada where people like open concept home spaces. They do not like having a living room that you enter directly from the front door. In her apartment for example, they made the dining room the living room so that people could come in the front door and not necessarily see the people in the living room. They also had a curtain hung up in the doorway between the kitchen and the "living room" so that those two rooms felt separate.[1041] I had noted on previous occasions during my fieldwork that many of my informants had set up their living rooms with multiple couches, often with elaborate Moroccan style furniture.[1042] I had noticed this fact so often that I wrote the following in my field journal:

> We also spent a long time talking about the new living room that they would be installing in the next couple of weeks. They live in a very normal Canadian split-level house, but are going to transform the living room to a traditional Moroccan living room and the pride and excitement for this task was evident. They are having traditional Moroccan couches built along with matching tables and all of the cushions and tapestries will match. At another's house on Saturday I also noticed that her living room seemed very traditional and was told that it was very Moroccan. Again, as I have noted before, most Maghrébine living rooms look well suited to host a large amount of people. It is clear that receiving guests is incredibly important in their culture. This informant who was building her new living room was pleased that she would have a traditional living room for Ramadan this year and has invited me back to see it when it is done and to celebrate with them.[1043]

As I noted in this field journal entry, my informants lived in "very normal Canadian" homes, and yet when one walked in to the home one was transported to another land, to the Maghreb and the "homeland." This home structure became so clear that I was able to start identifying someone's

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[1040] Levitt, "You know, Abraham," 851.
[1041] Participant observation, Field Journal, May 20, 2013.
[1042] Participant observation, Field Journal, May 18, 2013.
[1043] Field journal, May 19, 2013.

cultural background before I even knew from where he or she had come. For example, one afternoon I went to interview an informant on my own (without my usual Maghrébine hostess) and immediately identified the living room set up. As soon as I entered the living room space I got my first hint that the woman I was meeting with was Moroccan. I did not know her nationality before arriving at her house, and could not tell by the look of the apartment, but as soon as I saw the living room it was clear. There were multiple couches/beds lining all the walls of the living room, creating a mini amphitheatre of seating and extra sleeping space. There were elaborate, colourful, and Mediterranean style couch coverings, pillows and drapes, which all matched. The table was decorated with a tray on which was a traditional Moroccan tea pot and tea glasses. I expressed how much I enjoyed the Moroccan style living room, and she seemed impressed that I even noticed or would know what it meant. For her it was a sense of pride, but a fact not normally noticed by an "outsider."[1044] By structuring their outwardly appearing Canadian homes in inward Maghrébine ways, these informants took deliberate steps to connect with the homeland in real and tangible ways.

7.3.2 Food as Transnational Bridge

While some of the transnational efforts touch on the tangible, others address subtler ways of connecting to one's homeland. Ultimately, the role of memory in transnational practice is essential for those who live at a distance too large to bridge physically. As argued by Sutton, it is through memory that one accesses the past and imagines oneself in relation to that past.[1045] The process of making those memories come to life is another way that my informants connect to the homeland. This process is essential for "remembering" where one came from, without which one may feel lost and confused. As one informant explained to me, "après je peux vous dire que quelqu'un qui ne tiens pas à sa culture, à ses normes, les normes de son pays, tu le trouves un petit peu perdu. Il faut garder cette culture-là. Il faut être fier d'elle. Tu es fier d'avoir une culture comme ça."[1046]

[1044] Participant observation, Field Journal, May 29, 2013.

[1045] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*.

[1046] 130518_001—"After, I can tell you that a person who does not hold on to his culture, his norms, the norms of his country, you will find him a bit lost. One must guard that culture. One must be proud of it. You are proud to have a culture like that."

This feeling of being lost often comes from the fact that one feels far from one's origins when one does not engage in memory-accessing practices. For one informant, this was noticeable specifically through what she ate or did not eat. For her, "c'est important pour moi parce que l'on a grandi en consommant les plats marocains. Si parfois je ne mange pas un plat marocain, je me sens comme si je suis éloigné de mon origine."[1047] Ultimately, attachment to the homeland is often done through memory and food plays important role in memory making and recall.[1048]

For many, memories of the homeland are tied to and evoked by foods and smells, because, "c'est des odeurs qui ramènent des souvenirs."[1049] According to one informant, accessing memories, whether through food or some other means, is an essential aspect of the immigrant experience. While all people need this access to their homeland, she argues, "certaines personnes ont besoin de se retrouver dans leur communauté" in order to find that "d'autres personnes comme moi se contentent d'épices."[1050] Engaging in certain food practices, making particular dishes, seasoning with specific spices, gathering around a table that is set in a particular way, in a kitchen that is set up like it would be in the homeland, are all means of accessing "home" for the Maghrébine immigrant in Montréal. These practices traverse time and space, recreating places and times for the people engaged in them.

I remember one afternoon going to an informant's home for an interview and lunch, and her explaining this experience to me. She explained that many of the dishes we were enjoying (chorba, saffron chicken, tajine) were dishes common for Ramadan and so lunch would take us back to Ramadan. She reflected the conclusion that Sutton posits, that referencing and using specific foods "has the effect of placing one in time."[1051] When she sat and smelled the chorba in front of her and looked at the tajine across the table she commented that she was being taken back in time and place to Algeria during Ramadan.[1052] For many informants, like this woman, using food to access memory was a way of recreating "home" in one's current "home," i.e. the

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[1047] 130615_002—"It's important for me because we grew up eating Moroccan dishes. If sometimes I do not eat a Moroccan dish, I feel as though I am away from my home/origin."
[1048] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 2, 74, 89, 100-101.
[1049] 130501_001—"It's scents that bring memories."
[1050] 130706_001—"Certain people need to be in their community"…other people like me, simply spice."
[1051] Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 28.
[1052] Participant observation, Field Journal, May 2, 2013.

host-land. In fact, she noted, one feels like "home" when one cooks and enjoys food from the homeland.

> C'est ça, je trouve que ma mère, quand elle fait les plats traditionnels, ça nous touche parce que c'est vraiment notre enfance. C'est la nourriture que l'on a connue quand on était jeune. On n'allait pas dans les restaurants. Quand j'avais 5, 6 ans, je n'allais pas dans les restaurants comme je vais maintenant, donc je n'avais pas accès à une grande variété. C'est pour ça que maintenant j'en mange. C'est vraiment quelque chose qui me touche.[1053]

For this women and other informants like her, by making the home food "on se sent comme si on était dans notre pays,"[1054] "on se sent chez soi."[1055] The power of food to traverse boundaries is so strong that some even use food as a means to escape the realities of the Canadian context. To feel nostalgia for the homeland, and even to flee winter ("évader l'hiver") and evoke the summer of the Maghreb, informants make dishes from back home to figuratively leave the reality of Canada behind for the dream of the warm homeland.

As a result, people eat the food from the homeland in larger percentage, more than they eat the food of the host-land. Although, my informants did state that they make food from outside the homeland from time to time, they eat "their" food primarily. Let us remember that, with one exception, we are dealing with first-generation immigrants for whom "home" is still vivid. In fact, one informant suggested that this was a "normal" pattern for people of any background. For her, she ate "les plats algériens. Et tous les Algériens mangent leurs plats, les Iraniens mangent leurs plats, les Indous, les Tunisiens, les Marocains mangent leurs plats. Mais de temps en temps on fait des exceptions."[1056]

I had informants explain that while they try other dishes, especially Canadian dishes, for the most part the base of their cooking was Maghrébine.[1057] For some, cooking majority Maghrébine food is simply a matter of habit; the home food is what they are used to. For example, one informant explained that "c'est l'habitude. Moi je suis arrivé ici, j'avais l'âge de 33

[1053] 130517_001—"That's it, I find that when my mother makes traditional dishes, that touches us because it's really our childhood. It's the food we knew when we were young. We didn't go to restaurants. When I was 5, 6 years old, I didn't go to restaurants like I go now so I didn't have access to much variety. It's for that reason that now I eat it, it's really something that touches me."
[1054] 130517_001—"We feel as if we are in our country."
[1055] 130612_001—"We feel at home."
[1056] 130401_001—"Algerian dishes. And all Algerians eat their dishes, Iranians eat their dishes, Hindus, Tunisians, Moroccans eat their dishes. But from time to time we make exceptions."
[1057] 130430_004; cooks 70% Moroccan food at home, 130430_006; cooks 80% Algerian food at home, 130501_001.

ans … c'est toute une vie que j'ai passé là-bas; pour changer après 33 ans c'est un peu difficile, et c'est ça."[1058] On the other hand, for many, the food practice is the easiest form of connection to the homeland. When everything else around them feeds their Canadian or Western identity, the traditional dishes of the Maghreb feed their home identity. When I asked one informant why it was important for her that she prepare traditional dishes from the Maghreb she illustrated this fact. She explained that "c'est ma culture. Je suis là au Canada mais je garde toujours ma culture. Elle est là, elle est née avec moi, elle a grandi avec moi, donc je ne peux pas. Je cuisine d'autres plats, mais le couscous c'est ma culture, c'est depuis que je suis née."[1059]

This informant and others like her make the home food in larger percentage because they want to "rester liés, pour ne pas perdre le lien avec le pays,"[1060] while nevertheless remaining open "aux plats que l'on ne connait pas."[1061]

Finally, informants also stressed the importance of cooking the home food as a means of educating their children about the homeland. It was essential in passing on the Maghrébine side of one's transnational identity.

> Toujours on parle des anciens temps à nos enfants. Ma maman faisait ça, ma maman…donc ils savent maintenant que ça c'est un plat marocain, ça c'est un plat…Ils savent, ils différencient. Quand tu mets le poulet avec l'olive, c'est un plat marocain—spécialement c'est un plat marocain. Ils savent. Il faut que les enfants sachent ça. C'est comme ça qu'on tient notre culture: avec la cuisine et avec beaucoup d'autres choses.[1062]

Consistency with one's food practice from back home is important, in sum, because of habit, because of a desire to maintain links with the homeland, and because of the need to educate the younger generations.

While most of my informants largely cook the home food, a significant difference than the cohort I interviewed in France, there were clear indications of the mixing of the two sides of one's transnational identity in one's food practice. This was evidenced in people having dishes

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[1058] 130424_001—"It's habit. I arrived here when I was 33 years old, … it was a whole lifetime that I passed there, to change after 33 years is a bit difficult, and that's it."

[1059] 130518_001—"It's my culture. I am here in Canada, but I always keep my culture. It is there, it was born with me, it grew with me, so I cannot. I cook other dishes, but couscous is my culture, it is since I was born."

[1060] 130731_002—"Remain attached, so to not lose the link with the country."

[1061] 130430_002—"[We remain open to] dishes that we do not know."

[1062] 130518_001—"We always speak about the old days to our children. My mother made this, my mother…so they know now that it is a Moroccan dish, that's a dish…they know, they differentiate. When you put chicken with olives, it's a Moroccan dish, it's specially a Moroccan dish. They know. It's necessary that the children know that. That's what maintains our culture. With cuisine and with many other things."

from both their Maghrébine and their Québécois/French homes at the same time. For example, one evening during Ramadan, this mixing of both side of transnational identity was clearly represented in the dessert table. For the most part the meal consisted of entirely Maghrébine food, but there was an important addition of a Québécois/French element. After a feast of purely Maghrébine fare, the mint tea and Maghrébine sweets were placed on the table, alongside a lemon meringue pie, a dessert that my Algerian host pointed out was her favourite dessert.[1063] Here we see an example of the "Dual National" identity according to Peggy Levitt,[1064] and an example of Paulette Kershenovich Schuster's "parallel eating."[1065] To an outside eye, this dessert seemed out of place considering all of the dishes that had preceded it, and yet, it was a natural inclusion in the Ramadan meal for this transnational informant. These combinations of cultures and contexts in food practice do not just show up in what is placed on the table beside particular dishes, but also within a single dish itself. One informant explained to me how she took a Québécois dish and altered it with Maghrébine ingredients as an inevitable outworking of the fact that "on vit avec deux cultures," and:

> on essaie de prendre de celle-ci et de celle-là et on fait un mélange…C'est bien de mélanger deux choses différentes, puis ça donne quelque chose de bien. C'est s'inspiré de deux choses pour faire quelque chose de bien. Et tout le monde l'a aimé.[1066]

Food is clearly representative not only of one's connection to the homeland but also to the host-land.

That being said, food practices that support the connection to the homeland become more prevalent in the host-land context than those practices would have been in the homeland. While one may not need to stress one's Canadian identity through what one eats, not only because Canada does not have a distinct food culture but also because one is in a context where everyone eats in their own way, the need to stress one's Maghrébine identity outside of the Maghreb is strong. This is why there is not only consistency of food practice with what one did in the Maghreb in the transnational context, but why there is in fact an increase in homeland food

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[1063] Participant Observation, Field Journal, July 11, 2013.

[1064] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport,* 77.

[1065] Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 290.

[1066] 130520_001—"We live with two cultures…. We try to take from this and from that and we make a mix…It's good to mix two different things because it gives something good. It's inspired by two things to make something good. And everyone liked it." She went on to say, "Je mélange, je fais le pâté chinois [a variation of Shepherd's Pie] à ma façon. Je fais la poutine, des fois je la fais. Je mélange tout."

traditions outside of the homeland. One informant gave a clear example of this increase in homeland food practice in the following story:

> Il ne faut pas dire que c'est juste pour les enfants parce qu'on a cette nostalgie du pays. Par exemple, quand j'étais en Algérie, je ne préparais jamais le pain. Quand je suis au Canada, je prépare le pain. Quand en Algérie je leur dis que je prépare le pain. "Ah bon?" C'est bizarre parce qu'on achetait le pain. Je ne préparais pas mon propre pain. Mais ici, tellement que l'on aime cette nostalgie on prépare notre pain. Il y a beaucoup de choses que je ne faisais pas en Algérie, mais ici je les fais.[1067]

When in a context where one's homeland identity and practice is not the norm, one may have to ramp up one's efforts in order to maintain the transnational connection.

The increase in verifying of ingredients on any given product is another realm where transnational Muslims demonstrate their connection to a homeland where such verification was not necessary. Many women offered stories similar to the following:

> Puisque j'habite ici quand je fais le magasinage avec mes enfants, je vérifie toujours la composition des ingrédients de chaque aliment que j'achète parce que je ne dois pas trouver de la gélatine, c'est-à-dire le porc, parce que le porc, on ne peut pas le manger dans notre religion. Quand j'étais dans mon pays, comme c'est un pays musulman, on ne se souciait pas avec quoi ça avait été fait, mais maintenant ici on devient de plus en plus vigilant. Vu le contexte je respecte bien, c'est le pays qui nous a accueilli, on le respecte bien, mais en même temps je dois respecter Dieu, ce que Dieu m'a dit de manger qu'en soit pour moi ou pour mes enfants.[1068]

[1067] 130520_002—"One cannot say that it is just for the children because we have this nostalgia for our country. For example, when I was in Algeria, I never made bread. When I am in Canada, I make bread. When in Algeria I tell them that I make bread 'Oh really?' It's strange because we bought bread. I never made my own bread. But here, because I love that nostalgia, we make our bread. There are lots of things that I did not do in Algeria but I do there here."

[1068] 130430_001—"Because I live here when I do the shopping with my children I always verify the composition of ingredients in every product that I buy because I cannot find gelatin, that is pork, because we cannot eat pork in our religion. When I was in my country because it was a Muslim country we did not worry about what it was made with but now, here, we have become even more vigilant. Given the context, I respect well, it's the country that welcomed us, we respect it well but at the same time we must respect God, what God told me to eat whether for myself of for my children." Here's another instance: "en Algérie ou dans les pays arabes c'est tout halal, donc on ne se pose pas la question. Depuis que l'on va à l'étranger, bien que je vous dis que certains imams nous disent même à la mosquée que lorsque l'on est dans un pays étranger et que l'on n'a pas le choix on peut manger non halal—ce n'est pas une faute grave—mais tant que le halal existe autant l'utiliser" (130401_001) ; In Algeria or in the Arab countries it's all halal; thus, one doesn't ask the question. Since we've gone abroad, even though I'm telling you that some imams tell us, even at the mosque, that when one finds oneself in a foreign country and we don't have a choice one can eat non-hallal food, it's not a major problem—but to the extent that halal's available, use it."

While one respects the host context, one tries hard to maintain one's practice as one did in the homeland. It is an effort that often requires not only a consistency, but an increase in religious and cultural food practices.

If these food practices are essential to the transnational Maghrébine Muslim in Montréal, then the necessary ingredients for these practices must be available. If my informants were cooking 70, 80, 95 percent Maghrébine dishes in Montréal, the availability of these ingredients becomes particularly important. All my informants suggested that it was easy to access all the necessary ingredients from the Maghreb in Montréal. As one informant pronounced, "On n'a pas de difficulté à trouver les ingrédients. On trouve tout, sur les épiceries, je ne dirais pas halal, mais les épices. On arrive à préparer tous les plats que l'on veut préparer."[1069]

Beyond just the facility of finding the necessary ingredients for various traditional dishes, one can, in fact, find even more than one could in the homeland in the transnational context. One young woman explained to me "qu'au Québec, c'est rendu que tu peux faire n'importe quel plat de n'importe quel pays, n'importe quelle culture."[1070] In fact, she went on to explain:

> Je pense que même ici on a accès à plus de choses que dans nos pays parce qu'ici ils sont disponibles toute l'année…Je trouve que c'est plus facile ici de magasiner, d'aller au magasin, d'acheter les choses et de cuisiner.[1071]

For other informants, it was not only the seasonal accessibility of ingredients but also the fact that one could find ingredients from all regions of the Maghreb that made the transnational context easier to cook traditional dishes.[1072] We saw the same phenomenon earlier with my Parisian informants. While in the Maghreb they would only have access to the ingredients of their region, while in Canada they had access to all ingredients, allowing for a greater ease of access to multiple traditional dishes.

[1069] 130430_002—"We don't have any difficulty finding the ingredients. We find everything, in the grocery stores; I won't say halal, but the spices. We manage to prepare all of the dishes that we want to prepare."

[1070] 130517_001—"In Québec, it's come to the point that you can make any dish from any country, any culture."

[1071] 130517_001—"I think that here there is even access to more things than in our country because here they are available all year…I find it easier here to shop, to go to the store, to buy things and to cook."

[1072] "Il y a toutes les choses. Tout le Maroc il est là. Je trouve même des choses parfois, je me dis, je n'ai jamais pensé l'acheter au Maroc, tiens je vais l'acheter" (130529_003); "on peut trouver tout, même plus que chez nous. Par exemple, ici on peut importer des choses de tout le Maroc, toutes les régions marocaines. Par exemple, au Maroc, pour trouver un produit il faut chercher un petit peu. Est-ce que vous avez le produit de la ville de Safi, par exemple? Safi s'éloigne de 400km de chez moi, de la capitale de Raba. Ici on peut tout trouver, on peut trouver des tajines, tout" (130615_001).

Although it seems as though it is easy to access all of the necessary ingredients to make traditional Maghrébine food, there are still some people who bring things back with them from the Maghreb.[1073] There are those who bring couscous, spices, etcetera, from the Maghreb when they come back from visits to the homeland.[1074] Even if one can find the ingredients, and often even more, there is still a desire to have a physical connection to the homeland through the ingredients that one cooks with. One woman explained that, "même les épices pour la chorba, je les ramène d'Algérie. Ça se vend ici, mais je ne les ai jamais utilisées—pour la chorba surtout, je ramène celles de l'Algérie."[1075] As can be seen with this example, even if one has access to the necessary ingredients, there is still possibly something missing in the host-land that one can only gain access to in the homeland. Hence, people try and bring that difference back with them when they visit the homeland. Like my informants in France, many attribute this difference, that missing "je ne sais quoi," to a difference in taste—both real and imagined. I had informants explain to me that even if one could find all necessary ingredients, the vegetables, meat, grains, everything tastes better in the Maghreb.[1076] For most of my informants, like those in Paris, this difference in taste came from the belief (they called it a fact, but evidence belies their claims) that in the Maghreb the ingredients were organic while the ingredients in Canada were industrial.[1077]

[1073] A similarity to my Parisian informants, and to those represented in studies by Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 290; Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts*, 81.

[1074] 130430_001; 130430_006; 130706_001, 130731_002; one informant who expressed that she did not bring back ingredients from Algeria, but instead ingredients from France. While she could find everything she needed to make Algerian dishes, French ingredients were a different story: "il y a des gens qui ramènent des choses de l'Algérie. Moi je n'ai jamais rien ramené. Quand je vais en France, je ramène du fromage et de chocolat. Mon fils il me dit chocolat. Moi je ramène une variété de fromages français parce que j'aime beaucoup ça. À part ça, je n'en ai rien du tout… des gâteaux algériens peut-être, de l'Algérie. Des gâteaux algériens qu'on me donne" (130731_003).

[1075] 130520_002—"Even the spices for chorba, I bring them from Algeria. They sell them here, but I never use them—for chorba especially, I bring the ones from Algeria."

[1076] 130401_001.

[1077] "Ça dépend de la viande. Elle n'a pas le même goût. Ici c'est plus industrialisé. En Algérie, maintenant ça change, mais avant c'était plus biologique. On avait vraiment les fruits de saison, les légumes de saison. Ici tu peux trouver les fruits et les légumes à n'importe quelles saisons. Mais ça n'a pas le même goût car ils ont été congelés, puis ils ont été grossis avec les produits chimiques. Alors que chez nous c'est vraiment biologique. Ici, il y a des fermes spéciales biologiques. Chez nous c'est vraiment biologique à toute l'échelle du pays parce qu'on a vraiment les fruits de saison, les légumes de saison. Les choses d'été, tu ne peux pas les trouver en hiver. C'est vraiment chaque légume mais ça a un goût et une odeur différente" (130520_001); "ça ce n'est pas par rapport à la disponibilité des choses mais c'est plus par rapport au goût. Parce que l'on trouve que les légumes, étant donné que c'est comme tous avec des pesticides; ça ne goûte pas la même chose. Là-bas tu trouves des choses plus biologiques. Tu vas prendre des carottes et ça ne va pas être des carottes parfaites, des carottes moches, des vrais carottes finalement. C'est des carottes bio. C'est ça qui fait la différence du goût. C'est vraiment cet aspect-là. Mais sinon, tu vas trouver tous les

For others, the difference in taste is purely psychological.[1078] For example,

> il y a des gens qui disent, le goût ce n'est pas le même. Ici c'est du chimique. Mais je crois que c'est la même chose, je crois que c'est psychique. Lorsque tu es loin de quelque chose, ça te manque. C'est comme le passé chez tout le monde. Le passé est toujours bon.[1079]

This informant stresses how when someone is far from something or somewhere that you miss, that person engages in psychological means of traversing the distance between themselves and that missed thing or place.

Overall the desire to maintain connection to the homeland is strong in the community of Maghrébine Muslims that I studied in Montréal. Whether it was through the actual structure of the eating spaces, the kind and amount of home food one consumed, the search for culturally and religiously accurate ingredients, or any other number of bridging activities, the focus of their daily experience was largely on getting back to some notion of home with which they could identify. With such a strong focus on creating a new homeland that bridges both sides of one's transnational identity the question becomes: Can one be integrated *and* transnational?

7.3.3 Can Integration and Transnationalism go Hand in Hand?

If one considers "integration" as "assimilation," or as a process of giving up one's past identities to be a part of the national "we" (as is often the case in France), it becomes easy to see how transnational efforts may preclude integration. In a context such as France, where any action considered outside the French norm is considered evidence of a lack of integration, transnational efforts can be seen as fodder for communautarisme and lack of integration. The Canadian context seems to provide a different backdrop for transnational immigrants to engage in transnational practices and yet still proclaim fully integrated status. Because of a general lack of tension over religious identity and practice in Canada, according to my informants, immigrants

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légumes ici aussi" (130615_003); "Le goût non. (Elles rient.) Je ne sais pas pourquoi. Même mon mari me dit ça. C'est moi, c'est la même personne qui prépare la même chose, je la prépare là-bas, elle goûte mieux qu'ici. Je ne sais pas pourquoi…Et pourtant c'est les mêmes ingrédients. Les légumes peut-être parce que chez nous c'est frais, ça vient directement des champs" (130731_002).

[1078] Others express that the psychological difference lies in the missing familial ambiance, and eating in culturally and religiously accurate ways helps to re-establish that missing ambiance (130430_004; 130615_001; 130615_002). As I presented in Chapter 4, Kershenovich Schuster argues that taste is socially and culturally influenced (Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 297).

[1079] 130404_001—"There are people who say, the taste is not the same. Here it's chemical. But I believe that it is the same thing, I think that it is psychic. When you are away from something, you miss it, it's like the past for everyone. The past is always good."

feel more capable of integrating into the Canadian/Québécois context. They feel like they at least have a chance to be "fully integrated" and yet "fully Maghrébine/Muslim" (a right not outwardly given to similar communities in similar Western contexts, such as France). When interviewing my informants about integration many stressed their ability to integrate while at the same time not giving up their religious and cultural traditions. In fact, many spoke about the ease with which they could live their religious lives in Canada. One informant explained how the desire to live both a Canadian and Muslim life was viewed in the Canadian context. He explained:

> j'ai remarqué c'est que l'on pratique facilement notre religion ici au Canada. On n'a pas trouvé de difficultés. Le mot magique que je trouve ici, quand vous parlez avec les gens, ils vous disent, "ça ne nous dérange pas."[1080]

Unlike in France where differentiating practices were viewed as more problematic, in the Québécois/Canadian context my informants expressed that there was little tension over these kinds of practice.[1081] In fact, some of the transnational practices in which they engaged in the host-land actually strengthened their ability to integrate.

The issue of *communautarisme* was an often-mentioned reason for the lack of integration in the French context. It is sometimes argued that *communautarisme* prevents integration and that Muslim communities are particularly prone to *communautarisme*. One rebuttal against such a claim may be the emphasis on hospitality in the Maghrébine Muslim community. One may argue that, with the lack of emphasis on the "need" to integrate as understood as "to assimilate," immigrants feel free to maintain practices that are essential to their religious and cultural lives in the homeland, i.e. hospitality. My informants spoke about how essential maintaining a context of hospitality outside of the Maghreb was for their cultural and religious self-understanding.[1082]

This trait allows for a higher level of integration, more reaching out between communities, and more of an emphasis of interacting with the "other" than one may expect. By being free to express one's religious convictions while at the same time being a part of Canadian

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[1080] 130430_006—"I noticed that we practice our religion easily here in Canada. We have not found difficulties. The magic word that I found here, when you speak to people, they will say to you 'that doesn't bother us.'"

[1081] 130401_001; 130517_002.

[1082] As I mentioned above, many of my informants set up or constructed their kitchens and living rooms in such a way as to make hospitality easy. There were many couches, all which could double as beds, and the general flow was such that people could easily flow into the space and be comfortable in it for long periods of times. No one needed to sit on the floor, or on an uncomfortable folding chair. Instead, all people could be comfortably seated in the living room for many hours of discussion, or even to sleep for the required three days that one is expected to house a visitor, according to the religious tradition.

society, informants felt as though there could be a greater reaching out to one's neighbours of all backgrounds and identities. In a non-communitaristic setting such as Montréal, where there is no real "Muslim neighbourhood," one's neighbours are varied and consequently one's interactions with the larger community are inevitable. As I argued in Chapter 6, even the "petit Maghreb" neighbourhood in Montréal is not highly populated by Maghrébines. In fact, many Maghrébines come into this neighbourhood to do some shopping but then they return home, to neighbourhoods made up of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In terms of reaching out to one's neighbours, then, this is not just to fellow Muslims, but also to the "Québécois(e) de souche," Italian, or Polish neighbour down the hall.

7.3.3.1 Hospitality as Means of Integration

Many of my informants reflected on the importance of hospitality in Islam and the role that it plays in their lives in Québec. For these informants, welcoming someone into one's house and providing the best of the best for them was essential to their religious practice, something that brought great blessing.[1083] For example, one informant explained to me why performing hospitality was especially important. She expounded that "on aime ça parce qu'on a été éduqué comme ça, et aussi dans l'Islam quand on reçoit du monde, quand nos invités sortent, il y a des anges qui restent chez nous."[1084]

Hospitality is not only about having the space to house people, but is also about how one demonstrates the welcome. This welcome is often professed through food. When I asked one informant what was the place of hospitality in Islam, she explained the centrality of food for any understanding of hospitality when she exclaimed that, "nous, quand tu fais hospitalité, tu prépares de la bonne nourriture pour tes invités… La nourriture c'est un signe d'hospitalité pour nous."[1085] It is not just any food that one is expected to prepare, though. Instead, one is expected to welcome in abundance, not just with meager offerings. This abundant welcoming is considered part of one's religious and cultural obligations.

> C'est notre religion. Notre religion, on ne peut pas [la] vivre séparé des gens. Inviter les gens c'est vraiment dans l'Islam. Inviter les gens, bien les recevoir, préparer les meilleurs

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[1083] 130424_001; 130505_001.

[1084] 130519_001—"We like that because we were educated like that, and also in Islam when we receive people, when our guests leave, there are angels who stay with us."

[1085] 130731_002—"For us, when you engage in hospitality, you make good food for your guests…food is a sign of hospitality for us."

plats, c'est notre religion. D'ailleurs nos coutumes viennent de notre religion. Dans notre religion il faut être très généreux avec un invité, il faut bien recevoir les invités. Par exemple, je ne peux pas inviter quelqu'un pour lui donner juste un café. Si quelqu'un frappe à ma porte et il rentre, le minimum que l'on peut lui offrir c'est un café avec des gâteaux. Ça c'est le minimum. Je ne peux pas inviter une personne pour juste prendre un café. C'est le minimum chez nous. Et dans notre religion, il faut être très généreux avec un invité.[1086]

This extensive hospitality was something that I experienced directly in my fieldwork on multiple occasions.[1087] Because the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants whom I was interviewing were also comfortably situated in their Canadian context, because they felt much freer to be both Canadian and Muslim or Maghrébine the doors were much more easily opened. Here we can see how food plays a role in Phillip Connor's third theme of "integrating faith," in the Canadian context. As he sees it, that quality is embedded in religion, and religious expression, of which hospitality is an example, according to my informants, helps the immigrant in their integration.[1088] Hospitality is in fact, according to one informant, a way to bring together "toutes les cultures, tous les gens.

[1086] 130520_002—"It's our religion. Our religion we cannot live separately from people. To invite people is core Islam. Invite people, receive them well, prepare the best dishes, it's our religion. Besides, our customs come from our religion. In our religion, you must be very generous with a guest, you must receive your guests well. For example, I cannot invite someone and just give them a coffee. If someone comes to my door and enters, the minimum that we can offer him is a coffee and cakes. That is the minimum. I cannot invite a person just for a coffee. That's the minimum for us. And in our religion, one must be very generous with a guest."

[1087] I recall experiencing this abundant hospitality to the extreme one afternoon when I, along with a colleague, went to an informant's home for a meal and an interview. Already, the fact that my colleague was welcome to join me was a significant sign of my informant's hospitality. We showed up on a Sunday afternoon to a feast for both of us, with vegetarian dishes made especially for my colleague who was pescatarian. There was chorba with meat and an onion and cheese soup made specifically for my friend. There were boureks with meat and boureks with tuna as well as the little potato pancakes. There was a shrimp dish for my colleague and a veal and chicken dish for the rest of us, with salad and homemade bread rounding it all out. The veal dish was accompanied with zucchinis stuffed with ground beef and spices. The chicken was served on top of a mound of vermicelli noodles. It was all around delicious. We talked around the table about how the women learned to cook, and the similarities and differences between their culture and others. My informant's children joined us for the meal and timidly shared their own experiences with food. After the meal was complete, or so I thought, as per usual we were not allowed to help clean up, and we headed into the living room to chat and drink tea. My informant and her daughter then began to bring out the tea and sweets to the table and we were taken aback by how much food there was. She had made brownies and small chocolate and pistachio tarts as well as a traditional Algerian sweet made with couscous and a filing of dates. Then they brought out a plate of cheesecake. Once we had finished the interview and did not think it was possible to fit any more food in us, my informant then asked her daughter to bring in the strawberries. She had made up small cups of sliced strawberries in lovely light syrup for us to enjoy. We spent 4 hours eating; it just did not stop. After we left, we noted how they took out their best serving dishes and teacups for us and how we were treated like absolute royalty. Despite this huge demonstration of hospitality, more than one could have expected, my informant still humbly suggested that her actions were not spectacular, that she had simply welcomed us as she would have welcomed any guest. In that moment I was no different than a member of her family, coming home from a long journey.

[1088] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 74. I will address Connor's four themes in more depth in Chapter 9.

Même si [on a] des religions, des cultures différentes, on dit que l'être humain partout, c'est un être humain."[1089] In this case, integration is to interact with all human beings, no matter the culture or religion, to be open to all. That is the ideal.[1090]

7.3.3.2 Definitions/Understandings of Integration

For most of my informants, integration did not mean that one had to change one's practices. Food practices were just one realm where this fact was evident. Informants stated that "ce n'est pas parce que je vais manger du porc et boire de l'alcool que je suis intégré, pas du tout."[1091] Whether one ate strictly according to Muslim religious traditions or not, or whether one ate a mix of cultural foods or not, it did not have an effect on one's integration. Another informant explained how this notion of requiring change in some food practices had no effect on one's integration by showing how absurd a request such as this may be.

> Est-ce que je suis obligé d'aller prendre un verre pour que je me sente intégré? Non. Ça je ne peux pas me le permettre. Maintenant si le Québécois m'accepte comme je suis, je l'accepte comme il est. Je ne vais pas interdire à quelqu'un de boire de l'alcool pour que je me sente en sécurité. Non.[1092]

Just as bizarre as it would be for this informant to tell a non-Muslim Québécois(e) that they cannot drink in order for him to feel secure, a non-Muslim Québécois(e) should not be able to tell a Muslim person that they have to drink to show some form of security and integration. On the other hand, food can be a positive means of integration. As one young woman explained to me, "je regrette vraiment qu'au Québec on ne met pas l'accent sur la tradition culinaire. Et ça, par contre, c'est un bon moyen d'intégrer les gens."[1093] Food can or cannot be a way to demonstrate one's integration and can and cannot be a tool that people use to integrate the other. Overall, integration is a mutual thing, engaged in by both sides.

[1089] 130612_001—"All cultures, all people. Even if the religions, the cultures are different, we say that a human being everywhere is a human being."

[1090] This idea that hospitality, as represented by food practice, can assist in "integration" is not exclusive to the Muslim community. In fact, Desjardins and Desjardins also highlight the role of hospitality in integration, in reference to the Sikh Langar (Desjardins and Desjardins, "Food the Builds," 12).

[1091] 130430_005—"It's not because I am going to eat pork or drink alcohol that I am integrated, not at all."

[1092] 130517_002—"Am I obligated to go for a drink so that I feel integrated? No. That I cannot allow myself. Now if a Québécois(e) accepts me as I am, I accept him/her as they are. I am not going to forbid someone from drinking alcohol so that I feel secure. No."

[1093] 130706_001—"I really regret that in Québec we do not put an accent on [a particular] culinary tradition. On the other hand, [not doing so] is a good way to integrate people."

My informants were clear in explaining that integration was not just about their integration into Québécois society, but the efforts of the Québécois society to integrate to them as well. It was a mutual effort. It was reflective of Micheline Milot's "two-way street approach to integration" in Canada.[1094] The same informant who suggested that food could be a good means to integrate people stressed that

> l'intégration n'est pas unilatérale. Ce n'est pas uniquement à l'immigré(e) de se fondre/ de s'assimiler intégralement dans la société en refoulant sa personnalité. C'est également à l'Etat d'accueil de mettre en place les moyens nécessaires à son insertion.[1095]

Not only is it a responsibility of the state to make sure that the immigrant could engage his/her integration, but it is also the responsibility of the regular citizen to offer mutual acceptance and understanding. Another informant expressed this view as follows:

> Je préfère la reconnaissance, même pas la tolérance. Parce que la tolérance ok, ok je [ne] t'aime pas mais je te tolère. La reconnaissance, je crois que c'est mieux. La reconnaissance, et la reconnaissance mutuelle. L'intégration mutuelle. J'essaie de m'intégrer mais j'attends à l'autre aussi d'intégrer.[1096]

Other informants, like this one, spoke of integration as a mutual process. Many used the words "mutual acceptance" as a way to explain what it meant to be integrated.[1097] For these informants, religious and cultural idiosyncrasies were not important, but instead the base acceptance, recognition, and ultimately respect for the "other" was what integration was all about.

For many of my informants, integration is primarily about respect, between and among various parties. As the informant mentioned above, if the majority Québécois culture accepts him

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[1094] Milot, "Modus Co-vivendi," 117.

[1095] 130706_001—"Integration is not unilateral. It is not uniquely on the immigrant to blend/ to assimilate fully into the society by repressing his personality. It's equally up to the welcoming State to put the necessary mediums in place for his insertion." As I discussed in Chapter 6, this often involves an effort by the Québécois government to provide services for immigrant communities to learn the common culture in Québec to which immigrants are expected to integrate.

[1096] 130404_001—"I prefer recognition. Not even tolerance. Because tolerance: ok, ok, I do not like you but I tolerate you. Recognition I believe is better. Recognition and mutual recognition. Mutual integration. I try to integrate but I wait for the other as well to integrate."

[1097] "C'est comme ça que je vois mon intégration. Ils m'acceptent comme je suis, je les acceptent comme ils sont" (130517_002); "Et si je rencontre par exemple une personne du Québec, j'accepte aussi leurs valeurs comme ils vont accepter mes valeurs. C'est une acceptation de plusieurs cotés" (130615_002); "L'intégration c'est que je t'accepte ou tu m'acceptes en tant qu'être humain. C'est la fraternité humaine, avant la religion. Tout ça c'est des choses. Mais je ne touche pas à ta religion, tu ne touches pas à ma religion. Je ne touche pas à tes coutumes. Je les respecte, tu respectes mes coutumes. Et comme ça on arrive à être en collaboration" (130731_002).

for who he is, then he is integrated. The centrality of respect for the understanding of integration was clearly outlined by one of my informants when she explained to me the following:

> Moi, Rachel, il y a une chose que je peux vous dire: quand tu respectes n'importe qu'elle personne qui est devant toi, il te trouve le respect, tu es intégré. Automatiquement tu es intégré. S'il n'y a pas ce respect entre les deux religions différentes, la même religion, tu ne peux pas être intégré. Même si tu es dans ton pays, le Maroc, et tu changes de vie, c'est que tu es immigrante. Mais il faut ce respect-là.[1098]

According to this informant, whether someone is in his or her homeland or in their host-land, if there is respect there is integration.

Respect for the laws of the society is also an important aspect of integration, according to my informants.[1099] One explained how integration was on two levels: interior and exterior. For her, the exterior integration was about respecting the laws, but more importantly the interior integration was about "le respect entre les gens…ce n'est pas que moi je dois me changer complètement pour devenir Québécoise; ce n'est pas ça l'intégration pour moi."[1100] If respect is present between and among groups, then according to these informants integration is present.

Food can be one way to show this respect, as the following extract shows:

> Avec mes voisins il n'y a pas de problèmes. Ils mangent, ils trouvent que c'est intéressant. Le fait de préparer et de partager avec eux, ils trouvent ça vraiment, ils disent "mais pourquoi?" et je dis, "c'est juste parce que vous êtes mes voisins, et dans notre religion on doit respecter le voisin. On doit montrer que vous êtes très important pour nous."[1101]

It is a religious obligation to respect one's neighbours, this informant notes, and that respect is shown through food. Other informants highlighted the respect of specific food practices as evidence of integration. Whether it was respecting the non-Muslim who eats pork and drinks alcohol or having the respect of the non-Muslim Québécois(e) about the fact that they do not eat

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[1098] 130518_001—"For me Rachel, I can tell you something, when you respect any person who is in front of you, he finds some respect, you are integrated. Automatically you are integrated. If there is not this respect between the two, different religions, same religion, you cannot be integrated. Even if you are in your country, Morocco and you change your life, it's that you are an immigrant. But there must be this respect"; "L'intégration, à mon avis, c'est de respecter les autres" (130615_001).

[1099] 130520_001—"Alors, c'est les lois et le respect des gens du pays d'accueil" (130505_001).

[1100] 130520_002—"Respect between people…it's not that I have to change completely to become Québécois(e); that's not integration for me."

[1101] 130430_004—"With my neighbours there is no problem: they eat, they find that interesting. The fact of preparing and sharing with them, they find that very… they say 'but why' and I say 'it's just because you are my neighbours, and in our religion we must respect our neighbour. We must show that you are very important to us.'"

pork or drink alcohol, these were clear examples that respect, and correspondingly integration, was present.[1102]

For most of my informants, integration is not about changing one's cultural or religious traditions to assimilate into the Québécois culture. As I argued above, integration had nothing to do with change as much as it had to do with acceptance, understanding and respect. Some of my informants spoke about the fact that integration was about putting some efforts forward to highlight the Québécois/Canadian side of one's transnational identity. Informants spoke about how one should try to live "comme eux,"[1103] or live your life "à la Québécoise, à la canadienne,"[1104] or even this: "tu fais ta vie comme chacun qui est né ici," which can show by the fact that "tu fais les courses comme lui."[1105]

Another clear example of this change toward living more like a Canadian is the emphasis on following Canada's Food Guide.[1106] When I spoke with a group of women at a mosque about their food practices in Canada and their integration processes, they spoke about adopting some "Canadian practices" such as the tenets of the Food Guide.[1107]

While most of these informants spoke about the fact that one could change toward a Canadian way of life and still not lose any of one's cultural or religious traditions, one informant explained how one can lose certain parts of one's homeland identity by trying to live in line with the Québécois(e). Although Maghrébine/Muslim hospitality tends to thrive in the Québécois context this informant spoke about how such an integral trait can change in the integration process. She explained how it was "normal back home" for her to share whatever food she was making with the neighbours or with her co-workers, but that it is seen as strange in the Québécois context, and because of that, "j'ai perdu un peu de ça ici. J'ai vraiment perdu un peu de ça ici. Parce que c'est différent. Et de l'un, on n'a pas le temps, on travaille. Et de deux, c'est

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[1102] 130430_001; 130505_001; 130615_002.

[1103] 130401_001—"Try to live like them"; "Mais s'intégrer dans ce pays, vivre comme les Québécois. Sortir comme les Québécois, faires des études comme les Québécois. Voir la vie comme les Québécois."

[1104] 130727_001—"Like the Québécois(e) or like the Canadian."

[1105] 130529_003—"You live your life like everyone who is born here…you do your grocery shopping like them."

[1106] The Canadian Food Guide is a nutrition guide provided by Health Canada. It is translated into 10 other languages other than English and French (http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/order-commander/guide_trans-trad-eng.php). Many sites for new immigrants across the country highlight the Guide, such as: http://settlement.org/ontario/health/nutrition-and-healthy-living/healthy-living-and-nutrition/eating-well-with-canada-s-food-guide/.

[1107] Participant Observation, Field Journal, May 22, 2013.

différent ici."[1108] Because of a desire to not seem strange, to not stand out and to embrace the "Québécois way," some traits were changed.[1109]

While minor changes were made to one's daily life based on an effort to embrace the Québécois side of one's transnational identity, there was generally a great deal of consistency with one's practices, especially food practice, in the Maghreb for my informants. Integration was more about respect and acceptance and even celebration of difference than it was about change.[1110] Again, this is not surprising given the fact that my informants were almost all first-generation immigrants. Integration was, in fact, seen as a process of mutual advancement and enrichment.

> On peut très bien vivre ensemble, c'est un enrichissement mutuel. Je prépare du pâté chinois, quelque chose que j'ai découvert ici, je le mange, ça ne me dérange pas. Et d'autres personnes ne le mangent avec moi. Mais il n'y a pas que ça, la vie ici elle est différente de chez nous. Il y a des activités que l'on ne faisait pas chez nous, que l'on fait maintenant, parce qu'ici on fait ça, tant que ce n'est pas interdit, ce n'est pas illicite. Si on a envie de le faire, on va le faire.[1111]

In Québec, for my informants, integration is about fully embracing both sides of one's transnational identity, about being both in Canada and in the Maghreb, and in bringing that

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[1108] 130520_001—"I lost that a bit here. I really lost that a bit here. Because it's different. For one, we don't have the time, we work. And second, it's different here."

[1109] Another informant told me of wanting to help an elderly neighbour of hers by visiting with her and making her food, etc., but she was told by others that she could not do such a thing in Québec, that she had to realize that it wasn't like "back home," and so she told me that "j'essaye de me reprogrammer" (I try to reprogram myself) because the Québécois culture was different than her Algerian culture (130424_001).

[1110] Due to space, and the focus of this work, I cannot fully explore one of the significant aspects of integration for my informants: the role of work. This is a significant issue for immigrants who come to Québec because they are sought after, as immigrants, because of their work, yet when they arrive they typically cannot work in their respective domains. For these informants, integration comes through work. If one can work in the society, then one is integrated; an opportunity not granted to many. "Parce que l'intégration ça passe par le travail. Si on ne travaille pas, on ne peut pas parler d'intégration. Ça c'est comment je vois les choses. Maintenant, l'intégration pour moi aussi ne veut pas dire adopter les mêmes pratiques culturelles. Intégration, c'est être en harmonie avec son entourage, avec sa société. Ça ne veut pas dire se décolorer et laisser tout ce que l'on avait avant comme culture qui était notre identité et paramètre identitaire; on les jette et puis ok, et on se met à imiter telle ou telle personne pour être intégré. Ça me parait, ça n'a pas de sens" (130430_002); "l'intégration professionnelle facilite les autres niveaux d'intégration. C'est ça le problème" (130430_006); "je commençais à m'intégrer mais je pourrais dire toujours comme je ne travaille pas encore, je ne suis pas encore intégrée. Parce que ça demande qu'il faut travailler, il faut avoir un poste et travailler dans la société. C'est là que je dirais que je suis intégré" (130703_004); "Intégrer c'est travailler" (130723_001), etc., e.g. 130519_001; 130520_001; 130807_0001.

[1111] 130519_001—"We can easily live together, it's a mutual enrichment. I make shepherd's pie, something that I discovered here, I eat it, that doesn't bother me. And others don't eat it with me. But there is not just that, life here is different than back home. There are activities that we did not do back home, that we do now because here we do that, as long as it is not prohibited, that it is not unlawful. If we want to do it, we are going to do it."

richness of the two sides together into something new; a process which is facilitated by strong religious and cultural practices brought from the "homeland."

7.4 Conclusion

I began this chapter with an exploration of the various ways that my informants identify themselves, interact with, and present those identities through their food practice in Montréal. In terms of national identity, two thirds of my informants claimed Canadian identity to some extent. Many of my informants argued that Canada's general openness to diversity, as well as their perception that "everyone is an immigrant in Canada" made them feel comfortable claiming Canadian identity, whether they had Canadian citizenship or not. Furthermore, I argue in this chapter that the emphasis on one's origins led to all my Montréal informants claiming their nation of origin as one of their primary identities. What is fascinating in regards to national identity is that, for my informants, Québécois identity did not seem to come into play in their own identity negotiations. While two of my informants claimed this national identity, the other 30 did not. My informants did show some understanding of a separate Québécois national identity when they spoke about Québécois food. They did not use the word "Canadian" food but spoke about the various foods that could be part of the Québécois national identity.

After discussing my informants' national identifications, I explored their religious identity claims. For 30 of my 32 informants, Muslim identity was one of their central, orienting self-understandings. For these informants, their religious identity was not just made up of belief or institutional practice, but of the things of everyday. Here food played an essential role in one's religious identity. For many of my informants, food was central to what made someone "Muslim."

Within the discussion of Muslim identity, I challenged the simplistic understanding of the sometimes-posited subcategories of "practicing" and "non-practicing" Muslim. I showed how, for my informants in Montréal, non-practicing could refer to someone who felt like they could do more, or to someone who was not going "far enough" in their practice. In fact, I showed how in Montréal my informants often felt the need to "go further" in their practice, to go beyond the traditional Muslim food practices to demonstrate their Muslim identity.

I then addressed how my informants saw themselves as different, as holding different identities from the non-Maghrébine/Muslim Québécois(es) who surrounded them; "we" are different than "them," according to my informants. Food was the realm within which my informants demonstrated these identity differences. My informants often felt like they needed to go further than the common differences in foodways to draw lines between "us" and "them" and as a result, they mentioned five differences in "how" "we" eat differently than "them." I explored the argument that my informants would make that "we" are different from "them" because "we" (1) do not eat to excess, (2) only eat with our right hand, (3) do not waste food, (4) eat communally and (5) do not eat at restaurants. In this section, we can see how my informants use binary distinctions that overemphasize difference, in the face of vast variation, to highlight the positive value of their home culture in the face of unfamiliar practices in the host land.

I close this section by exploring how food can also be a means of accessing this imagined, unfamiliar, "other." In this I showed how for my informants in Montréal food can act as a powerful means of bridging the gap, often perceived as being larger than it actually is, between communities. I argue that this bridging through food is particularly successful in a place like Québec/Canada where multiple food cultures are seen as accepted and encouraged as part of the national food culture, leading to a great ease of maintenance of transnational identity through food.

This led me into an exploration of my informants' transnational identities and efforts in the second half of the chapter. I explained that for the Montréal informants of my study "transnational" is a better label for their identity and experiences than "diasporic" because they were comfortable with the fluid motions between various places and identities that are essential to the transnational experience. Because my informants saw themselves as firmly located in both the home and host land identities they needed a means of bridging the gap between the two, whether real or imagined. Beyond just constructing their home spaces in ways reminiscent of their lives in the Maghreb, my informants used specific food and food practices to help gain access to both sides of their transnational identity. I argued how for many of my informants using food to access memory was a way of recreating "home" in one's new "home." Beyond just a means of bridging the gap between home lands, my informants also prepared home food out of habit and out of a desire to educate their children about this side of their transnational identity. I went on to show that while maintaining connection to one's home land through food was

important to my informants, they also engaged in food practices that allowed them to tap into the host land side of their transnational identity. In this context, they spoke of the various ways that they prepared and consumed Québécois food as well.

After discussing how my informants saw themselves as bridging the two sides of their transnational identity, particularly through food practice, I discussed the idea of integration and its role in transnational experience. I presented the idea that by being able to maintain homeland characteristics, such as hospitality, in Montréal, my informants were able to "integrate" more easily into their Québec context. They interacted with their neighbours, in a joint process of integration, which often fostered mutual respect. My informants saw integration as a mutual effort between themselves and the host society, suggesting that both sides needed to make efforts of acceptance, understanding and respect. Both sides could use food as a tool to aid in this endeavour.

My informants did suggest that part of their integration efforts had to do with fostering the Canadian/Québécois side of their transnational identity. They did not feel the need to assimilate fully into Québécois culture by leaving behind their culturally and religiously specific practices and identities, but to make some effort to understand and incorporate parts of the Québécois culture into their own daily experience. Food, again, was a good avenue through which to pursue this, for example by following Canada's Food Guide.

Throughout this chapter I have addressed the role that food plays in my informants' various identity negotiations and in their transnational efforts. In this process, I have mentioned several food practices which my informants perform as a means of aiding in these processes. I continue the exploration of food practice in the next chapter as it specifically relates to the understanding of culture and religion.

Chapter 8: "Il y a la culture d'une part et il y a la religion d'autre part"[1112]: Religious and Cultural Food Practices in Montréal

8.1 Introduction: Culture vs. Religion

As I discussed in Chapter 5, people often make a distinction between cultural and religious practices and values. Coming up with a definition of either of these terms is an especially difficult task; coming up with a universally acceptable definition is impossible. Like in Paris, instead of imposing a definition of religion and culture onto my informants in Montréal, I sought out their own understandings of what these terms meant. While most did not give a clear definition of these terms they did suggest that there were two distinct realms within which their practices or values lay, even if a particular practice or value could lie in both. While Ahmed argues that one cannot break apart any given phenomenon into perfect categories of culture versus religion, for my informants, "il y a la culture d'une part et il y a la religion d'autre part."[1113]

There is clearly a difference between the two, in their view, and my informants offer some suggestion as to what those differences are for them. First, my Montréal informants would often interchange the word "tradition" for culture. Traditions are understood as changing, depending on place and time. Religion on the other hand is more stable, has more universal ideas and expectations. While "la culture, les traditions, sont liées à la culture musulmane" they are different from "la religion musulmane, [qui] est beaucoup plus diversifié."[1114] While cultures are specific to certain groups and times, religion, according to my informants, is "pour toute l'humanité. Ce n'est pas pour un arabe ou un africain; c'est pour tout le monde."[1115]

Alongside the universal versus distinct argument, some informants also argued that there was a difference between culture and religion based on its locus in either public or private life.

[1112] 130727_001—"There is culture on one hand and religion on the other."
[1113] Ibid. Ahmed addresses this in *What is Islam*, 116.
[1114] 130404_001—"The culture, the traditions, are linked to the Muslim culture…the Muslim religion, that [referring to Muslim culture] is much more diverse."
[1115] 130517_002—"For all humanity, it's not just for an Arab or an African; it's for everyone."

These informants presented the idea that religion is private versus culture being more of a public expression of identity. One informant explained this idea to me as follows:

> D'abord, la religion c'est quelque chose qui est propre à moi. Je ne dois pas imposer ma religion à quelqu'un d'autre….Ma religion reste propre à moi, les choses personnelles restent propres à moi. Je peux intégrer dans les choses qui sont communes. Je n'ai pas de problèmes dans ce sens-là.[1116]

This informant clearly differentiated between what he could change and what he could not. While his religion was private and unchangeable, the aspects that were more public were more changeable; there were things that are "purement culturel"[1117] and things that are "religieux."

In this chapter I show how these kinds of distinctions are represented by and enacted in the food practices of my informants in Montréal. Consequently, I explore the fourfold typology of food practice that I presented in Chapter 5 as it applies to the Montréal case study. I present each of the seven individual food practices and discuss the various means of argumentation that my informants make for engaging in these traditions. While there are variations in practice in Montréal there is a great deal more consistency of engagement with these seven practices than was the case in my Paris study.

8.2 Fourfold Typology of Food Practice

Food practice is one of the biggest realms of debate as to what is cultural and what is religious. The line between culture and religion can be blurry when you consider normally "religious" practices that are continued by people who "do not care about the religion," "are not religious," etcetera. One informant presented this casually when she explained to me that she had grown up in a non-religious home and then went on to talk about the (normally understood) religious practices that her family performed. She explained, "Je n'ai pas été élevé dans un milieu religieux, personnellement. Mes parents s'en foutaient. On faisait le carême, on ne mangeait pas de porc, ça s'arrêtait là. Le reste, tout était permis."[1118]

[1116] 130430_006—"First of all religion is something that I keep to myself. I must not impose my religion on someone else…My religion is kept to myself, personal things are kept to myself. I can integrate in the things that are common. I have no problem with that."

[1117] 130430_001—"Purely cultural."

[1118] 130401_001—"I was not raised in a religious setting personally. My parents didn't care. We did the fast, we didn't eat pork, but it stopped there. Everything else was permitted."

There is a great diversity of responses as to what is religious and what is cultural. How someone acts in relation to their food practice may be primarily dictated by culture (according to their own understanding and explanation), or by religion, or a mix of both. Some find it easy to distinguish between the two realms and others find the lines much more difficult to draw. For the most part, food is seen as cultural, except for "deux ou trois trucs qui sont en rapport avec la religion,"[1119] or, as another informant suggested, "ce qui est interdit est interdit, et les traditions diffèrent."[1120] For the most part, "religious" is often given as a label if the practice or value can be found in the Quran as injunction (not just food mentioned in the Quran, or else olive oil, dates, camel milk, etcetera, would be considered religious foods), or in the Sunnah as something that the Prophet did that the community would like to follow. The situation is similar to the one I noted in Paris. There is a spectrum of religion and cultural food practices and how they relate to obligation and flexibility. As I mentioned in Chapter 5, food practices were often then labelled as religious or cultural depending on whether they were grounded in religious texts or tradition. So, the hierarchy of religious practice worked out in this way.
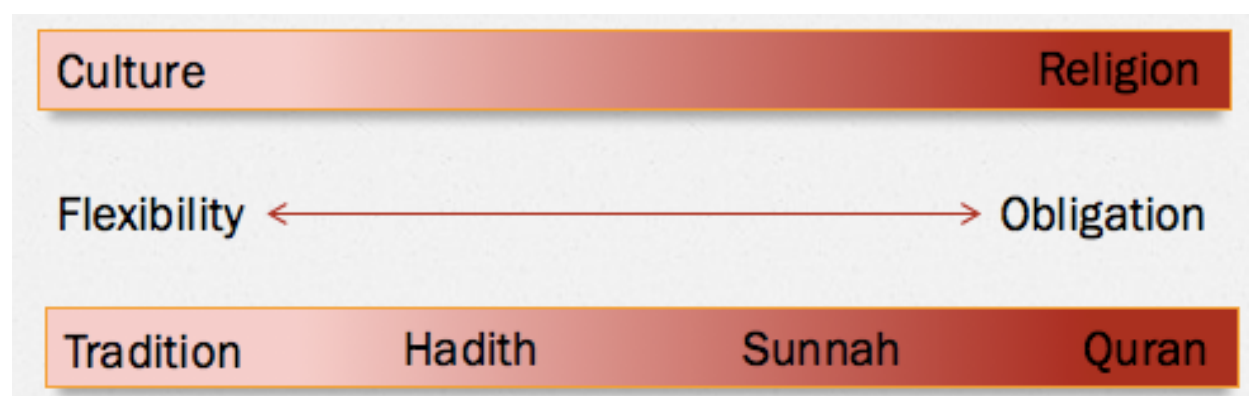
Because of this similarity, the four categories of food practice that I posited in Chapter 5 can also apply to my Montréal case study. Those categories are: (1) the Quranically-documented and "prescribed" food practices, i.e. the abstention from consuming pork and alcohol, practicing

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[1119] 130520_001—"Two or three things that are related to religion"; "Mais d'autre chose qui est acceptable et pas acceptable, ce n'est pas la religion à 100% parce que ce qui est interdit dans la religion, dans le texte, ce qui est pas beaucoup, 6 ou 7 choses: le sang, tout ce qui est mort, cochons, 4 ou 5 [autres]. (Il réfléchit) Je dois réciter en arabe. Mais d'autre chose que l'on ne mange pas, que l'on n'approche pas, que l'on n'accepte pas, c'est la culture" (130404_001).

[1120] 130520_002—"What is forbidden is forbidden [understood as religiously forbidden] and traditions are different."

the fast of Ramadan and the obligation to eat properly-butchered animals (halal). (2) the Quranically-based but not prescribed category, e.g. the lamb of the Eid Al-Adha. (3) The Sunnah inspired food practices, e.g. dates and milk, and (4) the purely cultural food practices, e.g., couscous and other traditional dishes. While in Paris informants may have given cultural reasons for their keeping of the commonly understood "religious practices," in Montréal most of my informants engaged in such practices because of religious reasons.[1121]

In Montréal, there was a large effort by my informants to give more than just a religious reason for their practice. Food practices would be neatly tucked into the categories but then they would also give more "cultural" reasons for these practices. In this way, the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study tended to be influenced by the culture to show how the practices they engaged in were not only based on religious conviction, but had a "more solid scientific" grounding as well. I often felt like my informants felt the need to give a culturally-significant reason for their religious practice, almost in a defense against a perceived attack on the logic of the religious practice. One informant explained that,

> il y a 30 ans en arrière, mon père me parlait toujours que les gens voulaient des preuves scientifiques. De 1980 à çà, tous les étudiants parlaient de découvertes scientifiques, et aujourd'hui, en 2013, on est conscient que la manière la plus saine pour notre santé est la manière islamique.[1122]

For many of my informants Islamic practice did not go against the modern, Western emphasis on science, but instead was the perfect outworking of this approach. I explore these arguments from "logic" when I address each category of practice.[1123]

[1121] I address the possible reasons for this difference in labeling practices "cultural" or "religious" in Paris versus Montréal, in Chapter 9. Furthermore, even though I contrast the categories of "culture" and "religion," as I did in Chapter 5, I still provide insight into the varied ways that my informants interact within and across these categories, thus revealing the "human and historical phenomenon of Islam" that Ahmed suggests is lost in this very effort (Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 116).

[1122] 130615_001—"Thirty years ago, my father always told me that people wanted scientific proof. From the 80s to here, all students spoke of scientific discovery. In 2013, one is aware that the healthiest way for our health is the Islamic way."

[1123] I will further explore why my informants felt the need to give "logical" explanations when I compare the Paris and Montréal data sets in Chapter 9.

8.3 Quranically-Documented and "Prescribed" Food Practices

The first category covers the Muslim food practices that are most commonly understood as strictly religious: the "Quranically-documented and 'prescribed' food practices." These are the practices that are seen as universal and usually obligatory. Like in Paris, when examining the four different practices in this category a slight hierarchy of obligation appears, with the Ramadan fast being the most religious, followed by pork abstention, then alcohol abstention, and finally eating halal meat.

8.3.1 Ramadan

The fast for Ramadan is easily considered the most "religious" of Muslim food practices for my Montréal informants and as a result it was the most commonly practiced. Thirty one of my informants fasted for the month of Ramadan, leaving only one informant who did not.[1124] For those who label themselves as practicing, religious Muslims, Ramadan is always present. For those who have a more cultural approach to their Muslim identity, Ramadan still remains essential. It is the foundational Muslim food practice because of its place in the five pillars of Islam and in the Quran.[1125] Even those who do not pray five times a day, or practice the other pillars, still fast during Ramadan.[1126] Ramadan is labeled as a "sacred month" by many of my informants. One informant explained how this practice was more than merely religious; it was part of a larger sacred moment for Muslims. She explained "Oui, le jeûne c'est vraiment sacré. Le mois de ramadan c'est un mois où l'on doit être relax, zen…. C'est vraiment un mois plus que sacré."[1127] Because this month and its affiliated practices are considered "more than sacred," it is considered a serious sin not to fast during Ramadan.

> Par exemple, si quelqu'un ne jeûne pas pendant le ramadan, comment on dit ça? C'est …en dehors de la bénédiction de Dieu. C'est comme s'il affronte Dieu. C'est vraiment un péché très grand.[1128]

[1124] This informant sees herself as not really Muslim, but just coming from a Muslim culture and family. She celebrates Muslim holidays, and holds a religious morality, but that is far as she would argue that her Muslim identity goes (130706_001).

[1125] As noted in Chapter 5, the Quranic verses that explain the fast for Ramadan are: 2:185, 187.

[1126] 130806_004.

[1127] 130529_003—"Yes, the fast is very sacred. The month of Ramadan is a month where we must be relaxed, chilled out (Zen)….It's really a month that is more than sacred"; so too 130615_001.

[1128] 130615_002—"For example, if someone does not fast during Ramadan, how do we say it?…. It's outside of the blessing of God. It's as if he confronts God. It's a huge sin."

This clearly placed the practice of the Ramadan fast in the religious category.

When personally experiencing the Ramadan fast, its religious elements became poignant to me.[1129] For those who are practicing out of religious conviction or obligation the practice appears to be much easier than for those who may do so simply out of culture or experience. For example, I could see these differences in my own experience of Ramadan, both on the days that I fasted and on the days that I did not. When I was fasting, although I found it difficult to wait until the evening prayer to eat, the women I was with seemed to have no issue. On our first day of Ramadan the women with whom I was breaking the fast got lost in conversation and barely realized that it was time for the *iftar* (the name of the break-fast meal during Ramadan). There was not such a sense of urgency about it. The women explained to me about the power of intention, about how God rewards those who fast and follow him. The funny thing was that we were just talking and no one was really watching the clock, so when the call to prayer came on they were all surprised. Even though I seemed to be much more aware of my grumbling stomach than they were of theirs, their sense of calm helped to quell the vicious hunger that would have normally been at work inside me. There was no rush to eat, but we calmly sat at the table and waited for the call to prayer to finish, and then we took our dates and milk and broke the fast.[1130] This intentional element became clear to me when breaking the fast surrounded by people who were not fasting or who were just doing so out of culture. When I broke the fast with my one informant who does not generally keep the fast I could definitely sense this difference. I reflected on it as follows in my field journal.

> I found the last hour today to be particularly difficult. When I am surrounded by others who are also fasting, it is not as tough. But tonight, being surrounded by a group of girls who were not fasting [or who didn't have a religious reason to do so], who were drinking beer on the hot summer evening and were talking all about food, made it so incredibly difficult. I was counting the minutes until I could break the fast. My host [who was a self-

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[1129] In both my Paris and Montréal fieldwork experiences I fasted for some of the month of Ramadan. In Paris, I fasted for 10 days. In Montréal, I fasted for 15 (half of the month). In Paris I found the experience to be difficult because of the summer heat and the desire to go out for meals with my friends before the setting of the sun. In Montréal, the heat and long hours were again a factor in making the fast difficult, although most of my evenings were spent at informants' homes so there wasn't the same desire to go out for dinner with friends. Some days felt easier than others, and just when I thought that it was getting easier, it would prove to be difficult again. In both cases, I stopped fasting because I felt as though I had been sufficiently saturated in my fasting experience and because I felt as though the lack of energy and focus that often characterized my fast days was detrimental to my work in the field. I felt less focused, less able to capture all the little nuances in the field when I was trying to keep myself from not passing out.

[1130] Participant Observation, Field Journal, July 10, 2013.

proclaimed cultural Muslim] had set aside dates for me and a glass of water and as soon as the moment came, I jumped up from my seat and grabbed them.[1131]

In my admittedly very limited experience of fasting there seemed to be a different sensitivity to the practice when practicing it religiously, as it was meant to be, as most of my informants would argue, in comparison to simply doing so for the experience of it. I felt my hunger more deeply on the days I fasted with my culturally Muslim informants or when I fasted on my own than when I fasted with my informants who were fasting out of religious conviction.

Although the fast for Ramadan was largely seen as a strictly religious practice by my informants, like all the practices in this category, and the other categories for that matter, my informants would find culturally significant reasons to engage in the practice as well. At base, they fasted because it was a religious obligation to do so, because it was cited in the Quran and was part of the five pillars of Islam, but they also expressed other reasons for why it was a beneficial practice. One informant explained the logic, as they understood it, behind the religious obligation to fast. After explaining the various religious reasons for the fast she noted the following:

> De l'autre côté ça a été prouvé que le corps de l'être humain a besoin de jeûner de temps en temps pour éliminer toutes les toxines de la nourriture mauvaise qu'il a dans le corps. Il a besoin de jeûner. Ça a un côté médical aussi; on commence à se poser des questions et à chercher.[1132]

For this informant, and others like her, one looks beyond the simple reason that the practice is "Quranically-documented and prescribed" and seeks out a scientific reason as well for any practice.

This search and its conclusions are logical given the belief that God is behind the food practice, and the Muslim understanding of God that makes him all-knowing, and able to transmit his knowledge to humans. Within *that* frame of reference, how could Ramadan *not* be good for people? Outside this frame of reference, the logic is on shakier grounds.

[1131] Field journal, July 14, 2013.

[1132] 130520_001—"On the other hand it has been proven, that the human body needs to fast from time to time to eliminate all of the toxins from bad food that he has in his body. He needs to fast. That has a medical side as well, and we begin to ask ourselves questions and to search."

8.3.2 Pork

The second type of food practice in this category is the abstention from eating pork. Similar to the Ramadan fast, thirty one of my informants did not eat any pork, while one did.[1133] The injunction to not eat pork is firmly grounded in the Quran and is strictly mentioned as "haram."[1134] I had informants explain, simply and purely, that they did not eat pork because it was "interdit dans ma religion"[1135] because "c'est un verset Quranic qui dit [c'est] haram, la consommation de la viande porcine."[1136] The practice is clearly based in religious text and values, and thus the argument was made that, "si notre Dieu nous a interdit cette chose, c'est qu'elle va nous faire mal. On ne va pas discuter."[1137] For this informant, and others like her, there was no need for further arguments than the fact that it was forbidden and documented in the divinely-delivered Quran.

For some of my informants, on the other hand, cultural arguments were also important. Although cultural arguments are made in support, the practice of abstaining from pork is considered more of a religious than a cultural practice. My one informant who views herself as more of a cultural than a religious Muslim eats pork, and yet maintains other culturally Muslim practices. If it were at base cultural, she would not eat it either. One can see the cultural influence on the practice when one considers that some do not know why they engage in the practice other than the fact that they have done so since they were young. As one informant purported, "ils ne prennent pas le porc parce que …c'était mis dans leur tête quand ils étaient jeunes: 'On mange pas de porc, on mange pas de porc.'"[1138] It is not so much a religious argument that is given, but a cultural one for the religious practice. Furthermore, another informant explained how this practice, which is at base religious, can become cultural.

> Je pense qu'à la base c'est religieux, ensuite c'est devenu culturel…. Le porc, culturellement, il n'y avait pas de porc en Algérie quand j'étais petit. Ça n'existait pas, ça ne se vendait pas. Ma mère ne mange pas de porc. Donc, en plus, culturellement, ils nous ont dégoûté du porc: le porc est dégueulasse, le porc est un animal très sale. C'est pour

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[1133] Again, this informant was the same one who did not fast for Ramadan and viewed herself as more culturally Muslim than religiously so.

[1134] As noted in Chapter 5, the verses that are used to support this injunction are as follows: The Quran, 2:173; 5:3; 6:145; 16:115.

[1135] 130424_001—"Forbidden in my religion"; see also 130430_001; 130520_002.

[1136] 130424_001—"There is a Quranic verse that says the consuming of meat from pigs is 'haram.'"

[1137] 130529_003—"If our God forbade us from this thing, it's because it will do us harm. We are not going to discuss it."

[1138] 130731_003—"They do not take pork because it was… it was put in their head when they were young. 'We don't eat pork, we don't eat pork.'"

ça, beaucoup, que je ne mange pas de porc. C'est plus par habitude que par conviction.[1139]

It is for this reason that it is possible, according to some of my informants, to find atheists with Muslim origins who do not eat pork.[1140] This supports Bergeaud-Blackler's conclusion that the cultural revulsion around pork consumption is so strong in the Maghreb, that it is almost not necessary to give religious reasoning, or support for, the abstention from consuming it.[1141]

The logical arguments for this religious practice also came to the fore. I spoke with a PhD candidate in Islamic Studies, who also happened to be a Maghrébine Muslim, and he explained how strict the interdiction against pork is, for both religious and cultural reasons. He explained that there is no argument that can be made for eating pork, there is absolutely no reason to eat it. It is entrenched in the Quran and is clear as day. When another informant asked him what the reason is behind not eating pork, he gave a classic explanation: not only is the meat weak, but the pig only has one stomach and consequently the food it eats does not get properly digested and is toxic, which then makes the meat of the pork toxic for humans to eat. He then asked if we would like to know the real reason why it is forbidden, the reason that Muslims do not want to admit. I responded with an "of course." He then began to explain that the pig is the only animal where the male does not get jealous of the female. He explained that if another pig mates with his female, the male pig does not care, and this sort of lack of jealousy of the female is completely against Arab culture. He suggested that the person who eats pork then takes on this characteristic to some level and becomes less jealous of others around the women in his life.[1142] I was surprised by this argument; I had never heard it before and did not hear it again, nor could I find textual support for it, but it proved to be a striking example of people finding logical reasons to not engage in a particular practice.

[1139] 130806_004—"I think that at its base it is religious, and after it became cultural…pork, culturally, there was not pork in Algeria when I was young. It did not exist; it was not sold. My mother did not eat pork. Moreover, culturally, they made us feel disgusted about pork: pork is disgusting, the pig is a very dirty animal. It's for that reason that I do not eat pork. It's more of a habit than a conviction."

[1140] 130404_001.

[1141] Bergeaud-Blackler, "Social definitions of *halal* quality," 102.

[1142] Personal Correspondence, Field Journal, March 1, 2013. What is noteworthy about this response is it highlights the centrality of food to identity. As I have argued food is a means of presenting, and of labeling others', identity. After all, "we are what we eat." If we are what we eat, we take on the characteristics of the things we are eating. This idea seems to be at play in this informant's idea of why pork is problematic.

The more common "logical" reason given for this practice was related to health. Some informants explained that pigs were created to clean the planet; they consequently ate everything and were considered dirty and best to be avoided.[1143] While many would state this idea as a matter of fact, without any real grounding, others would go further and cite specific studies or scientific knowledge for why the abstention from pork was the only logical way to go. One of my informants, a medical doctor, took this approach. He explained to me,

> Je sais ça parce que j'ai fait des recherches, mais sinon les gens ne le savent pas. Mais il y a maintenant 27 maladies qui sont liées au fait de manger du porc. Surtout quand on mange du porc on ne le cuit pas suffisamment, donc ce ver là, ou les œufs de ce ver là, vont rester vivant. Ils vont sporuler et, une fois dans le corps humain, ils vont prendre forme et ça forme des maladies. Mais les milieux hospitaliers savent ça, ils reçoivent des gens atteint d'infections liées à ça. Mais on n'en parle pas car c'est tout un commerce, un business, ça fait tourné l'économie.[1144]

There was clearly a scientific reason to this religious practice given by this informant (in this case, accompanied by a bit of conspiracy theory)—and by many others who cited the health reasons for not eating pork. Both cultural and religious reasoning was given for this normally understood religious practice.

8.3.3 Alcohol

A similar situation arises for the practice of abstaining from alcohol. When examining my informants' practices, there is the slightest bit more flexibility in this practice than in the abstention from pork, with 30 of my informants abstaining and two consuming alcohol.[1145] Some of my informants saw the abstention from alcohol as a religious obligation while others saw it as a cultural practice. While it was "Quranically-documented and prescribed" the lack of clarity in the Quran regarding this practice may be a reason for why it is not as clear-cut of an injunction.[1146] For example, one informant explained the effect of the language of the Quran in this case to me. He said,

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[1143] 130615_001.

[1144] 130727_001—"I know this because I did research, but if not people would not know this. But there are 27 illnesses that are now linked to the fact of eating pork. Especially when we eat pork, we do not cook it sufficiently so the worms or the eggs of the worms will remain living. They will populate and once in the human body, they will take form, and that causes sickness. But hospital settings know that, they receive people who are suffering with infections related to it. But we do not talk about it because it is commerce, a business, it turns the economy."

[1145] Again, the cultural Muslim and a mid-thirties Algerian male.

[1146] As I described in Chapter 5, the commonly cited verses in the Quran to support the abstention from alcohol are as follows: 2:219; 4:43; 5:90-91.

Ça me vient à l'esprit que dans le Coran, si on lit très bien les versets Coraniques ... il n'y a pas de verset Coranique qui dit que l'alcool c'est haram. Le Bon Dieu nous a dit les conséquences de la consommation de l'alcool et il dit à la fin "attention n'approchez pas"; c'est un ordre, mais ce n'est pas dit que c'est haram…Une fois, j'ai eu une discussion avec des gens qui consomment de l'alcool, c'est ce qu'ils m'ont répondu en fait. Ils m'ont dit que ça n'a pas été dit dans le Coran que c'est haram.[1147]

Other informants focussed on the stages of the injunction against alcohol as the reason why there may be some confusion as to whether the practice is a religious obligation or not.[1148] Regardless, whether the practice is considered haram or simply something one must avoid, it is argued as being religious because of its place in the Quran.

Most of my informants would argue that it was a strict religious obligation to *not* drink and yet they all seemed to know Muslims who broke this obligation. The argument was typically made not that these folks were not practicing Muslims, but instead, Muslims who sinned, who did not follow Islam quite as closely as others, etcetera.

L'Islam c'est comme le code de la route. Il y a des personnes qui vont le respecter de 50%, d'autres à 60%, d'autres à 70%. Aussi ça dépend du cheminement spirituel, de l'éducation, il y a plusieurs paramètres qui rentre. On ne les juge pas, parce que ça dépend de tous les paramètres dont je t'ai parlé tout à l'heure, mais oui, il y a des personnes qui prennent de l'alcool. Oui. Ils savent que c'est…Un musulman va jamais te dire que l'alcool n'est pas…un péché. Il n'y a pas quelqu'un qui va te dire ça, mais il va te…donner d'autre raisons. Peut-être c'est la pression au milieu du travail, ça dépend, son entourage…mais il n'y a pas quelqu'un qui va te dire "non, c'est pas un péché."[1149]

[1147] 130517_002—"It comes to mind that in the Quran, if we carefully read well the Quranic verses …there is not a Quranic verse that says that alcohol is Haram. God told us the consequences of the consumption of alcohol and he said in the end 'Be careful, do not approach it'; that's an order, but it does not say that it is haram…One time, I had a discussion with people who drink alcohol, and that what they told me. They told me that it was not said in the Quran that it is haram"; So also: "Oui, par exemple, pour l'alcool, c'est écrit dans le Coran … évitez-le. Ce n'est pas écrit le mot interdit. Il y a des musulmans qui en prennent. Mais l'alcool nous a été interdit car quand tu bois de l'alcool tu as [perdu] un peu les idées" (130529_003).

[1148] "Donc la première, c'est l'alcool est bon, bon pour la santé, mais il est mauvais pour autre chose. Et ce qui a de mauvais l'emporte sur ce qu'il y a de bon. Donc les gens ont dit, on va faire un petit régime, on va réduire. Puis la deuxième, c'était n'approchez pas de la prière en ayant bu de l'alcool; comme ça vous saurez ce que vous direz. Et puis la troisième, c'est éviter, en terme arabe, si vous voulez la satisfaction d'Allah. Alors, ce n'est pas écrit et des gens jouent sur ça. Ils disent, oui ce n'est pas écrit clair. Alors qu'en arabe le mot 'éviter' c'est beaucoup plus important, il a plus de poids que le mot haram. Haram c'est dans certaines circonstances, mais éviter c'est dans toutes les circonstances (130727_001).

[1149] 130424_001—"Islam is like the highway code. There are people who will respect it 50% of the time, others at 60% and others at 70%; also that depends on the spiritual path, education, there are many parameters that enter into play. We do not judge those people, because that depends on all of the parameters that I told you about earlier, but yes, there are people who drink alcohol. Yes, they know that it's… a Muslim will never tell you that alcohol is not something that is not a sin. There is no one who would tell you that, but he will tell you, he will give you other reasons. Maybe it is the pressure at work, it depends, [or perhaps] his entourage, but there is no one

Instead of placing people in the category of "not a real Muslim"—something that happens often when people act in ways that seem to conflict with a general understanding of religious membership—my informants would explain the situation in another way so as to not take away the person's Muslim identity, but to merely qualify it. Like Beyer's categorization of Muslim identity along a ten-point scale,[1150] my informants seemed to believe that people practice to differing levels and alcohol is one realm where this is evident. The notion of culture and religion can be blurred here.

The context in which one finds oneself sometimes leads to more flexibility in this practice. My informants sometimes spoke about living in France, where alcohol is much more prominent and accessible, with this possibly leading to changes in practice.[1151] Other informants suggested that people will come back to practicing lives later on in life and will stop drinking, but that many drink when they are young; it is accessible and acceptable.[1152] One informant described the various contexts that one may find oneself in where this abstention from alcohol is not as culturally driven.

> En Algérie, il y a beaucoup de musulmans qui le prennent. Il y a une région au sud, là où je faisais parfois mes missions, il y a des gens qui reviennent de la mosquée après avoir pratiqué une prière donnée, après ils prennent de l'alcool normalement. C'est étonnant mais c'est comme ça. En Algérie il y en a beaucoup; ici aussi, il y en a beaucoup. En France, parce que j'ai fait mes études en France, il y en a aussi énormément de musulmans qui prennent de l'alcool, et même qui mangent du porc le plus normalement du monde.[1153]

In these contexts, where alcohol is accessible, it seems as though many leave the religious injunction aside and take on a more cultural reason to engage in this practice.

Another aspect of the injunction against alcohol that helps to reveal some of its cultural elements is the fact that it is considered more acceptable for a man to drink alcohol than a

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who will tell you 'no, it's not a sin.'"; see also: "C'est interdit mais il y en a qui transgressent" (130430_002); "Oui, il y a des musulmans qui boivent. Ils savent que ce n'est pas halal, mais…(silence)" (130505_001).

[1150] Beyer, "Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism," 58-60.

[1151] 130401_001.

[1152] 130404_001.

[1153] 130517_002—"In Algeria, there are many Muslims who drink it. There is a region in the south, I did some of my missions there; there are people who come back from the mosque after practicing a certain prayer; afterwards they drink alcohol normally. It's shocking but it's like that. In Algeria, there are many; here as well, there are many. In France, because I did my studies in France, there are also a large number of Muslims who drink alcohol and also who eat pork as normally as the rest."

woman. If it were strictly religiously forbidden, the gender of the consumer would have no effect on the acceptability of the practice. One of my informants who drank alcohol explained that "culturellement, c'est très mal vu qu'une femme boive de l'alcool," and because "la règle est la règle, si elle ne s'applique pas de la même manière pour tous, je préfère m'inscrire dans le groupe le plus privilégié."[1154] She justified her lack of practice by the fact that to her it was culturally malleable.

Whether someone used religious or cultural reasons to explain the injunction against alcohol, logical arguments were also made for the reason why someone should abstain from it. One informant spoke of the fact that one cannot drive after having consumed alcohol and so it was logically problematic to consume it. She posited that,

> parce que vous voyez dans ces sociétés-là, c'est interdit pour vous de conduire quand vous buvez. Donc ce n'est pas bien de boire. (Elles rigolent.) Si c'était une bonne chose, on ne peut pas dire, ne buvez pas de l'eau quand vous conduisez, vous ne pouvez pas prendre du coca cola; donc ça donne à réfléchir pourquoi je n'ai pas le droit [de boire de l'alcool]. C'est pas bon pour la santé, ce n'est pas bon.[1155]

Whether or not it was because we cannot drive when having consumed alcohol or we cannot drink alcohol when we take certain medications,[1156] these reasons were seen as clear, logical reasons for the religious injunction against this consumption practice.

8.3.3.1 Alcohol vs. Pork

Where the complexities of the role of culture and religion become evident is in the comparison of the injunction against pork and the one against alcohol. Although most of my informants did not consume either product, as I explained above, all my informants knew Muslims who consumed alcohol, but barely any could come up with an example of Muslims who ate pork. Mohammed Benkheira, in his article on Muslim food prohibitions, similarly states that although, "du point de

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[1154] 130706_001—"Culturally it is frowned upon for a woman to drink alcohol…. The rule is the rule, if it is not applied in the same way for all I prefer to register in the more privileged group"; so also: "Tous les Algériens ne boivent pas, quoi que les hommes, ils boivent; ne croyez pas qu'ils ne boivent pas. Mais en général, les femmes ne boivent pas" (130731_003).

[1155] 130430_004—"Because you see in those societies, it's forbidden for you to drive when you drink. So it's not good to drink. [They laugh.] If it was a good thing, we cannot say don't drink water when you drive, you cannot drink coca cola, so that makes one think why I do not have the right [to drink alcohol]. It's not good for one's health, it's not good."

[1156] "Je trouve que ça n'a aucun sens franchement d'interdire la consommation d'alcool et de la permettre dans les restaurants. C'est une complication de vie. Et même si tu as des problèmes de santé, le médecin t'interdit de boire de l'alcool. Si tu consommes un médicament, il est interdit de consommer les deux simultanément. Je crois que c'est assez clair pour tout le monde que l'alcool n'est pas bon pour notre santé" (130615_001).

vue pénal, il vaut mieux manger du porc que boire du vin, les Maghrébins transgressent plus facilement le second interdit que le premier."[1157] If the injunction against alcohol is considered to be at the same level as that against pork, and sometimes even more problematic as we see in Benkheira, then what led to this difference in actual practice? First, a large portion of my informants argued that there was no difference between the two practices: both are religious food obligations and cultural influences do not matter.[1158] As one informant exclaimed, "C'est exactement la même chose. Il faut tout écarter à 100%...C'est interdit, c'est catégorique, c'est blanc ou noir."[1159]

Although this informant and the others like her saw the issue as black and white, others argued for larger grey areas in the discussion. Some would argue that fundamentally it was the same and yet there was a difference in practice on the ground of the two.

> C'est un peu bizarre parce que la restriction est la même, les deux sont vraiment interdits mais vous pouvez trouver plusieurs musulmans qui boivent mais vous n'allez pas trouver des musulmans qui mangent du porc. Je n'ai jamais compris pourquoi. Si tu leur dis, tu manges du porc? Ils disent non, c'est impossible que je mange du porc malgré qu'ils boivent. C'est la même chose, mais c'est bizarre.[1160]

For these informants, the situation is bizarre, almost unexplainable.[1161] Others come up with reasons why there is a difference, and most of those have to do with cultural influence.

For some, the way that the two practices were written about in the Quran is the reason for this difference in approach. As I explained above, the language around the injunction against alcohol is muddier than that for pork, despite the fact that the Quran is clear that Muslims should not drink alcohol. Why? While pork is explicitly labeled as haram in the Quran, alcohol is not, and for that reason there is more room to argue for exceptions to the rule.[1162] For others, it is the

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[1157] Benkheira, "Alimentation," 266. "From the criminal point of view, it is better to eat pork than to drink wine, Maghrébines more easily transgress the second interdiction than the first."

[1158] 1304301_001; 130430_003; 130430_004; 130430_006; 1305050_001; 130519_001; 130520_002.

[1159] 130501_001—"It's exactly the same thing. One must exclude everything to 100%...It's forbidden, it's categorical, it's black and white."

[1160] 130517_001—"It's a bit strange because the restriction is the same, both are very much forbidden but you can find many Muslims who drink but you will not find Muslims who eat pork. I never understood why. If you ask them 'you eat pork?' They say 'no, it's impossible that I could eat pork' despite the fact that they drink. It's the same thing but it's bizarre."

[1161] "They are exactly the same, so much so that if someone feels they can consume alcohol they can also consume pork, and yet, people in Algeria will drink alcohol but not eat pork" (130518_001); see also: "Oui c'est ça, pour l'alcool tu peux trouver des musulmans non pratiquants qui boivent de l'alcool, mais le porc c'est vraiment interdit. Il y a une certaine difference" (130731_002).

[1162] 130807_001; 130706_001.

fact that alcohol is more readily available in the Maghreb than pork.[1163] The other informant who consumed alcohol explained his practice and the difference between the approach to alcohol and pork in this manner. He would not eat pork but he did drink alcohol, and when I asked him what the difference was he responded as follows:

> Mais, culturellement, c'est quasiment plus facile de boire que de manger du porc…Je pense que c'est parce que l'alcool est plus à la base dans notre culture que le porc. Nous, la viande, c'est plus l'agneau ou du mouton, par rapport aux asiatiques pour qui le porc est tout pour eux. J'imagine mal comment ils font ça là-bas. Pour nous, ce n'est pas vraiment difficile. Je [ne] me prive pas en ne mangeant pas de porc. Ça m'est égal. Ce n'est pas comme si j'aime ça et que je ne le mange pas. Mais, l'alcool ça a toujours été là.[1164]

For this informant, and others like him, pork was not present, it was not something he would miss out on, but alcohol was.[1165] In fact alcohol was often a part of young peoples' lives in the Maghreb, while pork was not.[1166] One of these products was made more normative while the other was kept as foreign, strange, bad.[1167]

This fact generally led to a different level of cultural revulsion or digust surrounding the two practices. One informant explained how the two products were viewed differently in a cultural sense. He suggested that

> il y a le silence. Socialement c'est plus facile pour l'alcool que pour le porc. Pourquoi? Parce qu'ils ont associé le porc à quelque chose de malsain. Le porc est omnivore, le porc mange n'importe quoi. C'est plus une révulsion pour le porc que pour l'alcool. Socialement, c'est peut-être plus accepté [de boire], c'est moins une violation de la religion.[1168]

[1163] As I argued in Chapter 5, alcohol, specifically wine, has been a prominent market in the Maghreb since France's colonization of the region. Wine was not just present, but a part of the market economy of Algeria and Morocco. Pork is almost non-existent.

[1164] 130806_004—"But culturally, it's much easier to drink than to eat pork…I think it is because alcohol is more present in our culture, at its base, than pork. For us, meat is more lamb or sheep, compared to Asians for whom pork is everything. I cannot imagine how they do it there. For us, it's not very difficult. I am not deprived by not eating pork. I do not care, it's not as if I like it and I do not eat it. But alcohol, it was always there."

[1165] 130517_002; 130529_003.

[1166] 130723_001.

[1167] One should note that alcohol consumption differs from pork and halal eating because it's physically addictive. Once hooked (and this differs, of course, from person to person) it is far more difficult to stop drinking alcohol than it is to stop eating pork.

[1168] 130806_005—"There is a silence, socially it is easier for alcohol than for pork. Why? Because they managed to associate pork with something unhealthy. The pig is an omnivore; the pig can eat anything. It's more of a repulsion for pork than for alcohol. Socially, that may be more accepted, it's less of a violation of the religion."

Here the informant expands the cultural effect to the religious realm. It is not only less of a social or cultural violation but is consequently less of a religious violation. For another of my informants this difference in violation was evident in her own thoughts about how she would feel if she ate pork versus if she drank alcohol. Through a colourful explanation of what she imagined would happen in the two circumstances, we can see how disgust is a strong emotional, and even, physical response.

> Il sait que le porc c'est pire que l'alcool. Personnellement, je sens que si je vais manger du porc, je sens que ça va partir dans tous mes tissus, ça va habiter mon corps. (Elles rigolent.) Alors le liquide pour moi, plus ou moins ça peut disparaitre mais le porc je vais sentir que j'ai un morceau quelque part qui appartient définitivement.[1169]

Similarly, other informants spoke about the effect of eating with your eyes in the Maghrébine culture. They related this to the question of eating pork and suggested that pork is not attractive to them. It is not an attractive looking thing and there is not the same pull toward eating it. Alcohol on the other hand, specifically a cold, crisp beer on a hot summer's day, is incredibly nice to look at and consequently more tempting.[1170] The elaborate visualizations of pork and alcohol that are present in the Maghreb influenced how each substance was viewed, in spite of its religious significance. So much so that Bergeaud-Blackler suggests that "the distaste for pork in Muslim societies is so profound that it is hardly even necessary to forbid its consumption."[1171] Pork is "culturally" inherently *more* problematic.

8.3.4 Halal Meat

The final of the four "Quranically-documented and 'prescribed'" practices is that of consuming halal meat.[1172] This practice was the most varied of the four, although there is still a large amount of consistency of practice in the data set. Of my 32 informants, 27 ate halal meat exclusively, three ate mostly halal but would sometimes eat non-halal meat, and two have no interest in keeping halal.[1173] Despite some slight variation, halal was generally seen as absolutely central,

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[1169] 130430_005—"He knows that pork is worse than alcohol. Personally, I feel that if I eat pork, it will spread in all of my tissues; it will live in my body. [They laugh.] Whereas liquid, for me, that can disappear more or less, but pork I will feel like I have a piece of it somewhere that will stay indefinitely."

[1170] Personal correspondence with the researcher, Field Journal, February 22, 2013.

[1171] Bergeaud-Blackler, "Social Definitions of *Halal* Quality," 102.

[1172] The verses of the Quran that support this practice are: 2:173; 6:145; 16:115. The most extensive verses in the Quran that address the various points behind halal slaughter are 5:3-4.

[1173] The two who had no interest in keeping halal were also the two who consumed alcohol.

sacred, and completely religious. It was "vraiment primordial, sacrée, ça c'est très important."[1174] It was so essential that some of my informants spoke about the fact that they would even decide where they would live based on the availability of halal meat.[1175]

The religious significance of the practice was also highlighted by the fact that trust was one of the most important aspects of keeping halal that my informants mentioned. Like my informants in Paris, most of my Montréal informants spoke about the fact that they had to trust the people who are selling them halal. Even if the sin is ultimately on the person selling the meat and not the person buying it, it was still essential that my informants knew that the meat was coming from a Muslim. These informants tended to trust a Muslim butcher more than the grocery store, and furthermore, they would have more trust in a Muslim butcher that they knew personally than just any Muslim butcher. Even though there is halal in the grocery stores, it is not good enough for many of my informants. For example, one informant explained that

> les grandes surfaces, malgré qu'ils disent halal, je garde une petite restriction. Même les boucheries, je n'achète pas chez n'importe qui. Il y a des bouchers, tout dépend des personnes. Tu sais, je n'ai pas confiance à n'importe quel boucher. S'il y a des bouchers que je connais…je vais acheter d'eux parce que je les connais et j'ai confiance.[1176]

If keeping halal was simply a cultural practice, then where one bought the meat would not matter so deeply to so many people. The fact that one must fully trust the person who is telling them that the meat is halal, even if the blame would be on the seller and not the buyer, is a clear indication of how religiously significant this practice is for these informants.

One can see the cultural influence on this practice when one considers those who do not keep halal strictly. These informants tended to give three different answers for why they did not keep halal. The first reason was by "politesse." This informant would not eat pork, would not drink alcohol, but saw halal as a bit more flexible. She told me that normally she keeps halal but if she is invited to a friend's house who does not eat halal, she will eat out of politeness, even if it

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[1174] 130430_001—"Really crucial, sacred, it is very important."

[1175] "La seule raison pourquoi on a choisi Montréal [c'est l'halal]—car mon frère a fait ses études à Trois Rivières. Maintenant je sais qu'il y a halal là-bas, mais avant, à l'époque où il faisait ses études, il n'y en avait pas; il faisait l'aller-retour Montréal pour en acheter" (130529_003).

[1176] 130520_001—"The large grocery stores ,although they say halal, I keep a niggling restriction. Even the butchers … I do not buy from just any butcher. There are butchers, everything depends on the person. You know, I don't trust just any butcher. If there are butchers that I know, I will buy there; because I know them and I trust them"; also mentioned by 130731_002.

would shock people to know.[1177] The second reason given for flexibility in this practice was because the definition has changed:

> C'est quoi le halal? Ça c'est un débat théologique. Donc on ne va pas rentrer ici. Je mange [tout]. Pour moi, la viande c'est la viande…la viande [en temps passé] c'est ce qui a été sacrifié en autre nom que Allah—quelqu'un a dit, au nom de bouddha, de Jésus, de Jean. Pour moi, je ne crois pas que, d'après mes connaissances, ça existe maintenant. Les gens qui travaillent dans les boucheries, ce sont des gens normaux. Ils font leur travail. Ils ne font rien [étrange], ils égorgent. Ça c'est un travail de routine.[1178]

The third reason that informants would give for why halal was more flexible is because there is an excuse given in the Quran for eating non-halal meat. According to this argument, because there is a Quranic passage that says that if one is in extreme conditions and

> on n'a pas le choix, malgré que ce ne soit pas halal et on sait que ce n'est pas halal, on peut prononcer le nom bismillah, ça veut dire au nom de Dieu, et on consomme. La religion est faite pour faciliter la vie des humains, pas pour la compliquer.[1179]

As I argued in Chapter 5, most of the verses that address the regulations around halal have provisions for "one who is driven by necessity," in which case it is not a sin to consume such things.[1180] Overall, there is some wiggle room to the religious obligation, whereas with something like pork there is never a time when it is acceptable to eat pork; there is never a loophole, or circumstance that allows for it. Some of my informants thought there is for halal. Interestingly, the part of the verse that is often used to justify consuming halal, "when driven by necessity," is located within the same verses that forbid pork consumption, yet pork is practically never included in the list of things that one can consume when this "necessity" arises. Here again we may see the influence of culture on religion.

As is the case for all the other practices in this category, whether or not one used religious or cultural arguments to explain their practice, they often gave a secondary reason for the consumption of halal that was based in logic. The most important argument made in this regard

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[1177] 130401_001.

[1178] 130404_001—"What is halal? That's a theological debate. So we aren't going to enter it here. I eat [everything]. For me, meat is meat… the meat [in times past] that was sacrificed to another name than Allah— someone said in the name of Buddha, or Jesus, or John. For me, I do not believe, according to my knowledge, that that exists now. People who work in the butcher shops, they are normal people, they do their work. They don't do anything [strange]. They slaughter. It's a routine job."

[1179] 130430_003—"We do not have a choice, although it is not halal and we know that it is not halal, we can pronounce the name *bismillah*—that means in the name of God—and we eat. The religion was made to facilitate the life of humans, not complicate it."

[1180] 2:173; 5:3; 6:145; 16:115.

was that halal meat was healthier because it drained the animal of all of its blood, and they believed that the blood was where disease was housed. Again this is argued as "scientifically proven" by many of my informants: "scientifiquement, quand on égorge de cette manière-là, la bête dégage tout son sang…Et la viande devient plus saine au niveau de la consommation; beaucoup plus que celle où il y a du sang."[1181] Many others argue simply that meat without blood is better for your health than meat with blood without any real explanation as to why that may be the case. Some do posit why bloody meat is worse than bloodless meat, namely because "le sang, quand il reste à l'intérieur, il est vecteur de germes. C'est scientifiquement prouvé que lorsqu'on vide l'animal de son sang, la viande est plus saine."[1182] While these so-called facts are now only available in recent years, many of these informants would suggest that they were already known by Muhammad, through God's revelation, and that is why this practice appears in the Quran. All Muslim religious practices have scientific grounding, according to these informants—not surprisingly, given the theological framework in which they imagine themselves in the world.

8.4 Quranically-Documented but not Prescribed Food Practices

We now come to the second category of food practice, that of the "Quranically-based but not prescribed" category. The clearest example in this category is the lamb of the Eid Al-Adha. The reason why it is placed in this category and not the first is that while it is a religious festival that most Muslims around the world do celebrate there is no real injunction in the Quran that one *must* eat lamb on this day. It is a religious act because it finds its grounding in a religious story and tradition; it is based on the story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, which is an essential story in the Abrahamic religious traditions.[1183]

[1181] 130615_001—"Scientifically, when we slaughter in this manner, the animal clears all of its blood…and the meat becomes healthier for consumption; much more than the one that had blood."

[1182] 130520_002—"The blood, when it stays inside, it is a vector for germs. It's scientifically proven that when you rid the animal of its blood, the meat is healthier"; 130424_001, 130430_004, 130517_002, 130520_001, 130615_003, 130727_001 all make similar arguments.

[1183] As I presented in Chapter 5, the verses which are relevant here are: (1) The verses which describe the story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael: 37:99-109; (2) the verse that people refer to in support of the sacrifice of an animal at the end of the pilgrimage: 22:27-29; and (3) the verse which addresses the Hajj, to which the sacrifice is related: 2:196.

8.4.1 Eid Al-Adha Lamb

This practice is essentially the clearest example of a religious food practice that my informants mentioned. For my informants, who generally gave cultural arguments for commonly understood religious practices, such as the four mentioned in the first category, the Eid lamb stood apart as something unique, something fully religious. One informant, when speaking of other, often understood, religious food practices, focused mostly on the cultural or traditional elements to the practice, but when it came to the Eid lamb she focussed on the religious. In response to this practice she exclaimed: "l'agneau de l'Eid c'est religieux."[1184] Another informant, when speaking about Islam and food, expressed that "la seule chose qui est religieux, c'est dans notre fête du mouton."[1185] It is not surprising my other informants, who were more prone to giving religious arguments for their food practices in general, also stressed the fact that slaughtering and eating the Eid lamb was a purely religious act; it was seen as something beyond culture.[1186]

One of the clearest reasons why this was a primarily religious food practice, according to my informants, is because of the fact that it was a universal practice: Muslims, they believe, engage in this practice no matter where they are in the world. After all, "ça, c'est la religion parce que même ici ou même en occident il y a les musulmans qui égorgent parce que c'est le Prophète, c'est la religion."[1187] Whether in the Maghreb, the West, the East, or elsewhere, all Muslims, my informants claim (with some measure of exaggeration, to be sure), acknowledge the practice of the sacrifice and consumption of the Eid lamb as a religious endeavour. Instead of being specific to a time and place, as cultural practices are, the sacrifice of the Eid lamb was thought to cross boundaries spatially and temporally.

Just because the practice is seen as universal and essentially religious, it did not mean, according to my informants, that the practice was obligatory for all Muslims to engage in, like those practices in the first category. There are those who cannot afford to partake in the practice, and they are not obligated to do so as a result. As one of my informants clarified,

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[1184] 130401_001—"The Eid lamb is religious."

[1185] 130518_001—"The only thing that is religious, it is in our festival of sheep."

[1186] 130430_003; 130430_004; 130430_005; 130430_006; 130501_001; 130505_001; 130517_001; 130519_001; 130520_002; 130529_003; 130612_001; 130615_001; 130615_002; 130615_003; 130723_001; 130727_001; 130731_002; 130806_004; 130806_005; 130807_001.

[1187] 130404_001—"That is the religion because, whether here or in the Occident, there are Muslims who sacrifice because it is the Prophet, it is the religion."

on doit égorger le mouton, selon les capacités de la personne financière bien sûr. Si la personne a le moyen, c'est une obligation de sacrifier le mouton. S'il ne l'a pas, ce sont des gens pauvres, ils ne sont pas dans l'obligation de sacrifier le mouton.[1188]

Other informants suggested that, depending on the person's means, it might not always be a lamb or sheep, but instead may be veal or a cow or some other sacrifice, but it was important to sacrifice something.[1189] Another informant suggested that "ce n'est pas toutes les familles qui le font. Il y en a qui paye de l'argent. Nous, on a le choix d'égorger un mouton ou bien de payer le prix du mouton à des familles pauvres."[1190] Here an exception is made perhaps for those who do not wish to kill an animal but still want to participate in the religious festival—and those who live in places (like Canada and France) that forbid the killing of animals in public, and restrict the slaughter of animals in general to licensed butchers.

While the practice of killing and eating the Eid lamb is considered to be strictly religious by my informants there are still cultural influences on how the practice is played out. This became clear to me on the day of the Eid Al-Adha in Montréal. My host for the day explained the prophetic tradition of eating for the Eids. She explained that for the Eid that follows Ramadan, according to prophetic tradition, one is supposed to eat before the prayer. After a month of fasting it is important to eat right away. In comparison, for Eid Al-Adha the prophetic tradition is to not eat anything before one eats the lamb. Muhammad would do the morning prayer, pray over the lamb, sacrifice it and eat the liver immediately following. As a result, there would be no real time of fasting during this Eid, a practice that she explained is not allowed. She then explained that "back home" this practice was easy to follow. She explained that, like Muhammad, they would not eat anything until they ate from the sacrificed lamb. The problem is that in Canada the process of going to the farm and getting one's sacrificed lamb was much more complicated and took so much longer that it led people to fasting all day long, which is forbidden on the days of festivals.[1191] A conflict arises for the immigrant in Canada to follow two different

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[1188] 130520_002—"We must slaughter the sheep, depending on the financial capabilities of the person, of course. If the person has the means, it's an obligation to sacrifice the sheep. If he doesn't, these are the poor people, they are not obliged to sacrifice the sheep"; also mentioned clearly by 130723_002.

[1189] 130424_001.

[1190] 130517_001—"It is not all of the families that do that. There are some who pay money. We have a choice to kill a sheep or pay the price of a sheep to give to poor families."

[1191] This was one of the most interesting insights that I learned during the Eid. It speaks directly to how traditions have to change based on the immigrant experience. It would be fascinating to see how the Eid works, and has evolved, in the Maghreb to have a point of comparison and to explore the effect of migration. Perhaps this prophetic tradition is only important to a certain community of which this informant happened to be a part.

aspects of the tradition. To follow the tradition of not eating anything before the sacrificed lamb is consumed one almost has to fast. Because of the importance of not fasting on festival days, this tradition of not fasting seems to trump the tradition of eating the lamb meat first on the day of the Eid Al-Adha in Canada.[1192] We can see in this example that alterations are made to a religious practice based on one's cultural context.

8.5 Sunnah-Inspired Food Practices

Food practices that fall into this third category are based on a religious desire to imitate the life of Muhammad. The Sunnah is meant to guide the follower's life, to reveal the best path for following what is presented in the Quran. One informant elucidated the importance of imitating the Prophet when she told me the following.

> On suit la Sunnah du Prophète, ce n'est pas obligatoire de le faire, mais on suit notre Prophète. C'est comme si le Prophète a fait cette chose-là. Ça veut dire que c'est bon pour nous, parce qu'on croit que notre Prophète ne fait pas des choses par lui-même. C'est Dieu qui le dirige par des actions ou des paroles.[1193]

For this informant, and others like her,[1194] one follows Muhammad's lead because his way of life is clearly the closest way of living according to God's perfect plan that one could find. So the food practices that the Prophet Muhammad engaged in, as represented in the Sunnah, become essential to the religious practice of many of my informants.

8.5.1 Dates and Milk

The third category of practice is best represented by the consumption of dates, and to a lesser extent milk, to break the fast during the month of Ramadan. Because the Prophet Muhammad

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[1192] Participant Observation, Field Journal, October 15, 2013. Here we see the working out of new, negotiated foodways because of the context in which a religious individual finds him/herself, similar to those which Nora L. Rubel describes in her ""The Feast at the End of the Fast: The Evolution of an American Jewish Ritual," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America*, eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 234-250. For an overview of Eid Al-Adha, in the context of sacrificial theory and examples of lived religion across the world, see Michel Desjardins and Aldea Mulhern, "Living Sacrifice: Rethinking Abrahamic Religious Sacrifice using Field Narratives of Eid ul-Adha," in *Not Sparing the Child: Human Sacrifice in the Ancient World and Beyond*, eds. Vita Daphna Arbel, Paul C. Burns, J. R. C. Cousland, Richard Menkis, and Dietmar Neufeld (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 190-212.

[1193] 130615_002—"We follow the Sunnah of the Prophet; it is not obligatory to do but we follow our Prophet. It's as if, if the Prophet did that thing, that means that it is good for us because we believe that our Prophet did not do things on his own. It is God that guides him by actions or words."

[1194] 130430_001; 130430_004; 130518_001; 130519_001; 130612_001; 130731_003; 130807_001.

broke the fast of Ramadan with dates (and, some argue, milk), dates are given religious significance in food practice.[1195] Unlike the Eid lamb, which is mentioned in the Quran and thus has a strong religious undertone, the practice of eating dates during Ramadan comes from the Sunnah and has religious significance, but also allows for some flexibility in practice. There are those who see the practice as strictly religious: "Les dattes, c'est religieux."[1196] For these informants, because Muhammad consumed dates, and because this practice is located in the Sunnah, it is a universal religious food practice.[1197] For other informants the practice of eating dates is "un peu religieux."[1198] These informants spoke about the muddled nature of labelling this practice either religious or cultural. While there is a "un petit lien entre cette pratique et la religion"[1199] it was not as clear cut, not as universal, not as obligatory as some of the previously mentioned food practices. As one informant explained,

> je ne vais pas parler de choses et je vous dis: ça, c'est la religion à 100%. Je sais que notre Prophète, parce qu'il y a le Coran, il y a Sunnah [et] ça complète. Notre Prophète, il nous dit que c'est préférable de couper le jeûne avec les dattes et le lait. Je ne veux pas être formelle, ce n'est pas que…pas le faire c'est un péché. Mais il nous conseille de couper le jeûne avec les dattes et le lait.[1200]

For these informants, the practice is religiously grounded in the sense that it is related to the life of Muhammad, but it does not have the same status as the practices mentioned in the previous two categories.

That being said, there is some understanding that there are universal practices and there are practices that change with time and context. While following "the Prophet" is seen as valid and worthwhile, if Muhammad were alive in the current era perhaps some food practices would

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[1195] The commonly cited Hadith that supports the consumption of dates during Ramadan is: "The Messenger of God used to break his fast with some fresh dates, before he prayed; if there were none, then with dried dates (tamarat). If there were none of these he would take a drink of water" (Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, III.164) as found in Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya, *Medicine of the Prophet,* trans. Penelope Johnstone (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1998), 224. As I explained in Chapter 5, although many of my informants also suggested that milk was an important element of the iftar, I could not find a specific hadith that addresses the breaking of the fast with milk.
[1196] 130529_003—"Dates are religious."
[1197] 130430_003; 130430_005; 130501_001; 130703_004; 130727_001; 130731_002; 130806_005; 130505_001.
[1198] 130615_001—"A little religious."
[1199] 130430_002—"A small link between this practice and the religion."
[1200] 130520_002—"I am not going to speak of things and say to you that it is 100% the religion. I know that our Prophet, because there is the Quran, there is the Sunnah; that completes it. Our Prophet, he told us that it is preferable to break the fast with dates and milk. I do not want to be formal, it's not that … to not do it is a sin. But he counseled us to break the fast with dates and milk."

be different. This suggests that perhaps the essential is not what is consumed, perhaps not even how, but why. As one informant aptly expressed it to me,

> donc ils croient, les juristes, [que] le premier texte, la première autorité dans l'Islam, c'est le Coran. La deuxième, c'est la tradition du Prophète. Donc on [examine le] Coran, si on ne trouve pas [ce qu'on cherche]…si le Prophète a fait quelque chose [qu'on trouve dans la Sunnah], c'est la religion, il faut suivre ça. Moi, je ne crois pas en ça littéralement, mais c'est ça en général…Est-ce que je dois suivre le modèle prophétique à la lettre? Ou bien non? Si le Prophète ou une autre personnalité qui a vécu en ce temps-là, et qui est avec nous maintenant, est ce qu'il va faire la même chose ou bien il va changer beaucoup de choses? Pour moi, il va changer beaucoup de choses. Donc je vois la projection pour imiter quelqu'un. En général, je vois la projection de ça.[1201]

This informant suggested that if Muhammad, and others who were with him, were alive in this day and age he may act differently; there may be different things highlighted in his actions. The result for this person? While the general idea to model one's life on Muhammad's, according to information found in the Sunnah, is valid, there has to be flexibility in understanding how that plays out. In this specific example, of the dates for Ramadan, if the Prophet was fasting in Canada in the twenty-first century, his eating habits may be completely different and he may break the fast in a completely different way. This is why, this informant notes, it is the idea of following the Prophet's lead and not necessarily the food item itself that is important here.

The cultural effects on this practice can also be seen in the fact that, in spite of it being a food practice highlighted in the Sunnah, it is still not a universal practice for all Muslims. One informant postulated that "c'est traditionnel, [mais] je ne pense pas qu'en Indonésie ils font ça. Je pense que la datte c'est localisé. Je pense, je ne suis pas sûr."[1202] The fact that not all Muslims in all places break the fast with dates is one reason why this practice is seen as perhaps more traditional than religious. Another informant highlighted this by suggesting that even in the

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[1201] 130404_001—"So they believe, the jurists, [that] the primary text, the primary authority in Islam is the Quran. The secondary is the tradition of the Prophet. So we [examine] the Quran, if we do not find [what we are looking for]…if the Prophet did something [that we find in the Sunnah], it's the religion, one must follow that. But I do not believe in that literally, it's in general…Do I have to follow the prophetic model to the letter? Or not? If the Prophet or another personality that lived at that time and who is with us now, would he do the exact same thing or will he change many things? For me, he will change many things. So I see the point to imitate someone. In general, I see the point of that."

[1202] 130806_004—"It's traditional. I do not think that in Indonesia they do that. I think that the date is localized. I think, I am not sure."

Maghreb this was not always a popular religious practice, but came into effect with the Arab colonization of the Maghreb.[1203]

> Maintenant c'est une habitude. Est-ce que c'est dans la culture Magrébine, par exemple? Non. Nous l'avons acquise de la colonisation arabe. Je ne suis pas Arabe moi…Chez moi, par exemple, à la maison je n'ai jamais vu mon père, que Dieu ait son âme, prendre des dattes ou du lait…ce n'est pas culturel chez nous. Et après, au fur et à mesure que les gens ont commencé à fréquenter d'autres gens, d'autres pays, à visiter d'autres pays, donc c'est devenu maintenant une petite tradition qui s'est installé de plus en plus en Algérie. Je parle de mon pays.[1204]

Still another informant suggested that it was more of a "psychological practice than a religious one" and that one could break the fast with coconut if that is what one had access to, since what was most important was the sugar in the food not the food itself.[1205] In fact, some of my informants suggested that they engaged in this food practice not for religious reasons, but because of the logical health benefits of it.[1206]

Whether my informants saw the dates (and milk) as purely religious, as a little bit religious, or as strictly cultural, the "logical" reason behind eating dates was central to all of their responses. Informants spoke about the choice to break the fast with dates and milk as a religious choice, based on a desire to follow the practices of the Prophet, but then would go on to give "scientific" explanations for why this practice made sense. I had informants explain to me that "les dattes, c'est un fruit qui contient tout au point de vue nutritif: des sels minéraux, des sucres, des fibres,"[1207] and because of this their religious practice was reinforced by a scientific truth. Like the other rationally-based arguments, these informants talk about the fact that people did

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[1203] While the Arab colonization begins in 642 C.E in Egypt, Arab colonizers do not have a great deal of success in securing the countries of the Maghreb in the first 3 decades of this colonial project. They finally gain some control of the Maghreb in the early 8th Century C.E., turning the Maghreb into a province of the Arab Muslim empire and imparting Arabization and Islamization of the Berber culture. For more information on this topic see Michael Brett, Brian H. Warmington and Jamil M. Abun-nasr, "North Africa: From the Arab Conquest to 1830," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, last updated May 19, 2015, accessed 12 December 2016, https://www.britannica.com/place/North-Africa/From-the-Arab-conquest-to-1830.

[1204] 130517_002—"Now, it's a habit. Is it in the Maghrébine culture for example? No. We acquired that with the Arab colonization. I am not Arab myself…. In my home for example at the house, I never saw my father (may God keep his soul) take dates or milk…it is not cultural for us. And after, gradually people started to associate with other people, other countries, to visit other countries, so it became now a little tradition that is installed more and more in Algeria; I speak of my country."

[1205] 130706_001.

[1206] 130517_002.

[1207] 130430_002—"Dates are a fruit that contain everything from the point of view of nutrition: mineral salts, sugars, fibres"; see also 130430_003; 130723_002.

not know why these practices were beneficial, but now "it has been proven" scientifically.[1208] In this, their religious practice is validated by science.

8.6 "Cultural" Food Practices

The final category of food practices that my informants spoke about is the "cultural" food practices. The first set of practices that fit into this category are the traditional dishes that are made for religious festivals, such as Ramadan and the Eids. Informants argue these food practices to be completely traditional, the evidence of which comes from the fact that everyone eats different "typical" dishes during these festivals. These differences were not only based on country of origin, but also on regional differences. When I asked one informant about the dishes that he ate during religious holidays he explained these nuances:

> Je ne vais pas dire que c'est religieux. C'est beaucoup plus attaché à la culture, à la région de laquelle je viens d'Algérie. En fait, ça n'a rien à voir avec la religion. Par exemple, au ramadan, on prépare certains plats typiques. Dans d'autres régions, ils mangent autre chose. Donc, on ne va pas dire qu'il y a un lien avec la religion.[1209]

Unlike the dates and milk that would most likely be on most tables during Ramadan because of their religious position based on the Sunnah, these dishes vary in large degree. While they are consistent and constant within a family or regional group, across families and groups there is great variation. One may compare this to classic Christmas or Easter dishes enjoyed by Christian families during the holidays, or the foods associated with Jewish holidays. For me, Christmas would not be Christmas without my mom's apple cider enjoyed after the Christmas Eve church service. This food practice has taken up a central role in the religious experience of Christmas Eve for me and yet I would be hard pressed to find any religious significance in it. Just because it has become "religious" for me does not mean that it is a religious food practice. This is an important distinction that many, but not all, of my informants make. In fact, I had one informant who still considers these practices religious because they are linked to religious festivals. She explained that,

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[1208] 130731_002; 130430_006.

[1209] 130430_002—"I am not going to say that it's religious. It's more attached to culture, to the region of Algeria that I come from. In fact, that has nothing to do with religion. For example, during Ramadan, we prepare certain typical dishes, in other regions they eat other things. So one cannot say that there is a link with religion." Similarly, "non, c'est traditionnelle, religieusement parlant; je ne pense pas que tout le monde mange la même chose dans tout le monde arabe. Et dans le monde islamique ce n'est pas la même chose non plus" (130430_005).

pour moi, c'est religieux car on les prépare pour des fêtes religieuses en fonction du calendrier religieux. Cela peut être lié à la fin du ramadan, à l'Eid, ou encore à la fête de Muhammad ou encore Noël, puisque dans ma famille, on fête également la naissance de Jésus de la même manière que celle consacrée à Muhammad.[1210]

What is important to note in this case is that this informant, who is stressing that the food that she eats during the festivals is religious for her, is the informant who considers herself a cultural Muslim. She does not engage in any of the traditionally understood religious practices, including abstention from pork, alcohol, consuming halal meat and fasting for Ramadan, etcetera, but here she is arguing on the side of religion for the practices that more "religious" Muslims all label as cultural. In this example one can see how complex is the issue of "culture versus religion."

8.6.1 Couscous

One final food that adds complexity to the question of what is religious and what is cultural food practice for the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in my study is couscous. We saw this with my Parisian informants, and we see it again in Montréal. For many, it is a marker of Maghrébine Muslim identity, both religiously and culturally. It is seen as Muslim at its base because even if other religious groups make it, the Jews for example, "il est très bon. Tu manges un couscous royal chez les Juifs, tu te régales: très riche, beaucoup de choses, mais ce n'est pas le vrai couscous."[1211] The "real couscous," the "authentic couscous," belongs to the Muslim community, according to this informant.

Not only is couscous seen as something that the community is known for—it is an identity marker for them—but some would argue it has more significance than just that. While it may be the case that "on est connu pour le couscous,"[1212] it can also be much more. For example, one informant articulated this in the following manner. She explained that

il y a vraiment une explication très profonde quand on mange le couscous. Ce n'est pas juste un plat quand on fait la Harira ou quelque chose comme ça; c'est un plat très spécial pour nous. Il faut le faire le vendredi, après la prière, et c'est la réunion familiale et après

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[1210] 130706_001—"For me, it's religious because we prepare them for the religious festivals according to the religious calendar. That might be linked to the end of Ramadan, to the Eid or to the birthday of Mohammad or even to Christmas because in my family we celebrate equally the birth of Jesus in the same way as the holiday that consecrates Mohammad."

[1211] 130401_001—"It is very good. You eat a Couscous Royal with the Jews, you savour it: very rich, lots of things, but it is not the real couscous."

[1212] 130430_005—"We are known for couscous."

c'est le weekend. C'est vraiment très relax. Il a une signification très profonde pour nous, le couscous.[1213]

Couscous is more than just a traditional dish for this informant. In this community it is tied to religious practice (the Friday prayer) and brings the family together which is also foundational to Muslim culture. Here we see how "individual choice—the decision to distinguish certain practices from other, ordinary, practices"—influences how something is categorized; intention matters, such that the kind of cooking one does, for whom, in what circumstances, etcetera, makes it religious.[1214] We can similarly see the impact of individual intention on religious categorization when looking at Courtney Bender's *Heaven's Kitchen*. In that work, Bender describes one of her informants who argued that her cooking at "God's Love We Deliver" was a religious practice in comparison to just her regular everyday cooking.[1215] Like my informants, whom I describe above, who see couscous on Fridays as religious versus couscous on any other day, Bender's informants make ritual out of intention, as well as repetition. Mehta similarly explains that,

> while it is true that chocolate bunnies have little to do with the Resurrection, it is equally true that gefilte fish is not related to the Exodus, yet for many American Christians and American Jews, neither Easter nor Passover would be the same without those foods.[1216]

Couscous, like these other commonly understood "cultural" foods, can take on religious significance.[1217]

Couscous is also seen as a perfect example of a Maghrébine dish, as something that Maghrébines are known for, as a cultural food expression. One informant illustrated the centrality of couscous for her cultural identity as follows:

> Je cuisine d'autres plats, mais le couscous c'est ma culture, c'est depuis que je suis né. Je suis venu ici à 24, 25 ans. Donc tu ne peux pas [oublier] 24 ans…ça veut dire que depuis que je suis petite je mange le couscous chaque vendredi au Maroc. A chaque vendredi il y a le plat couscous. Durant la semaine on sait c'est quoi les plats. Le vendredi c'est très important: [pour] les marocains c'est le couscous. Donc, quand je viens là, c'est la culture,

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[1213] 130615_002—"It really has a very deep explanation when we eat couscous. It is not just a dish when we make Harira or something like that; it is a very special dish for us. You have to make it on Friday after the prayer and it is the family reunion and after it is the weekend. It is really relaxed. It has a very deep meaning for us, couscous."

[1214] McGuire, *Lived Religion,* 109.

[1215] Bender, *Heaven's Kitchen*, 67.

[1216] Mehta, "'I Chose Judaism," 165.

[1217] We can see another example of this process of making cultural foods into religious ones in Hicks, "An Unusual Feast," 134-153. Hicks suggests that, much like the couscous of my informants, gumbo takes up a religious place in his home (Hicks, "An Unusual Feast," 135).

je ne peux pas changer ça. C'est très important pour moi. C'est quelque chose que je prends dans mes veines.[1218]

Even though she also stressed the fact that couscous was consumed on Fridays, it was not the religious aspect that was important to her. Instead, it was the fact that it was the clearest example of a cultural tradition that was in her blood that she brought with her no matter where she would go. As she said, couscous is her culture.

8.7 Conclusion

This chapter addressed how my informants defined and consequently interacted with culture and religion through the lens of their food practices. When considering food practice the lines between these two categories often become quite blurry. The informants in my study often spoke about a clear distinction between these two terms, whether based on arguments of universality versus specificity, or public versus private, or obligation versus flexibility. Like in Paris, a hierarchy of religious/cultural food practice emerged for my informants in Montréal as well. I presented how, as was the case in Paris, food practice generally fell into the categories of (1) the Quranically-documented and "prescribed" food practices, (2) the Quranically-based but not prescribed category, (3) the Sunnah inspired food practices, and (4) the purely "cultural" food practices. I broke down each of these categories and described my informants' interactions with these various food practices as well as highlighting their cultural, scientific, and logical reasoning for why they engaged in each.

I began by exploring the fast during Ramadan. In this section I showed how, like in France, this practice was considered the best example of a religious food practice, and was consequently the most practiced. Its place in the five pillars makes it especially important. Interestingly enough, I showed that even for those Muslims in my study who do not pray, or engage in some of the other five pillars, they still fast for Ramadan. So, for some in my study, not only was fasting important because it was one of the pillars of Islam, but it was considered to

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[1218] 130518_001—"I cook other dishes but couscous is my culture, it is there since I was born. I came here at 24, 25 years old. So you cannot [forget] 24 years…it means that from the time I was little I ate couscous every Friday in Morocco. Each Friday there is the plate of couscous. During the week we know what are the dishes. Friday is very important: [for] Moroccans it's couscous. So when I go there, it's the culture, I cannot change that. It is very important for me. It is something I carry in my veins."

be the most important Muslim practice. I also presented the idea that there seemed to be a tangible difference in the fasting experience for those who practice based on religious conviction versus cultural conviction (or in my case, "educational" conviction). My informants who fasted out of religious conviction presented an air of comfort, calm and centeredness throughout the day, even in those last difficult moments before the iftar. I, and my cultural Muslim informants, on the other hand, seemed to feel the ravenous hunger, and all its side effects, that one would expect from not eating for 16 hours.

I then went on to explain two of the other practices located in the Quranically-documented and "prescribed" category, namely, the abstention from eating pork and drinking alcohol. After presenting the various religious and cultural explanations for my informants' engagement with these practices I discussed the difference in approach to the two. I showed the complexity of understanding and practice that exists within a given category. While both pork and alcohol abstentions are considered to be religious obligations, based on their position in the Quran, there is clearly a different approach to them on the ground. Most of my informants did not eat pork, nor could they think of any Muslims who ate it. While most of them did not consume alcohol either, they all knew Muslims who drank. Despite arguing that there was no difference between the two injunctions, that both were equally haram, my informants came up with possible explanations for why there seemed to be a difference in actual practice of some Muslims. Some suggested that it was the way that both injunctions were written about in the Quran that led to the apparent flexibility with which some approach the injunction around alcohol. Others suggested that there was a different level of cultural revulsion surrounding the two practices, with pork being continually culturally offensive and unavailable, and alcohol being culturally available and acceptable. These cultural realities thus had a clear impact on religious practice as was made evident through these differing practices.

While many of my informants kept halal strictly, by only consuming halal meat, some did alter their practice in Montréal. In this we can see the effect of culture on religious practice yet again. Those informants who did not continue to eat exclusively halal meat gave three different types of reasons for this change in practice. First, they expressed that, to not offend a host who offered non-halal meat, they would consume whatever was on offer; it was a matter of good old fashioned Canadian politeness. The second reason was the understood shifting definition of what exactly halal was. The third, and final, reason was that there was a caveat given in the Quran

around eating halal meat which some of my informants argued applied to their situation as Muslims living in a non-Muslim-dominant land. Ultimately, whether my informants kept halal strictly or not, they all consumed halal meat to some extent, and, like in all of these categories of food practice, gave what they saw as scientific/logical reasons for why they did so.

After addressing the four practices that are a part of the first category of food practice, I moved on to the second category and specifically the practice of sacrificing and eating the lamb for the Eid Al-Adha. What is curious about this practice is that although it is placed in the second category of food practices, it was seen as the most "purely religious" food practice of them all. The universality of the practice was one of the clearest reasons given for why the Eid lamb was "purely religious." Because Muslims across the globe engaged in this practice, according to my informants' understanding, it had to be religious. While it was universal, it was not necessarily obligatory, hence its placement in the Quranically-based but not prescribed category of food practice. I concluded this subsection by discussing the cultural influence on the practice of this tradition by showing how the Canadian context influences the actual consumption that is done on the day of the Eid Al-Adha.

When exploring the third category of food practice, namely the Sunnah-inspired food practices, I showed how this category complicates the notion of religion versus culture particularly well. While there are religious motivations and convictions for imitating the life of Muhammad and accordingly for breaking the fast with dates as he is said to have done, my informants also suggested that the cultural reasons behind this practice could not be ignored. Some suggested that if Muhammad had lived in a different time and different context he may have broken the fast with something else, and so cultural context clearly had an affect on this practice. My informants argued that, whether one were to eat dates or not, there was a scientific or "logical" reason to break the fast in such a way. Again, these informants suggested that their religious food practice went beyond mere religious obligation, and they suggested that, as Muslims, they believed that God had clear, beneficial intentions for each action; breaking the fast by consuming dates was an excellent example of such divinely premeditated advice.

Finally, I closed this chapter with a discussion of commonly understood "cultural" food practices, either food associated with religious festivals or the consumption of couscous. What was fascinating about this category is that although it is overwhelmingly understood to be strictly cultural, there were still people who gave these practices religious significance. One of my

informants, who sees herself as a cultural Muslim and eats pork, drinks alcohol and does not keep strict halal practices, argued that these food practices were, for her, religious. Some gave similar religious arguments for the practice of eating couscous as well, often because it was attached to the practice of the Friday prayers. More often than not, couscous was labelled as a perfect representation of a Maghrébine, cultural food practice, revealing the variation of definitions possible for any of the given food practices performed by my informants.

Overall, because of the complicated history of church and state in Québec, the relationship to one's religious and cultural practices gets worked out in fascinating ways on the ground in Montréal. For most of my informants, religious food practice was not only maintained in their move to Québec, but was in fact increased. There was no need to change their food practices in this context as one could find all the necessary ingredients and the necessary setting to feel as though these practices were acceptable. Because of the overall freedom to practice religion in Canada, my informants felt comfortable maintaining, and even increasing, all their religious, and cultural food practices in Québec.

One can still see the influence of secular reasoning on these very practices. My informants did not shy away from labelling a practice religious, but almost always gave another, more scientific, or logical reason for why they engaged in such exercises. No matter which category of food practice we would discuss, whether documented in the Quran, Sunnah or Tradition, my informants explained that the practice was religious at base, but then would go on to explain why it also made logical sense to carry out that practice. True to Québec interculturalism, my informants kept their religious identities but also adjusted them and their reasoning and understanding of them to fit into the common culture of Québec.

Chapter 9: Comparison, Critique and Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

Over the last eight chapters I have attempted to address the questions: How can food act as a means of reimagining, recreating, reaffirming, and expressing sometimes complicated and contested identities for minority immigrant communities in highly secular contexts? Does food emerge as a more "politically or culturally correct" avenue for religious expression than other religious practices? In secular contexts, where public signs of religiosity are often seen as problematic, could subtler or more private expressions of religious identity help the minority religious immigrant to engage with and express their identities in meaningful ways. Additionally, in contexts like France and Québec, which have strong and distinct food cultures, by taking up some of the foodways of the host context, or leaving some of the home food practices that are seen as especially in conflict with the host context behind (i.e. the restriction on alcohol and pork), could my participants claim and demonstrate their Québécois/French side of their transnational identity? Would they even want to? Finally, what is the impact of these societies' unique and complex histories and interactions with colonialism, immigration, secularism, and nationalism on these foodways and their affiliated identities?

My study shows not only that the host contexts have distinct histories and interactions with "the other" but that "the others" also have idiosyncratic responses to these contexts. Québec is not a Mini-France, or better, Montréal is not a Mini-Paris. Furthermore, there is no unified way that Muslims across or even within cultures and contexts respond to the challenges to identity that they face. By choosing which religious and cultural food practices to continue and which ones to alter, by choosing to label these practices, by relegating these practices to particular places and times, the Maghrébine Muslim immigrants of my study show the varied ways that Muslims negotiate their identities in transnational contexts.

9.2 Comparison Between Paris and Montréal Results

When I started this project, I hypothesized that there would be a great deal of overlap between the experiences of my informants in Paris and those in Montréal. I assumed that they would be two case studies of similar phenomena, leading to two sites of support for whatever conclusions I

was going to reach. I expected that there would be variation in how my informants lived their daily religious lives and constructed their individual identities; after all, every individual has his/her own personal history and set of circumstances that influence such things. What I did not expect, and what came to be one of the most fruitful discoveries of my research, was how the two contexts of reception, or host societies, would have such a differing impact on my informants' lives.

I knew that the host societies' histories would influence my informants. That could not be denied, but having bought into the myths of "Québec as a Mini-France," and "Québec as distinct in Canada" (in this case in relation to its approach to immigrants), I assumed that their impact would be similar, perhaps with my Montréal informants feeling slightly more comfortable in their lives in Québec than my Parisian informants in France. In this next section I address some of my key findings of similarity and difference between my Paris and Montréal data to show how the context of reception impacted my informants' identity negotiations in distinctive ways.

9.2.1 The Effect of French Vs. Québécois Nationalism on Immigrant Identity[1219]

In chapters 2 and 6 I explored the different approaches to nationalism present in both France and Québec. In Chapter 2 I argued that because of the emphasis on French national identity, and a distinct understanding of that identity, Muslims in France may need to make more concerted efforts to show that they too are "French," and all that that entails. These efforts often include the outward manifestations of one's identity, of which food is essential. In Québec, there is also a distinct national identity at work. As I argued in Chapter 6, the common culture that makes up the Québécois national identity consists of language and secular nationalism; thus, in general, Maghrébine Muslim immigrants would support one aspect of this national identity but not the other. Because of that Québécois reality I suggested that an "Islam du Québec" that fits with the intercultural model of Québécois nationalism might lead to Muslims in Québec de-emphasizing their religious identities, or even more so, giving them a Québécois flair, à la interculturalism. While my Paris data supports these ideas, the Montréal data provides a different picture, which I address below.

[1219] Parts of this (9.2.1) section and the next (9.2.2) section have been published in Rachel Brown, "Bread Beyond Borders: Food as a Lens into Thomas Tweed's Theory of Religion," *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* (forthcoming 2017).

France has a distinct relationship to food, with food playing a key role in the national identity; a national identity that is seen as essential, specific and unique. Because of a complex history of national development, to "be French" has specific connotations, and is seen as the most important identity for an individual in France to hold.[1220] National identity takes precedence, and my informants knew this, felt this, and were impacted by this "fact." My informants stressed that national identity is seen as the most important, the only worthwhile identity to mention in the French context.

Moreover, I showed how there is an idea that there is a "French, French" identity, a form of national identity, to which only certain people have access. Because of this, only 16 of my 33 Parisian informants claimed French identity, while 17 did not. Of the 16 who did claim it, it was not a straightforward identity claim. There were always qualifying "yes but…" explanations. As one of my informants expressed so clearly, "France is wine, cheese and baguette. I eat only the baguette. So there you go. I am not really French, French."[1221] This informant was French (she was born in France), and yet, because she did not fit into a specific food practice pattern of what it meant to "be French" she had a hard time claiming this side of her transnational identity.[1222] This was the case for many of my transnational informants in Paris. Because of the particular concept of the nation and thus what it means to "be French," as I described in Chapter 2, transnational identities are generally not encouraged or recognized. Trying to maintain a transnational identity in such a context will inevitably be worked out in distinct ways.

In Montréal, on the other hand, the concept of nation and national identity is not as closed. While I assumed, based on the Québécois nationalism that I outlined in Chapter 6, that my informants would be interacting with and affected by the Québécois stance on nationalism, I was surprised to see that instead it was Canadian nationalism with which they were interacting. In fact, only two of my informants in Montréal even mentioned Québécois national identity. Because of this, when it came to national identity only 11 of my informants in Montréal did not claim Canadian identity. In those cases, it was not that they *could not* claim it, or that they did not want to, it was simply a matter of fact that they were not *yet* Canadian (usually meaning they

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[1220] For works that highlight the importance of national identity in France see Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity*, 26.

[1221] 120905_001.

[1222] For the place food/drink in the French national identity, specifically the place of wine, see my discussion in Chapter 2, section 2.5.1.

did not yet have Canadian citizenship). The other 21 all gladly professed this national identity, or professed their desire to claim it, even if they might not have Canadian citizenship. My informants suggested that Canadian identity is viewed as being open to everyone, as something that is accessible to all migrants, as inherently multicultural and thus as encouraging to the transnational experience. Many of my Montréal informants brought up the fact that this accessibility and acceptance of both sides of their transnational identity was based on the fact that in Canada "everyone is an immigrant."

Because "everyone is an immigrant" in Canada, transnational identity and behaviour is almost expected and is a focus for many of my informants' daily actions. Because everyone is Canadian, the need to express this identity is not as visceral as the need to go back in family history and experience to explain one's origins.

For many of my Montréal informants, expressing their Maghrébine identities, and often their Muslim identities as well, was a means of displaying their Canadian identity. This is a distinct difference between the Canadian situation and the French situation. While in France the things that make you similar are the things that you must stress to show your national identity, in Canada it is one's origins that make you different that ultimately make you fit with the national identity.

The impact of these two approaches to nationalism on my transnational informants became obvious as I analysed my data and wrote up my ethnography. My informants in Paris, feeling as though French national identity was not really an option for them, did not attempt to claim it (hence the 16/17 split of national identity claims among my Parisian informants). In Montréal on the other hand, the fact that my informants believed that the Canadian national identity allowed for and even encouraged their other identities, made them want to claim this national identity even more (21claimed it wholeheartedly). Moreover, for my Paris informants who did claim French identity, it was always a complicated identity claim, and for my Montréal informants who did not claim Canadian identity it was an uncontested fact rather than a complicated claim.

While the fear may be that by maintaining or even increasing practices that indicate difference, that highlight the "homeland" side of one's transnational identity, immigrants may not integrate fully into the host culture, my research shows the exact opposite effect. By feeling free to fully express and engage both sides of one's transnational identity, often thanks to

Canada's official multiculturalism policy, my Montréal informants felt more Canadian, or had a greater desire to "be Canadian." In France, the opposite was true.[1223] Furthermore, my research provides indirect evidence for Micheline Milot's claim that immigrants to Canada "out-integrate" immigrants to the United States and other places that do not have a multiculturalism policy.[1224] Finally, this conclusion gives ethnographic evidence to Susan Worbs' findings that the "results in France are surprising in some aspects: The self-identification as French is not as widespread among migrant youngsters as should be expected judging by the strong assimilation efforts of the republican state."[1225] These differing approaches to nationalism not only had an effect on the national identity claims, or feelings of belonging, for my informants but also directly affected their daily practices.

9.2.2 Differences in Levels of Practice in Paris and Montréal

Because of the different approaches to nationalism present in France, Québec and Canada, my informants engaged with their transnational food practice in different ways. As I posited in chapters 4 and 6, to maintain connection to the homeland, and to feed one's transnational identity, accessibility to the homeland is key, whether or not it is physical or symbolic accessibility. As I have expressed throughout this dissertation, food and food practice are some of the most strongly-held means of situating oneself spatially and temporally; they can help the immigrant to cross borders of time and space.[1226] For my informants in Paris, where distances, between home and host land were smaller, and where acceptance of transnational identity was low, their "crossing" was physical, whereas their creation of homeland in host land, their "dwelling" practices, were less emphasized and more open to change. The feeding of the Maghrébine/Muslim identity was done largely through trips back home, "*au bled*" as they would say. Trips back home were frequent, at least once a year. These trips allowed my informants to

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[1223] James A. Beckford comes to similar conclusions by conducting a comparative study of how Muslims in British and French prisons are treated and what that reveals about the treatment of religious diversity in both locations in general. I use food as the lens rather than prison accommodations, as he does, but both studies show the way that France, in its effort to emphasize equality, actually undermines it. See James A. Beckford, "Public Responses to Religious Diversity in Britain and France," in *Reasonable Accommodation: Managing Religious Diversity,* ed. Lori Beaman (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 109-138.

[1224] Milot, "Modus Co-vivendi," 117.

[1225] Worbs, "Where do I Belong?," 54.

[1226] This comes out of Tweed's theory of religion as is found in Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling.*

keep the ties with Algeria (or Morocco, or Tunisia) that are essential to their knowledge of themselves as Maghrébine.

Beyond just emphasizing ties to the homeland, these trips were used strategically as well, mostly to bring food back to the host land. While many of my informants expressed the importance of living by rules, whether of society or Islam, they were willing to break rules in order to feed their transnational identities; they would bring back suitcases full of food. My informants stressed that, as much as one could access the necessary ingredients to make all their religious and cultural foods in the host land, there was a noted difference between the "host" ingredient and the "home" ingredient. All but one of my 33 informants in Paris mentioned that this difference was a difference in taste, or "goût." Maintaining practices that give access to the "home ingredient" is essential for the transnational immigrant in Paris then. Whatever the argument was for why the "goût" was different, often meaning "better" in the Maghreb than in France, it became clear that it was important to try and get to as close as possible to the full "taste" of the homeland.[1227] If one cannot go "home" to make the dish there, the next best thing is to make the dish from ingredients from "back home," hence the emphasis on bringing food across the borders from the Maghreb to France.

For my informants in Paris, highlighting their French identity, or de-emphasizing their difference, through food was a more essential process in the host land. Because they were close enough to access the homeland directly, or the home food directly, and because of the emphasis in France on "French identity," the working out of transnational identity in the host land was much more focussed on the French national side. Because of notions of French universalism,[1228] and as a result because it was essential to highlight one's French identity in France, or, if not French identity, simply not to highlight any other identity, my informants altered their Maghrébine/Muslim food practices to a great extent.

First, it is important to note that for most of my informants their ethnic and religious identities were conflated. One was "born Muslim" because one was born in the Maghreb. One engaged in Muslim practices as a means of maintaining Maghrébine identity and vice versa. I

[1227] In her article in a special issue of the Donner Institute's *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, Kershenovich Schuster suggests that taste is culturally and socially influenced, and consequently one can see how the exact same food tastes better "back home" or when made with "home food." See Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 297.

[1228] See Scott, *Politics of the Veil*, 11-12 for an exploration of French universalism.

had informants explain that it was important to maintain religious food practices as a means of maintaining their Maghrébine identity. They were Maghrébine/Muslim because they kept halal, did not eat pork and made couscous at home. The continuation of such practices was seen as an essential means of maintaining connection with the Maghreb.

On the other hand, I had informants who claimed this identity but also ate pork and drank alcohol, did not keep halal and did not fast during Ramadan (or any variation of these practices). The conflation of religious and ethnic/cultural identity allowed a greater variation of practice.[1229] Because not eating pork was viewed as a cultural practice by many of my informants in Paris, it was more open to change, to be left behind in the French context. In fact, concerning the conventionally understood Muslim food practice my Paris informants engaged them in the following way: Ramadan (24 strictly observed/ 5 practiced it from time to time/ 4 did not), pork (24 abstained/ 9 consumed it), alcohol (17 abstained/ 16 consumed it), halal (only 9 kept it strictly/ 24 did not). For most of these informants, to not eat pork, to fast during Ramadan, to eat the occasional couscous was enough to mark off their transnational identity. More importantly, to change those practices was a clear way of indicating their "integrated" French identity.

The situation in Montréal was much different. Because people there could not as easily make trips home and bring back "home ingredients" (something they were generally not interested in anyway), they needed to "cross the divide" in different ways. For many of my informants in Montréal, memories of the homeland are tied to and evoked by foods and smells.[1230] According to one of of them, accessing memories, whether through food or some other means, is an essential aspect of the immigrant experience. Engaging in certain food practices, making distinct dishes, seasoning with specific spices, gathering around a table that is set in a particular way, are all means of accessing "home" for the Maghrébine immigrant in Montréal.

In Montréal where distances are much larger in terms of space, climate, and culture than they are between Paris and the Maghreb, their dwelling effort was much more deliberate. For many of my informants these dwelling practices (the process of finding place through mapping,

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[1229] My theory that by changing the label of a food practice from religious to cultural the individual removes some of the obligation of that practice, thus leading to greater flexibility in that practice, is supported by Mehta, "'I Chose Judaism," 156.

[1230] McGuire suggests that "memory resides in the whole body…that means that memory can be closely connected with our senses and bodily states, including experiences of which we are not even conscious" (McGuire, *Lived Religion,* 99). It is not surprising then that food and eating pull out those memories resident in the body.

building and inhabiting),[1231] specifically making home food, help them to feel at home. One of these deliberate actions that many of informants took in Montréal was to organize and construct their living spaces in ways reminiscent of their living spaces in the Maghreb. By structuring their "outwardly appearing Canadian homes" in inward Maghrébine ways, these informants took deliberate steps to connect with the homeland.

More important than the structure of their kitchen and living room was what food was prepared in those spaces. Because of the need to emphasize the Maghrébine aspect of their transnational identity, my informants ate the food from the homeland in larger percentage than host land food. Although they make food from outside the homeland from time to time, they eat "their" food primarily. While for some, cooking majority Maghrébine food is simply a matter of habit, many of my informants make the home food in larger percentage because they want to "remain attached" to their homeland. Finally, informants also stressed the importance of cooking the home food as a means of educating their children about the homeland. It was essential in passing on the Maghrébine side of one's transnational identity in a context that was distant from the homeland.

While one may not need to stress one's Canadian identity through what one eats, not only because Canada does not have a distinct or narrowly-prescribed food culture, but also because the emphasis is often placed on the "other" side of one's transnational identity, the need to stress one's Maghrébine identity is strong. This is why there is not only consistency of food practice with what one did in the Maghreb, but an increase in homeland food traditions in Montréal. I had many informants suggest that religiously they were "more practicing" in Canada than they had been in the Maghreb. For these informants, their identities as "practicing Muslims" were only highlighted in the Canadian context; it would not have been an identity that they mentioned in the Maghreb, as there would have been no need to emphasize it in that context.[1232] Furthermore, because, according to most of my informants, 99.99% of Maghrébines are Muslims, being more religious was also a way to connect with being more Maghrébine. Because of this conflation, examining the conventionally understood religious food practices, most were maintained by my

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[1231] Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling,* 59, 82.

[1232] In Jennifer Selby's *Questioning French Secularism,* some of her informants reflected this kind of pattern in their experiences in the suburb of Petit Nanterre. She specifically addresses the expectation placed on young women who migrate from the Maghreb to marry men in Petit Nanterre to be even more practicing than they were in the Maghreb. Her informants express, like mine do, how in the Maghreb you don't need to emphasize certain things, because everyone does them, but in France you have to because it's what makes you distinct (164-165).

Montréal informants: Ramadan (31fast/ 1 does not), pork (31 abstained/ 1 consumed), alcohol (30 abstained/ 2 consumed), and halal (27 keep it strictly/ 3 keep it sometimes/ 2 did not care). Because religious identities are considered acceptable identities to hold in the Canadian context religious practices can be labeled as such and continued in the host land.

In a context such as Montréal where these relatively well known religious food practices are not so contested, more drastic means of showing different identity were emphasized. For example, for many of my informants in Montréal, the avoidance of gelatin is a part of one's religious food practice, and a part of what makes them Muslim in Canada. The discussion around gelatin was never mentioned by my Parisian informants but it played an important role in the religious food lives of my Montréal informants. Furthermore, because of this focus on taking the identity of practicing Muslim to the next level, many of my informants became obsessive ingredient verifiers, making sure that every single ingredient in every single product they purchased was halal. They became the community of "ingredient checkers" in a world surrounded by those laissez-faire shoppers who throw anything in their cart. Whereas in a place like Paris, the fact of keeping halal or not drinking alcohol was enough of a contested practice as to distinguish a particular identity, it was almost as if, in Montréal, my informants needed something even more distinct with which to identify themselves.

Because of the different contexts of Paris and Montréal, specifically the way that nation and relatedly transnationalism are viewed, the immigrants with whom I interacted engaged in the essential processes of crossing and dwelling in different ways. In Paris, practices that emphasize any other national or religious identity other than "French" are kept to the homeland context, or changed in the host land context. In Montréal, on the other hand, one can easily engage one's "other" side of transnational identity; it is in fact encouraged to do so. Because of this situation, transnational practices are deliberate in Montréal and even increased. In Paris, my informants relabeled their religious food practices as cultural to two ends: first, this relabelling allowed them to see this practice as more flexible and open to change, and second, if they did not stop these practices, this relabelling made their engagement in said practices more acceptable to the non-Muslim French majority that surrounded them.[1233] In Montréal, because my informants felt as

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[1233] This falls in line with Mehta's work when she suggests that focusing on the ethnic side of food practice can have two results: first that the practice is seen as more flexible, and second that because food, in its very nature, can "be easily read simply as ethnic," it may not be as "threatening to perceived religious identities" (Mehta, "I choose Judaism," 156, 169).

though their religious food practices were an acceptable aspect of their multiple and varied identities in their host context, they did not feel the need to relabel commonly understood religious food practices as cultural. In fact, because these food practices were *so* acceptable, they often emphasized other, more obscure religious food practices as essential to their lives as Maghrébine Muslims in Montréal.

Again, it is important to note that an increase in religious practice by my Montréal informants did not equate to more *communautarisme*; in fact, their ability to maintain religious/ethnic identity often led to them making more efforts to integrate into the host society. In Paris on the other hand, the effect on practice was generally of two sorts: either informants changed their food practice to show their integrated identity, or they maintained their practices (either relabelling them as cultural or not). In either case, most of my Parisian informants felt that the very fact of being Muslim (whether culturally or religiously so) and/or Maghrébine excluded them from being French, and as a result the community was fairly insular, and maintained a wary approach to outsiders, making integration difficult.

9.2.2.1 The Disappearance vs. the Growth of Hospitality in the Host Context
Another important distinction between my Montréal and Paris informants can be directly related to this feeling of acceptance or rejection of minority identities in the context of reception. Both groups discussed the importance of hospitality to their cultural and religious identities, but the way that hospitality was worked out on the ground was drastically different in the two settings.

As I discussed in Chapter 4, my Parisian informants argued that one of the most important distinctions between "us" and "them," between the Maghrébine immigrant and the non-immigrant French society that surrounded them, was in their approach to hospitality. While Parisians have a reputation for being cold and distant, even with their inner circle contacts, the Maghrébine culture, they insisted, is one of warmth and closeness, of hospitality. My informants suggested that hospitality was essential and yet, as became clear when comparing my Paris data to my Montréal data, this hospitality seemed to be altered in the French context—Frenchified, if you will. Hospitality, as an outworking of religious identity must, like all other religious practices be kept private. This seemingly important approach of hospitality was not present unless you were already inside the "us."

My Montréal informants also stressed the importance of hospitality to their religious and cultural identities.[1234] While this trait is somewhat altered in the community in Paris, it is alive and well in the community in Montréal. In Chapter 5, I argued that with the lack of emphasis on the need to integrate, as understood as "to assimilate," immigrants to Montréal feel free to maintain practices that are essential to their religious and cultural lives in the homeland, i.e. hospitality. This trait allows for a higher level of integration, more reaching out between communities, and more of an emphasis of interacting with the "other" than one may expect. By being free to express one's religious convictions while at the same time being a part of Canadian society, my Montréal informants felt as though there could be a greater reaching out to one's neighbours of all backgrounds and identities. For these informants, welcoming someone into one's house and providing the best of the best for them was essential to their religious practice, something that brought great blessing. Food was one of the essential ways that my Montréal informants expressed this hospitality; they offered the best and in abundance to neighbours, friends, family, and strangers alike.

Because my informants were comfortably situated in their Canadian context, because they felt much freer to be both Canadian and Muslim and/or Maghrébine, the doors were much more easily opened to non-Muslims. Hospitality was in fact, according to one informant, a way to bring together "toutes les cultures, tous les gens. Même s'il y a des religions, des cultures différentes, on dit que l'être humain partout, c'est un être humain."[1235] Integration, in this context, is to interact with all human beings, no matter the culture or religion, to be open to all. That is the ideal that my Montréal informants expressed and that they made evident through their hospitality.

9.2.3 The Importance of Logical Reasoning to Support Practice

While I have been highlighting the differences between the two contexts of reception thus far, I would now like to discuss a similarity between the two data sets. In both Paris and Montréal, both highly secular contexts, my informants navigated this secular world by providing logical

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[1234] As I mentioned in Chapter 5, many of my informants set up, or constructed their kitchens and living rooms in such a way as to make hospitality easy. This trait was not just expressed by my informants, but evident even in the material stuff of their lives.

[1235] 130612_001—"All cultures, all people. Even if the religions, the cultures are different, we say that a human being everywhere is a human being."

reasons for their religious and cultural food practices. It became clear to me that, while the motivations for my informants' practices were often religious or cultural in nature, they would try to provide logical, secular reasons for why they did what they did. It almost felt as though they needed to justify these practices to me—that as a Canadian, non-Muslim researcher I would expect a different justification for them. Even more, their responses often came across as rehearsed responses. They would describe their real motivations for, and engagement with, their religious practices, and then, almost on silent cue, tell me why it made logical sense to do whatever it was they were talking about at that time.[1236]

In Paris, my informants spoke to me about the logic of Islam on a frequent basis. If other traditions or cultures did not seem "logical" they were somewhat discounted, and many of my informants took pride in what they considered the fact that Islam and its requirements were completely in line with scientific reasoning. It was almost as if they felt that they had to ground their reasoning for fasting during Ramadan (fasting cleanses the body and helps counteracts overeating), not drinking alcohol (alcohol breaks down body parts and creates social strains), not eating pork (pork has worms, the animal is dirty and disgusting in other ways), eating halal meat (blood in meat is unhealthy, killing animals with a knife blade is more humane), etcetera, in something beyond mere faith. My informants gave logical, often health/scientific reasons as one of the main justifications for why they practiced the way they did. They saw their food practices as logical, as serving some purpose for their health, and as worthwhile engaging in.

In Montréal, there was a large effort by my informants to give more than just a religious reason for their practice as well. Food practices in our conversations would be neatly tucked into religious/cultural categories, but then they would also give more rational reasons for these

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[1236] While, as I argue below, I see this presentation of logical reasoning as possibly an outworking of my informants' experiences in Paris and Montréal, this effort to highlight the logical coherence of Islam may be located in the colonial Salafi revival that occurred in North Africa (and elsewhere in the colonial world) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This emphasis on the logical coherence of Islam could be seen as a response to the European colonial discourse on religion and Islam which tended to create an evolutionary model with rational monotheism at the top. Orientalists at the time, such as Renan, suggested that Islam was anti-rational and backward. A defensive discourse consequently arose within the early Salafi movement in Egypt and Syria to show how Islam was in fact coherent and rational, and had been since the time of the Prophet. This discourse then spread through the Arab world, and beyond, and was taken up in colonial contexts such as the Maghreb. This discourse, encouraged by post-colonial writers such as Frantz Fanon, would have been common in colonial and post-colonial Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and its history would most likely have an effect (often unknown) on my informants. For a full description of the development of this discourse see Chapter 6 in Michael Muhammad Knight, *Why I am a Salafi* (Berkeley: Soft Skull Press, 2015).

practices. No matter which category of food practice we would discuss, whether documented in the Quran, Sunnah or Tradition, my informants would explain that the practice was religious at base, but then would go on to explain why it made logical sense to do that practice as well. In this my informants seemed to be influenced by the intercultural outlook around them. They showed how the practices they engaged in were not only based on religious conviction, but had a "more solid scientific" grounding as well, keeping their religious identities but also adjusting them and their reasoning and understanding of them to fit into the common culture of Québec.

9.3 Critique/Scholarly Context: Religion and Migration; Food and Religion

As I have argued throughout this dissertation my informants use food and foodways to negotiate their transnational, immigrant religious identities in their host contexts. A work like this does not stand on its own and hopefully offers new insight into two fields of inquiry within religious studies, namely religion and migration, and food and religion. Both these fields are relatively new in the social scientific study of religion, so while general themes are beginning to emerge, there is still plenty of space for new studies, such as mine to offer insight and nuance to these exciting and emerging fields.

9.3.1 Religion and Migration[1237]

While studies of immigrant religion now abound, it was not that long ago that it was uncommon for both migration and religious studies scholars to take each other's work into consideration.[1238] Studies of migration on the whole were not interested in religion as an influencing factor and studies of religion were not interested in migration as an influencing factor. That has now changed thanks mostly to three specific reasons, according to Paul Bramadat. First, there has been a "De-Christianization of society and a De-Europeanization of many of the major Christian communities in the west."[1239] This means that recent debates around religion and migration are

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[1237] Parts of this section are based on the journal article "How Gelatin Becomes an Essential Symbol of Muslim Identity: Food Practice as a Lens into the Study of Religion and Migration," published in *Religious Studies and Theology,* vol. 3, no. 2 (2016): 89–113. © Equinox Publishing Ltd 2016. The author gratefully acknowledges kind permission of Equinox Publishing to reprint here.

[1238] Connor, *Immigrant Faith,* 5. Paul Bramadat similarly states that while migration studies are by no means new, the prominence of religion in the study of migration is a recent phenomenon. See Bramadat, "Religious Diversity," 1.

[1239] Bramadat, "Religious Diversity," 3.

no longer just about Christianity and Judaism but now include Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Chinese religion. Second, he argues that the salience of religion has become more obvious to scholars in the last 15-20 years and especially post-9/11; scholars are faced with the "perplexing power of religion in the world."[1240] Finally, and relatedly, Bramadat suggests that "unidirectional and simplistic versions of the secularization hypothesis have begun to break down to reveal the far more complicated realities this hypothesis previously obscured."[1241] Scholars can no longer assume that religion does not matter, is on the decline, and therefore is not a relevant aspect of any given subject, especially migration. There is consequently a large body of work which examines the many and varied intersections of religion and migration.[1242] I

[1240] Ibid., 3.

[1241] Ibid., 4.

[1242] For an overview of the most important articles written in the field of religion and migration see James A. Beckford, *Migration and Religion*, Vols I and II (London: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2016). Beckford organizes these articles along six themes in Volume I and seven themes in Volume II, and the collection addresses a wide variety of religious traditions in many different contexts. The most relevant articles to a project such as this are those found in part 5 of Volume I, namely on "Contexts of Reception." These articles include: Connor, "Contexts of Immigrant Receptivity," 376-403; Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Yousif M. Qasmiyeh, "Muslim Asylum-Seekers and Refugees: Negotiating Identity, Politics and Religion in the UK," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 23, no. 3 (2010): 294–314; Foner and Alba, "Immigrant Religion," 360–392; Mooney, "Religion as a Context of Reception," 99–112; Dianna J. Shandy, "Nuer Christians in America," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2 (2002): 213–221.

Other relevant articles to a study such as mine that are found in Beckford's anthology are: Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, "New Challenges for Islamic Ritual Slaughter: A European Perspective," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* vol. 33, no. 6 (August 2007): 965–980; John R. Bowen, "Beyond Migration: Islam as a Transnational Public Space," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 30, no. 5 (September 2004): 879–94; John Eade, "Religion, Home-Making and Migration Across A Globalising City: Responding to Mobility in London," *Culture and Religion*, vol. 13, no. 4 (December 2012): 469–483; David Garbin, "Marching for God in the Global City: Public Space, Religion and Diasporic Identities in a Transnational African Church," *Culture and Religion*, vol. 13, no. 4 (December 2012): 425–447; Matthias Koenig, "Incorporating Muslim Migrants in Western Nation States: A Comparison of the United Kingdom, France, and Germany," *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 219–234; Levitt, ""You Know, Abraham," 847–73; Valerie A. Lewis and Ridhi Kashyap, "Piety in a Secular Society: Migration, Religiosity, and Islam in Britain," *International Migration*, vol. 51, no. 3 (June 2013): 57–66; Douglas S. Massey and Monica Espinosa Higgins, "The Effect of Immigration on Religious Belief and Practice: A Theologizing or Alienating Experience?," *Social Science Research*, vol. 40, no. 5 (September2011): 1371–1389; Marcel Maussen, "Islamic Presence and Mosque Establishment in France: Colonialism, Arrangements for Guest Workers and Citizenship," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 33, no. 6, (August 2007): 981–1002; Celia McMichael, "'Everywhere is Allah's Place': Islam and the Everyday Life of Somali Women in Melbourne, Australia," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15 (2) (2002): 171–188; Miki Talebi and Michel Desjardins, "The Immigration Experience of Iranian Baha'is in Saskatchewan: The Reconstruction of Their Existence, Faith, and Religious Experience," *Journal of Religion and Health*, vol. 51, no. 2 (June 2012): 293–309.

Outside of Beckford's anthology a few other works have been important for my thinking about religion and migration for this work, specifically those that address transnationalism. Gafaiti Hafid, Patricia M.E. Lorcin, and David G. Troyansky, eds., *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009) is an anthology of articles addressing the experience of transnational immigrants in Francophone contexts—Shepard and Sussman's chapters are particularly useful. Vic Satzewich and Lloyd L. Wong, eds., *Transnational Identities and Practices in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006)

deal here with the work of a few key scholars in the field and show how my own research fits with or challenges these scholars' conclusions about the role of religion for the immigrant, or in the process of migration.

Phillip Connor, in his book *Immigrant Faith*, outlines four of the major ways that immigrant religion functions in the various stages and aspects of the immigrant experience. By examining quantitative data across religious traditions and host contexts Connor argues that his work gives big picture patterns and broad-based conclusions.[1243] Looking at the United States, Canada and Western Europe means that his study is inevitably comparative in nature but he suggests that his use of comparison is not meant to display the distinctive characteristics of destination (or host) contexts but rather underlines overall patterns that remain consistent across contexts.[1244] With this metaphor he is attempting to provide a view of the full tapestry and not just one part of the cloth.[1245] My work stands in stark contrast to Connor's in this methodological vein. While Connor focusses on quantitative methods and overarching cross-cultural conclusions, I use qualitative methods and make context-specific conclusions. While he uses comparison to find the breadth, I use it to find the depth. He does state in *Immigrant Faith* that he uses vignettes to make sense of statistical patterns,[1246] and he calls for research to disentangle the exceptions to the rule.[1247] I see my work as functioning in these ways; my work serves as a larger vignette which highlights the themes that Connor outlines in his work, and it also offers some insight into those exceptions that Connor mentions.

Connor addresses four themes in the study of religion and migration: (1) moving faith, (2) changing faith, (3) integrating faith, and (4) transferring faith.[1248] In what follows I tackle each of these in turn and discuss how my work acts a vignette of these trends, as well as how it challenges the conclusions that Connor presents in each.

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addresses transnationalism in Canada—specifically Micheline Labelle, Francois Rocher, and Ann-Marie Field, "Contentious Politics and Transnationalism from Below: The Case of Ethnic and Racialized Minorities in Québec," 111-129, and Sedef Arat-Koc, "Whose Transnationalism? Canada, "Clash of Civilizations" Discourse, and Arab and Muslim Canadians," 216-240.

[1243] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 5-6.

[1244] Ibid., 6.

[1245] Ibid., 5.

[1246] Ibid., 6.

[1247] Ibid., 8.

[1248] Ibid., 5.

First, Connor addresses the various ways that immigrant religion plays a role in the migration process itself. He explores the decisions that immigrants make about migration and suggests some trends for who migrates, where they migrate, why they migrate, and what role religion plays in all these decisions.[1249] He shows that the religious identities of immigrants are different depending on the receiving context. The majority of immigrants to the United States are Christian, in Western Europe there is a fairly even split between Christian and Muslim immigrants, and in Canada there is a slight majority of Christian immigrants with sizable shares of other traditions and "no religion" represented.[1250] Connor explores the various reasons for these religious backgrounds in these contexts; that is, he discusses the "cumulative causation" for these immigrants' migration.[1251] He explains that religious minorities often migrate to places where their faith is the majority, as we can see in Christian migration to the United States.[1252] He discusses the role of past colonial relationships on the migration of Muslims to Western Europe which results in immigrants being equated with Muslims in these contexts.[1253] And one may posit that the lack of religious preference and colonial history that underlies Canadian history may reflect the diversity of religious backgrounds that make up immigrants to Canada, although the country's generic Christian heritage may lead Christian minority groups to migrate to Canada.[1254]

My study emerged out of the assumption that Connor highlights here, namely, that in Western Europe, specifically, France, "immigrant" is equated with "Muslim" based on the sheer concentration of Muslim immigrants there.[1255] His work provides the quantitative support for the idea that, on the one hand, in contexts where the religious background of the immigrant is reflective of or in line with that of the general non-immigrant population, that population tends to "categorize immigrants by their racial or ethnic heritage."[1256] On the other hand, in contexts where the religious background of the immigrant is different from that of the general non-immigrant population, that population tends to highlight those religious identities and often not

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[1249] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 9.
[1250] Ibid., 19-20.
[1251] Ibid., 23.
[1252] Ibid., 26-27.
[1253] Ibid., 22, 27.
[1254] Ibid., 26.
[1255] Casanova also highlights the equation of immigrant with Muslim in the European setting in his article "Religion, European Secular Identities and European Integration."
[1256] Ibid., 21.

recognize the immigrant's nationality of ethnic group.[1257] My work illustrates these patterns quite well. As I described in Chapter 4, my Parisian informants spoke about the conflation of "immigrant" and "Muslim." On the other side of the equation, in Chapter 7, I showed how my Montréal informants highlighted their ethnic identities, seemingly in line with what they thought "non-immigrant" Canadians (a term that does not really apply to many Canadians according to my informants) expected of them.

The other aspect of immigrant religion as "moving faith" that is essential to a study such as mine is the impact of the context of reception, or host society, on the immigrant's future.[1258] Connor argues that while "the boundary line marking differences between immigrant and non-immigrant groups seems to be religious in Europe," it is an ethnic line in the U.S.[1259] In fact he goes on to suggest that while in the U.S. being religious falls in line with being American, in Europe, clinging to religious practices makes you non-European; Canada apparently has attributes of both.[1260] These general attitudes towards the place of religion in society have a real effect on how the majority non-immigrant population responds to and welcomes immigrants in these contexts of reception. Connor presents the attitude of receptivity in the various host societies in one of his tables (1.4). Using the 2006 World Values Survey he shows the percentages of people not wanting neighbours who are either immigrants or neighbours of a different religion.[1261] When examining France and Canada, Connor's table shows that in France 43 percent of informants suggested they would not want an immigrant neighbour; in Canada, the response was only five percent. Furthermore, only two percent of Canadian informants said they would not want neighbours who were of a different religion; in France, 30 percent would not.[1262]

[1257] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 21.

[1258] Ibid., 35. Cesari uses the concept of "Destination Effects" to show how the context of reception will inevitably influence the immigrant's experience. Cesari, "Islam, immigration and France," 212-218.

[1259] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 35.

[1260] Ibid., 39.

[1261] The fact that this data comes from the 2006 World Values Survey is important to consider. A great deal of discussion and conflict around immigration, and particularly Muslim immigration, has arisen over the past 10 years since this survey. The rise of ISIS, related terrorist attacks across the world, ongoing Western attacks on Muslim-dominant countries such as Libya, Mali, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and the current refugee crisis (as just a few examples) will inevitably have an affect on the sentiments reflected in this survey. Because much of my data collection took place before many of these significant events occurred, the results from the 2006 World Values Survey are still comparatively relevant for my findings.

[1262] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 37.

These figures paint a picture of Canada being a potentially more welcoming context of reception to religious minority immigrants than France.

My work supports this picture. As I made clear throughout this dissertation, and highlighted in section 9.2, this difference in context of reception has a significant impact on the lives, identities and practices of immigrants in those countries. For example, several of my Parisian informants suggested that no matter the efforts they made to show their "French" identity, they always felt as though, as Muslim immigrants, they would never quite be accepted as French. My Montréal informants all expressed sentiments reflective of the picture of Canada being a more welcoming context of reception than other places, especially in comparison to France.[1263] For numerous informants in Montréal this had to do with the fact that in Canada "everyone is an immigrant" and they felt that one's minority identities (whether religious, cultural, ethnic, etc.) were not only accepted but encouraged.

Before continuing with Connor's other points, let me turn to another essential work in the field of religion and migration which addresses the contexts of reception, and specifically their governance of religious diversity: Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig's edited volume *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity*, to which I've already referred.[1264] Unlike Connor's work, which highlights the commonalities across contexts, the authors in this volume highlight the distinctive characteristics of various host societies in the so called "West" in their approaches to interacting with and governing the religious diversity that is present thanks mostly to recent immigration.

Bramadat in his introductory chapter suggests that there are three mitigating factors in any given context of reception's approach to the governance of religious diversity within their borders.

> First, the individual historical paths followed by each of these states as they entered the contemporary era have set up distinctive social, political, and economic conditions that have, in turn, strongly influenced the way religious diversity is interpreted and governed by policy-makers in each state.[1265]

[1263] While my data paints a much rosier picture of Canada than France, and points to surprisingly positive perceptions on the part of Muslim immigrants to Montréal, Canada as a whole, including Québec, is not without its deep prejudices in dealing with Muslim and non-White immigrants, as well as its Native communities. In section 6.1 I highlight some of the events that have occurred in the recent past in Québec which may support a more uncomfortable situation for Muslims in the province.

[1264] Bramadat and Koenig, *International Migration.*

[1265] Bramadat, "Religious Diversity," 7.

Second, he argues that each state has its own relationship to, and history of, contemporary migration and colonialism, and each state has particular demographics in relation to migration because of these factors.[1266] My agreement with Bramadat regarding these two mitigating factors is obvious in that I dedicated two chapters of this dissertation to presenting these very histories in France and Québec. I see these histories and their resultant policies and attitudes as especially relevant to how immigrants live their daily lives in these states.

The third mitigating factor that Bramadat proposes is that policies which govern religious diversity are not only influenced by these national forces but also by global or transnational forces.[1267] The way a given context of reception understands and responds to religious diversity can be influenced by the way other states do or to the particularities of immigrant religions found in other contexts across the globe. States do not operate within a vacuum. For my research, for example, one cannot ignore the violence inspired by radical forms of Islam, or the colonial violence imposed on Muslim nations by various colonial powers, which has led to fear and mistrust on multiple fronts. Moreover, as Cesari suggests, any understanding of the Muslim minority in the West must take the phenomenon of global Islam into account as well.[1268]

With these three factors in mind, the authors in this volume address the histories of the context of reception and the global and transnational forces at work which influence the receptivity of immigrant religion in each.[1269] This dissertation has taken a similar appraoch to the chapters found in this volume, just at much greater length, and with much more ethnographic depth. Furthermore, although Cesari and Milot both address the impact of the context of

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[1266] Bramadat, "Religious Diversity," 7.
[1267] Ibid., 8.
[1268] Cesari, "Islam, immigration and France," 202.
[1269] Two chapters which are relevant for, and related to, my own work are Jocelyne Cesari, "Islam, immigration and France,"195-224 and Micheline Milot, "Modus Co-vivendi," 105-129. Cesari explores the various histories of interaction with and resultant policies around the governance of one particular immigrant religion in France, namely, Islam. She breaks this issue down into (1) "origin effects," the things, both psychological/philosophical and physical, that immigrants bring with them from their home contexts, and (2) "destination effects," factors relating to French and European culture. She shows how the combination of these two creates the setting within which Muslim immigrants to France must live out their lives. Milot, in her chapter, focusses on three components of political life that she argues affect the expression and governance of religious diversity in Canada. These three components are: (1) Canada's official Multiculturalism Policy, (2) the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as embedded in the Constitution, and (3) the bi-national history of Canada (105). By exploring these three policies she shows how immigrants to Canada tend to "out-integrate" immigrants to other Western contexts without such policies in place. These two chapters, along with all the chapters in Bramadat and Koenig's work, illustrate that the contexts of reception clearly have an effect on the daily lives of religious immigrants within their borders. This is also a main conclusion of my dissertation.

reception on the immigrant individual in this book, neither of them addresses the central role of food in the immigrant experience.

These contexts of reception have a direct influence on the second theme that Connor explores in his work: changing faith. In the chapter that examines this theme he shows the various ways in which immigrant religion is not static. Connor, in another article, presents two possible hypotheses about the host's receptivity level and its effect on immigrant religion's changing faith: (1) welcoming contexts provide the space for religious immigrants to engage in higher religiosity than the host population, and (2) less welcoming contexts create an "us" versus "them" scenario that triggers hyper-religiosity.[1270] In this article, and throughout *Immigrant Faith*, he suggests that when it comes to Muslim immigrants, less welcoming contexts, such as those found in Europe, lead to higher religiosity and religious outcomes in that community, while "more welcoming contexts are associated with lower immigrant Muslim religious outcomes."[1271] His findings with regards to Muslim immigrants thus challenge his first hypothesis but support his second. Unlike Muslims in Europe, who do not seem to be religiously adapting, Connor suggests that, in general, other "immigrants begin, on average, to resemble the new country's population, becoming more or less religious over time, depending on the national and local context."[1272] So, for example, Christian immigrants to France would become less religious over time, while non-religious immigrants to the U.S would become more religious over time.

My findings regarding Muslim immigrants in both Paris and Montréal directly challenge and complicate these conclusions. While it may be true that Muslim immigrants in the *banlieues* (suburbs) of Paris, specifically second and third generation individuals, may be responding to the unwelcoming context of reception with hyper-religiosity,[1273] this was not the case for several of my informants. In fact, most of my Parisian informants were making adjustments in their religious identities and practices that reflected the national and local norm, as Connor suggested was normal for immigrants who were not Muslim.[1274] Some would only decrease some practices

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[1270] Connor, "Contexts of Immigrant Receptivity," 381.

[1271] Connor, "Contexts of Immigrant Receptivity," 394; Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 60-61.

[1272] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 55.

[1273] This was a trend I did not directly encounter amidst my informants, but as I discussed in the Paris case study chapters, some spoke about the "problem" of 2nd and 3rd generation youth in the *banlieues*. My informants suggested that when in a position where one is not accepted as neither French nor Maghrébine (Moroccan, Algerian or Tunisian), some of these youth deal with their inevitable conflicts of identity by grasping on to the one identity that is not questioned: i.e. Muslim identity.

[1274] Connor, *Immigrant Faith.*

and maintain others, while others would stop practicing all together, some would simply alter the way they engaged with certain practices, or they would change the way they labelled them. Furthermore, in Québec/Canada, where immigrants are seen as welcome, my informants were not decreasing their practice to reflect the norm (especially the norm in Québec), but in fact were increasing it, or upping the identification ante as I argue, to show their religious identity. In fact, in a context such as Canada where the relatively well known practices (fasting for Ramadan, not eating pork, not drinking alcohol) are less contested than some other locations, other practices move to the forefront of practice and identity; hence, when avoiding gelatin becomes a significant aspect of religious identity for some Muslims in Montréal. Whereas in a place like France, the fact of keeping halal or not drinking alcohol was enough of a contested practice as to distinguish a particular identity, it was almost as if, in Canada, my informants needed something even more distinct with which to identify themselves, something more distinct to draw the line between "us" and "them." Therefore, in contrast to Connor's conclusion that Muslim immigrants would become "less religious" in more welcoming contexts, and "more religious" in less welcoming contexts, my examination of "Muslim food practices" shows that my informants in Paris (a less welcoming reception context) actually alter and leave behind their practices to a large extent and my informants in Montréal (a more welcoming context of reception) increase their religious practices and stress their religious identities even more in the Canadian setting.

As I argued in section 9.2 above, this receptivity may lead to an increase in religious practice/identity, but it also leads to an increase in national identification as well. While France may assume that by denying the religious identities of immigrants in the public sphere, those immigrants will integrate more successfully into French society, my work shows the opposite to be the case. In spite of the changes that my Parisian informants were making to their religious food practices and related identities, they still felt as though they were on the outside of the "French" identity. This often led them to conflicts of identity and relationship that simply were not present for my Montréal informants. In fact, my Montréal informants, because they felt as though their minority religious identities were accepted, not only highlighted more specific religious food practices as a means of presenting their religious identities, but also felt more "Canadian" and consequently more invested in this side of their multifaceted identities. In agreement with Margarita Mooney's argument, "greater recognition of immigrants' religious identities and organizations would probably improve the cultural and structural incorporation of

immigrants in France."[1275] By comparing the experiences of Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Paris and Montréal through the lens of food practice, we can see that more welcoming contexts of reception can actually lead to "more incorporation" of minority religious immigrants, and less welcoming contexts of reception can actually lead to minority religious immigrants distancing themselves further from the majority groups and identities. While France may assume that by denying the religious identities of immigrants in the public sphere those immigrants more successfully integrate into French society, my work shows the opposite to be the case.

Connor's third theme addresses the topic of "integrating faith." He discusses how immigrant religion can act as both a help and a hindrance to integration, again often dependent on the context of reception in which the immigrant finds him/herself.[1276] He highlights the role of religion in providing the three Rs made famous by Charles Hirschman: Refuge, Respect and Resources.[1277] In another article he suggests that religions provide "psychological refuge for immigrants facing cultural and other stresses, public respectability through opportunities for leadership, and finally resources in helping immigrants start businesses, get leads on jobs, and increase language proficiency."[1278] While immigrant religion may be able to provide the three Rs and consequent integration, this is unfortunately not always the case, or at least not always uniformly the case. While for most immigrants religion may provide refuge, especially psychological, in the migration process, respect and resources may be further from reach. Connor states that, in fact,

> Western Europe and the United States are two extremes of immigrant societies where religion plays either a hindering (Europe) or helping (United States) role for immigrant integration. But not all countries fall so neatly into this categorization. Canada, for

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[1275] Mooney, "Religion as a Context of Reception," 110. Mooney's article is just one in a special issue of *International Migration* titled "Incorporating Faith: Religion and Immigrant Incorporation in the West," which addresses, among other things, the role of contexts of reception on immigrant religion. The other article that directly addresses this issue is Wendy Cadge et al.'s work on "Religious Dimensions of Contexts of Reception" (Cadge et al., "Religious Dimensions," 84-98). I place my work in line with these articles as I believe that it is these contexts of reception that have the largest impact on the immigrant religious experience. Because of this I would also place my dissertation in Part V "Contexts of Reception" in Volume I of James A. Beckford's anthology *Migration and Religion* that I mention above.

[1276] One of the weaknesses of Connor's work in *Immigrant Faith* is that he sets it up as a comparative study which reveals broad patterns that are applicable to all contexts, and not the unique aspects of the host countries, and yet most of his themes reveal a stark difference between immigrant experience in the U.S, Canada and Western Europe.

[1277] Charles Hirschman, "The Role of Religion in the Origins and Adaptation of Immigrant Groups in the United States," *The International Migration Review*, vol. 28, no. 3 (2004): 1206-1234.

[1278] Connor, "Introduction," 5.

example, provides a middle case where elements of both the American and the European contexts are simultaneously present.[1279]

My work clearly supports this categorization of religion's role in the integration process. I argued that in Paris, religion and religious practice were generally seen as hindrances to integration, at least, when integration is understood as assimilation. Furthermore, in support of this idea, my informants spoke of and engaged in transformations of their religious identities and practices as a means of showing their integration. Since religion became a hindrance, the removal of religion was a tool that my informants could use. Conversely, religion served as both a help and a hindrance in the Montréal context, showing the middle ground approach that Connor suggests is present in Canada. It was a hindrance to claiming secular national identity in Montréal and at the same time through the religious emphasis on hospitality allowed the immigrant to interact with and be transformed by his or her non-immigrant neighbours, an essential element to integration in Québec.

Finally, the last theme of religion and migration that Connor presents in his work is that of "transferring faith." He shows how immigrant faith is often not transferred perfectly to the next generation.[1280] One can, consequently, understand why many immigrants go to such lengths to attempt to transfer at least some aspects of their faith to their children.

For my informants, food practices were an essential means of this transference. For some, this was the main reason why they maintained, and often increased, their religious food practices in the host context. Doing so was a means of transferring not only religion but also ethnicity, since these two things often went hand in hand. Connor shows how, rather than following a pattern of decline in religiosity as is found from first to second generation in other traditions and contexts, second generation Muslim immigrants in Europe tend to stay in faith and practice as much as their parents do.[1281] Since most of my work, focusses on first generation, I cannot directly support or critique this finding.[1282]

Connor's work addresses the role of immigrant religion in migration but only in the host context, as a means of integrating into one's new home. While he does point to the field of

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[1279] Connor, *Immigrant Faith*, 74.
[1280] Ibid., 112.
[1281] Ibid., 114.
[1282] My informants did speak about the increased religiosity of third generation youth living in the banlieues in Paris. They spoke about the fact that not only was there no decline in religiosity, but in fact younger generations were becoming *more* religious than their first-generation parents and grandparents.

transnational immigrant religion in his conclusion, he does not address it in any depth. Peggy Levitt, another important scholar in the field of religion and migration, fills this gap by highlighting the role of religion in transnational migration. While Connor addresses how immigrant religion plays a role in moving, changing, integrating and transferring faith for the immigrant in their host context, he does not address how immigrants' moves are often not unidirectional, and often involve movements back and forth between home and host land, whether these moves are made in the real world or in the imagination. Levitt, in her work, does just that and consequently shows "the ways in which religious identities and practices also enable migrants to sustain memberships in multiple locations."[1283] Connor, like other scholars of immigration, focusses on immigrant incorporation (what many call integration), while Levitt, and other transnational scholars like her, seeks to challenge the focus on integration by revealing that individuals stay connected to their home land communities even as they establish "homes" in their host society.[1284] One way in which they do this is by using religion as a means of crossing and dwelling in both home and host land. Echoing Tweed and his theory of religion, Levitt argues that

> religion is the ultimate boundary crosser. God needs no passport because faith traditions give their followers symbols, rituals, and stories they use to create alternative sacred landscapes…religion also transcends the boundaries of time because it allows followers to feel part of a chain of memory, connected to a past, a present, and a future.[1285]

But there are more than just home and host land influences at work; religious immigrants are also in constant communication with, and in the process of creating, global religions. Levitt suggests that "the study of transnational migration and religion, therefore, provides an empirical window onto one way in which religious globalization actually gets done."[1286] It shows the ways in which immigrants negotiate their transnational identities in a global context.

While some people think that "one land, one membership card, and one identity is a secular version of the Holy Trinity,"[1287] as I argue in the case in Paris, the truth of the matter is that most immigrants do not fit within this Trinity. They interact with nationalism and citizenship in vast and varied ways and religion plays a significant role in each. Levitt, in her work *God*

[1283] Levitt, "'You Know, Abraham," 847.
[1284] Ibid., 849.
[1285] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport,* 12-13.
[1286] Levitt, "You know, Abraham," 849.
[1287] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 67.

Needs No Passport, outlines six of these possible national responses.[1288] She asks: "if people have lots of food in their pantries, what are the main ingredients they cook with every day, and what do they use only occasionally? How do the recipes they prepare change as a result?"[1289] as a means of symbolically describing the various identification processes that people may go through. While she uses this question, and the resultant descriptions as mere illustrations of these larger processes at work, my research shows that food is not just an illustration, but is at the heart of these negotiations.

The first national identity that immigrants may choose, according to Levitt, is the "American" identity; to apply her typology beyond the American context we could call it "the host land" identity. An immigrant who claims this identity sees him/herself as a non-hyphenated, fully [insert host country identity here] individual.[1290] As Levitt states, this immigrant is the first person to bring apple pie to the Fourth of July picnic.[1291]

The second possibility is the "homeland" national citizen. This individual also claims non-hyphenated national identity and emphasizes that no matter how long he or she is gone from the homeland he or she will always be [insert home country identity here].[1292] These immigrants are those who bring "samosas to the Indian Independence Day,"[1293] or, in the case of my research, those who bring chorba or harira to the *iftar*.

The third national identity that Levitt presents is the "ethnic national" identity. For these immigrants being ethnic is what being American is all about. They claim both sides of their transnational identity, but they interact with both sides in a very particular way. It is an Americanism that is infused with ethnic culture and an ethnic culture that is made in America. It has nothing to do with the outworking of the ethnic culture in the homeland and everything to do

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[1288] Similar to Levitt, Akhtar, in his *Immigration and Acculturation,* presents various ways that immigrants negotiate their identities in their host contexts. I use his typology in Chapter 4 of this dissertation. Briefly, his four identity consolidation possibilities are: (1) ethnocentric identity, (2) hyperassimilated identity, (3) Alienated identity, (4) Bicultural identity (189-192).

[1289] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 67.

[1290] Ibid., 70. This is somewhat in line with Akhtar's hyperassimilated identity (Akhtar, *Immigration and Acculturation,* 191).

[1291] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 67. None of my informants claimed this sort of identity. They all maintained some form of identification with their homeland identity.

[1292] Ibid., 72-73. Akhtar's ethnocentric identity would be a representation of this (Akhtar, *Immigration and Acculturation*, 191).

[1293] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 67. This was a much more common response for my informants, especially in France. While they were still comfortable creating homes for themselves in Paris, they did not want to, or believed they could not claim French identity (the host land identity).

with the experience of being [insert homeland identity here] in the United States.[1294] Adding masala to ketchup on their hamburger would be a food move that ethnic nationals would engage in;[1295] my Montréal informant who added Maghrébine spices to shepherd's pie was engaging an ethnic national identity, according to Levitt.

A fourth approach, which highlights both sides of the transnational identity, is the "dual national." The dual national immigrant identifies strongly with both the home and host land, feeling at home in both, and engaging in life in both contexts.[1296] A table at the dual national's Fourth of July celebration may have both apple pie and samosas on it; on the Eid dessert table in Montréal, there was lemon meringue pie alongside Maghrébine sweets.[1297]

The fifth identity that Levitt examines is the "cosmopolitan." She argues that these immigrants blur the lines between all borders and are at home wherever they may be. They either see home as portable, moving from place to place but always having a similar set of possessions and acquaintances, or they see home as having roots. While they can be home anywhere, they are selective about where that may be.[1298] For cosmopolitan identifiers no cuisine dominates their pantry, and consequently "they eat from the world's table and are proud of it."[1299]

The sixth and final national identity that Levitt describes is the "religious global citizen." The religious rules and rulers matter most to these identifiers, and they consequently take their cues from those leaders and rule books.[1300] This does not mean that political, national and other forms of belonging do not matter to these identifiers. In fact, religious global citizenship can be complementary to other forms of belonging. Levitt states, concerning this group:

[1294] Ibid., 75.

[1295] Ibid., 68.

[1296] Ibid., 77. I call this transnational, and Akhtar calls it bi-cultural identity (Akhtar, *Immigration and Acculturation*, 192).

[1297] Levitt points out that while ethnic nationals and dual nationals share some things in common there are two important distinctions between these groups: (1) the home national identity in ethnic nationalism is shaped by being that ethnicity in the host land context—not influenced by or even interested in home country affairs; (2) where they direct their energies: ethnic nationals "dedicate themselves to helping their immigrant community in the United States," while Dual Nationals are concerned about the immigrant community AND their homeland one (Levitt, *God Needs No Passport,* 78). Most of my informants in both Paris and Montréal would fall into the dual national identity.

[1298] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 79-81.

[1299] Ibid., 68. Two of my Parisian informants called themselves "citoyens du monde" and yet when we spoke about their food practices, they fell much more in line with the "dual national" identity described above. They maybe ate more varied food than the rest of my informants, but both French and Maghrébine/Muslim foods and food practices still oriented much of their daily lives.

[1300] Ibid., 68.

> It was not that they were oblivious to their surroundings or the salience of political borders. It was that they thought of themselves as living in an alternative topography, with residents, rules, and landmarks that mattered more to them than their secular equivalents.[1301]

Religious global citizens, then, fast during Lent, or feast on lamb for the Eid based on religious calendars and rules. An excellent example of this identity at work is the story of my Parisian informants looking to the religious leaders in the Maghreb for the start date of Ramadan (who base that date on what is happening in Mecca) rather than to the official French date, as represented by the leaders of the Grande Mosquée. My informants wanted to make sure that they were acting in line with their fellow religious global citizens and not just performing an ethnic national version of their Islam.

Overall, Levitt argues that where people place themselves within these national identities depends largely on "how people think of themselves racially, ethnically, or religiously"; these factors strongly influence "how they see themselves as citizens, how they perceive their right and obligations, how they participate in the public sphere, and why."[1302] The kinds of faiths that all of these various identifiers bring with them into these identities are far from monolithic and are being constantly recreated and redefined.[1303] Even within these different national identities, there is wide variation of the kinds of immigrant religion at work.[1304] She argues, because of these variations in religiosity, nationalism and citizenship, and the constant influence of global and

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[1301] Ibid., 83.

[1302] Ibid., 90-91.

[1303] Ibid., 94.

[1304] Levitt provides an overview of the various ways that her informants enacted "being religious," in Chapter 4. These ways of "being religious" are: (1) the strict faithful—tall, impermeable boundaries, theology and practice is given, god-directed, goodness is set in stone, right and wrong remain no matter one's national context (*God Needs No Passport,* 97)—my Parisian Grande Mosquée informants would mostly fall in line with this, as well as some of my highly devout Québécois informants. (2) The questioning faithful—they believe and act in correspondence to the traditions set out in their faith, but also believe that "traditions change and have to be adapted." There is a continuum of how much they grapple and what can be negotiated (99)—most of my informants would probably lie in this category. Interestingly, when Levitt was describing this category she stated that many of her Muslim informants would list the five pillars of Islam as the basic tenets of their faith. She then goes on to list the five pillars as: "pray five times a day, fast during the holy month of Ramadan, give to charity, refrain from eating pork, and go on hajj or to Mecca, if possible" (100). What is note-worthy here is that she replaces the shahada with the injunction against pork, as one of my informants did as well which I describe in Chapter 4 (section 4.4.1). (3) The Golden Rule faithful do not see significant differences between their faith and what others believe, give the same answers, not big on practice (103-104). (4) The Symbolic faithful—"people who used religious symbols to express feelings of religiosity and identification, without participating regularly in religious culture or celebrations." (104)— those of my informants who saw themselves as cultural Muslims could be placed in this category. Finally, (5) the self-help faithful—using faith in their own personal service and development (107).

transnational networks on all of the above, that global religiosity requires new religious organizational architecture, and ultimately "major changes in business as usual."[1305] Both religious individuals and organizations, she says, need to engage in new and creative ways to meet the needs of their personal and collective selves within these complex transnational and global worlds.

I argue that food is one such way to creatively navigate the rough waters. My work answers the call that Levitt proposes in her influential article "You know, Abraham was really the first immigrant," where she states that

> many more studies are needed to flesh out how migrants' transnational religious practices are actually enacted, what their impacts are, what explains the variations between them, how transnational religious life differs from transnational life in other social arenas, and what these dynamics mean for home- and host-country life.[1306]

By showing how immigrants' transnational religious practices are enacted, specifically through food, I have proposed responses to most of Levitt's inquires above.

9.3.1.1 Religion and Migration Summary

In this section I have discussed some foundational works in the field of religion and migration and have shown how my work complements or challenges the conclusions found within them. After a brief overview of the three reasons why religion and migration is now an important field within religious studies, as outlined by Paul Bramadat, I outlined Phillip Connor's quantitative study of immigrant faith and showed how my project acts as qualitative support for many of his findings.

As "moving faith" Connor shows how the relationship between the immigrant's faith and the context of reception can impact the future of the immigrant in that context. My work highlights this aspect of Connor's work and emphasizes the significant impact of the context of reception on the lives, identities and practices of immigrants. Because of this, I also addressed Bramadat and Koenig's edited volume *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity* to show how others have approached the discussion of context of reception and immigrant religion. In regards to "changing faith" I presented Connor's argument that immigrants tend to become less religious in more welcoming contexts, and more religious in less

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[1305] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 128.
[1306] Levitt, "You know, Abraham," 868.

welcoming ones, and furthermore, that immigrant faith starts to reflect the non-immigrant faith represented in the host context. I then discussed how my research directly challenges these conclusions. In Paris, a less welcoming context, my Parisian informants were making adjustments in their religious identities and practices that reflected the national norm. While, in Montréal, a more welcoming context, my informants were not decreasing their practice to reflect the norm (especially the norm in Québec), but in fact were increasing it to show their religious identity. I then showed how my work supports Connor's "integrating faith" category; in Paris, religion is a hindrance to integration, while in Montréal, it can be a help. Finally, I discussed how my work acts as a vignette of Connor's "transferring faith" by showing that food practices were an essential means of this transference.

After exploring Connor's work, I then presented Peggy Levitt's work on transnational religion. Levitt's work shows how immigrants' moves are often not unidirectional and often involve movements back and forth between home and host land, whether real or imagined. In this, I showed how Levitt presents six different options for national identities for the transnational migrant. I outlined the six possibilities and used food as an illustration of each. Overall, I argued that food and food practice can be a means of creatively navigating the rough waters of transnational experience; my work serves as evidence that food can provide insight into the kinds of negotiations at work that Levitt suggests are present throughout her work.

9.3.2 Food and Religion

Like the study of religion and migration, the study of food and religion is also a relatively new field of investigation in the social scientific study of religion. Like the situation I described above regarding religion and migration, both food studies and religious studies have long and complex histories of research attached to them but neither has taken the other's subject matter as particularly relevant until very recently. Early anthropologists of food did examine some of the religious elements of people's food practices, particularly people's food relationships with their gods including feasts and sacrifices, taboos and injunctions. But, as Sidney Mintz explains in his *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*, most of the food work (gathering and preparation) was being done by women and most of the anthropologists were men who were not interested in the real

stuff of food practices.[1307] For that reason, "it would probably be accurate to say that food and eating got much less attention in their own rights as anthropological subjects than they really deserved."[1308]

This is no longer the case. In this section I examine two volumes that address food and religion, comprised of scholars who pay a great deal of attention to food and eating in their own right, to situate this dissertation within recent work done in this field.[1309] Although some

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[1307] Michel Desjardins in his "Religious Studies that *Really* Schmecks," suggests that by exploring religious food practice we locate the missing voices of women from much of religious studies (147-156). Meredith McGuire similarly posits that "when we allow that food preparation and eating can be highly meaningful spiritual practices, we can have a different appreciation of women's religious roles" (McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 106).

[1308] Sidney Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 3.

[1309] While there are many other important texts in the study of food and religion space does not allow for a full exploration of them all. By focusing on the most recent collections one can gain a current view of the kinds of questions scholars who are working in this field are answering and the kinds of issues that still need to be addressed, or further explicated. I draw the reader's attention to the key works with which many of the scholars who are currently addressing religion and food interact and which set the stage for the field as a whole. For example, probably the most foundational work in the field, which opened up the exploration of food and religion in new ways is Daniel Sack, *Whitebread Protestants: Food and Religion in American Culture* (New York: St Martin's, 2000).

For early works exploring the historical accounts of the various ways that religious food practices have come to be see, Rudolph M. Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Marvin Harris, *Good to Eat: Riddles of Food and Culture* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast, and Holy Fast*: *The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). For some excellent cultural histories, which primarily address food but also include some exploration, albeit sometimes quite brief, of religion see: Hasia Diner *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Robert C. Fuller, *Religion and Wine: A Cultural History of Wine Drinking in the United States* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996); Franca Iacovetta, Valerie Korinek, and Marlene Epp, eds., *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012)—for chapters which directly address religion see chapter 3, 10 and 11; for chapters that address food and ethnicity see chapters 7, 8, 9 and 12. For historical explorations of specific religious traditions and their foodways see Kenneth Albala and Trudy Eden, eds., *Food and Faith in Christian Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Desjardins and Desjardins, "The Role of Food," 70-82; Leonard J. Greenspoon, Ronald A. Simkins, and Gerald Shapiro, eds., *Food and Judaism* (Omaha: Creighton University Press, 2005).

For foundational religious studies texts, which have some mention of food to elucidate larger themes, see Karen McCarthy Brown's *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Robert A. Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985). In fact, my first foray into the study of religion and food was a conference paper that I wrote exploring of the place of food in Orsi's *Madonna of 115th Street*. For explorations of the ways that religious food rules affect relationships between and amongst religious communities see, Desjardins and Mulhern, "Living Sacrifice," 190-210; Claudine Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast: Jews, Christians, & the Pig*, trans. Carol Volk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); David M. Freidenreich, *Foreigners and their Food*: *Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). For the first collection of articles written about food and religion in the community of the American Academy of Religion, which set the stage for the growing field, see the special edition of *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 63, no. 3 (Fall 1995).

common themes and threads are present in the two, they present distinctive pictures of the field. Someone picking up Zeller et al.'s edited volume *Religion, Food and Eating in North America*[1310] may have a different understanding of what the field looks like than someone who just read the special "Food and Religion" issue of *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*.[1311] I address each of these volumes in turn, describing the picture that arises of the field of food and religion in each, and situating my work in both.

    Religion, Food and Eating in North America arose out of the "Religion, Food and Eating in North America" seminar, which met at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of

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For important works on halal and Muslim food practices see, Bergeaud-Blackler, "Social Definitions of *halal* Quality," 94-107; Marjo Buitelaar, "Living Ramadan: Fasting and Feasting in Morocco," in *The Taste Culture Reader,* ed. Carolyn Korsmeyer (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2007), 175-180; Johan Fischer, *The Halal Frontier: Muslim Consumers in a Globalized Market* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Richard C. Foltz, *Animals in Islamic Tradition and Muslim Cultures* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006); Peter Heine, *Food Culture in the Near East, Middle East and North Africa* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 2004)—while Heine focusses on Muslim food practices in this work, he also addresses Jewish and Christian holidays and food practices.

For another work that deals directly with food and religion in the North American context see R. Marie Griffith, *Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). Related to a project such as this, for a work that addresses food as one of the principle elements of everyday religion see Graham Harvey, *Food, Sex and Strangers: Understanding Religion as Everyday Life* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

For important works that address the role of food in identity formation and maintenance see Anderson, *Everyone Eats*, especially Chapter 10 where he directly addresses food and religion; Demossier, *Wine Drinking Culture;* Donna R. Gabaccia, *We are what we eat: Ethnic Food and the making of* Americans (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell, eds., *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984); Leon Rappoport, *How We Eat: Appetite, Culture, and the Psychology of Food* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2003); Peter Scholliers, ed., *Food, Drink and Identity: Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe since the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Berg, 2001)—chapters which are especially relevant to my work are Kolleen M. Guy, "Wine, Champagne and the Making of French Identity in the Belle Epoque," 163-178 and Willy Jansen, "French Bread and Algerian Wine: Conflicting Identities in French Algeria," 195-218. For an exploration of the role of food in the migrant experience see, Anne J. Kershen, ed., *Food in the Migrant Experience* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002); Jeffrey M. Piltcher, *Food in World History* (New York & London: Routledge, 2006)—especially Chapter 9, "Migrant Cuisines"; Desjardins and Desjardins, "Food that Builds."

Finally, the work of two anthropologists have thoroughly shaped the way many scholars of food and religion think about the subject. First, Sidney W. Mintz shows how "food and eating afford us a remarkable arena in which to watch how the human species invests basic activity with social meaning" (7) in his *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom;* Mintz' overview of the anthropology of food and eating in *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985) is also foundational. Anyone who studies food and religion cannot help but also be informed by Mary Douglas's work, specifically Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966) and Mary Douglas, ed., *Food in the Social Order: Studies of Food and Festivities in Three American Communities* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984).

[1310] Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel, eds., *Religion, Food & Eating in North America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

[1311] "Religion and Food," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, Vol 26 (2015), accessed March 28, 2016, http://ojs.abo.fi/index.php/scripta/issue/view/74/showToc

Religion (AAR) between 2008 and 2012.[1312] This is important to note, as this book's providence offers an insight into the potential for an unbalanced presentation of traditions that Marie Dallam addresses in her introductory chapter. Self-selection is one part of this equation, but as Dallam describes there does tend to be an imbalance in the North American context which examines Christianity and Judaism and mostly in the context of the United States.[1313] Dallam states that this book is in fact a call for other works which are set in Mexico, Canada, and the Caribbean, and works that address traditions outside of Judaism and Christianity. I take up this call with this current work as it addresses the Canadian context and Islam.

The book is broken up into four thematic sections, namely, Theological Foodways, Identity Foodways, Negotiated Foodways, and Activist Foodways. In the Theological Foodways section, articles address the religious rules and spiritual inspiration for the religious foodways of a variety of Christian communities who practice vegetarianism in some way or another. The authors, through an exploration of theological imperative, show the development of (Grumett) and the consequent impact on religious foodways for members of these communities (Primiano), often describing the ways in which individual believers enact their religious lives through the dietary restrictions that they practice (Rapport, Blazer).

In the Identity Foodways section, authors show how individuals and groups have constructed and maintained both individual and group religious identity through their foodways. In these chapters the reader is presented with the various ways, across traditions, in which religious actors tap into shared histories, e.g., via cookbooks (Gross) and ceremonies (Crawford O'Brien), and come to understand and consequently present, their religious and ethnic identities, i.e. via gumbo (Hicks) and Christmas cookies (Mehta).

The Negotiated Foodways section consists of four chapters that reveal the complicated negotiations that often occur between "ideal" and "lived" religious foodways. In these chapters the reader gets a view into the ways that people navigate their religious lives through what they eat and how they eat it. The authors show how, when one looks outside the rule books of a tradition, commonly understood rules, philosophies and practices are altered or reimagined to fit with the lives of religious practitioners. Religious rituals are transformed by lived religion, as we

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[1312] This seminar meeting is one of the foundational moments in my scholarly career. It was in my attendance of this seminar at the AAR in 2009 where I discovered that religion and food was a viable, and in fact vibrant, area of study.
[1313] Dallam, "Introduction," xxiii.

see in Perez's chapter; food becomes a focus where it was not before, as we see in Holbrook's chapter; traditional religious concepts are altered because of foodways, as we see in Wilson's chapter; and new religious foodways are created, at the expense of traditional ones in light of cultural influences on the community, as we see in Rubel's chapter.

Finally, in the Activist Foodways section the authors show how religious individuals and communities can use food as a means of effecting change in the world, using food as a tool for social activism. Levasseur addresses this by looking at the social justice activity taken up by a Christian community in the American south, revealing the challenges of this kind of food activism. Robinson enters the conversation by describing the efforts of a Chicago Muslim organization to expand the definition of halal beyond just ritual slaughter to include socially just food practices and the problems that that move brought to the organization. Finally, in an interesting twist, Zeller takes the reader outside of the realm of commonly labelled "religions" to show how normally understood secular American foodways function as "quasi-religions" in their activist initiatives.

Across these themes, there are subthemes which many of the articles address. A main goal of the book is to "look across traditions to find commonalities in the expression of the relationship of both food to religion and eating to religion."[1314] Dallam outlines these commonalities in her introductory chapter and suggests that food and religion, as they are presented in this book, cross the larger thematic boundaries via subthemes of foodlore, distinction, abundance, conversion, politics and comparison.[1315] The essays in this volume show how people create stories around their food practices (foodlore), how foodways can act as boundary marking symbols distinguishing "us" from "them" (distinction), how many religious foodways act as a means of counterbalancing the North American (mostly American) pursuit of abundance (abundance), how religious actors reveal changes in their religious outlook via foodways (conversion), how food can be a means of individual and local power (politics) and how the food practices of one group can illuminate the experiences of another group (comparison).

Taking all these themes and subthemes into consideration, the book illuminates the many ways that the food practices of individuals and communities reveal a great deal about what it

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[1314] Dallam, "Introduction," xxiii.
[1315] Ibid., xxiv-xxvi.

means to be religious in North America. As Mintz states, eating is never a "purely biological" activity,[1316] and in this case it acts as a strong symbol of meaning making. For that reason, and many others, this work shows that food should be taken seriously in the study of religion.[1317]

My work could easily be placed into Zeller et al.'s work in either the Identity Foodways section or the Negotiated Foodways section. First, throughout this dissertation I have shown how my informants use food and foodways to understand themselves and to present those identities in their immigrant contexts. Like Derek Hicks and Samira Mehta I show how by eating certain foods my informants place themselves alongside other individuals and groups who also eat those things. For Hicks, this was gumbo, for Mehta, Christmas cookies, and for my informants it was couscous, the Eid lamb, dates during Ramadan, etcetera. Hicks argues that by eating or not eating certain foods the food actor is able "to communicate messages about cultural identity" on at least three levels. The individual can, through their foodways, (1) focus on the host context identity and reject the home; (2) aggressively maintain traditional home identity; or (3) blend the two.[1318] These categories relate to Akhtar's typology of identity consolidation possibilities that I use in Chapter 4 to describe the ways in which my Parisian informants use food to negotiate and present their identities.[1319] So for Hicks, and for my Parisian informants, food is a powerful means of expressing identities.

Furthermore, like Hicks and Mehta, I also complicated the categories of religion, culture, ethnicity, etcetera, throughout this work. Just as gumbo took up a religious place in Hicks' home,[1320] couscous took up a religious place in the lives of many of my informants. By using commonly understood cultural food practices as means of expressing religious identity, my informants show how the line between culture and religion, or religion and ethnicity, is often

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[1316] Mintz, *Tasting Food*, 7.

[1317] A piece that addresses the value of adding food to the study of religions is Desjardins, "Religious Studies that *Really* Schmecks," 147-156. In this chapter Desjardins suggests that food highlights the "fluidity and functionality of categories" that become too often ignored in the study of religion (particularly in the study of Christian origins). He also suggests that by looking at food one moves the study of religion outside of the study of Christianity in content and in who is conducting that research. Finally, this chapter is useful, as I noted above, in highlighting the importance of studying food and religion as a means of locating the voice and experience of women. Desjardins suggests that by studying leaders, and the writers of texts, and rule books, we only find men. But by looking at food, women abound.

[1318] Hicks, "Unusual Feast," 145.

[1319] (1) Relates to the hyperassimilated identity, (2) the ethnocentric identity, and (3) the bicultural identity. There is no example in Hicks of Akhtar's alienated identity.

[1320] Hicks, "Unusual Feast," 135.

blurred and highly dependent on individual experience and history. It reveals, as Ahmed insists is necessary, "the human and historical phenomenon" of a tradition.[1321] Mehta also shows how culturally-significant foods are taken up in religious communities, and in the minds of outsiders, as symbols of religious events and identities, even if they have no place in the texts and traditions of the religion.[1322] For my informants, ethnic components of their Muslim culture also become associated with Islam as a whole, so that Friday prayers would not be Friday prayers without couscous, or the Eid al-Fitr would not be the Eid without baklava.

Another of my conclusions comes to light when reading Mehta's chapter. She suggests that labelling a food practice as traditional, cultural or ethnic rather than religious can lead to two important outcomes. First, that practice can be seen as more flexible or not as strict.[1323] I directly address this in chapter 5 and 8 when I present my spectrum of religion versus culture as it relates to the food practices of my informants. I showed how my informants engage this relabelling process to allow them to alter their commonly understood religious food practices to fit with their lives in their host societies. The second and related outcome that Mehta expresses is that food, in its very nature, can "be easily read simply as ethnic and is therefore not threatening to perceived religious identities"[1324] or, I would add, national identities. Because food has the ability to cross the often-blurred boundaries between ethnicity, culture and religion, focussing on one side of this triple symbolism can allow the individual to present an "acceptable" identity to others. My informants could engage in religious food practices more than other religious practices because those food practices could be argued away as ethnic/cultural practices and thus were not seen as threatening to the secular national identity present in both Paris and Montréal.

My work could also fall into the Negotiated Identities section of *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America* as it addresses the ways in which "lived religious foodways are distinct from the ideal religious foodways we might expect to see."[1325] Like the groups which Holbrook examines in her chapter, the Nation of Islam and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,[1326] my informants highlight what some may see as secondary religious values and practices over the more commonly understood central tenets and practices of the faith. Some of

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[1321] Ahmed, *What is Islam*, 116.
[1322] Mehta, "'I Chose Judaism," 165.
[1323] Ibid., 156.
[1324] Ibid., 169.
[1325] Dallam, 'Introduction," xxviii.
[1326] Holbrook, "Good to Eat," 195-213.

my informants do this to such an extent that they replace some of the five pillars of Islam with religious foodways (i.e. replacing the *shahada* with the injunction against pork).[1327] For some, it is these practices that make them Muslim. While many may assume that the daily prayers, the belief in one God and Mohammad as his Prophet, and other such things are the foundation of all Muslims lives as Muslims, my informants show how it is often more mundane practices which take up the place of utmost importance in their religious lives.

This situation can sometimes involve the creation of new religious food practices as well, similar to the feast which Nora Rubel describes in her chapter.[1328] My informants, when faced with cultural and logistical challenges to enacting the traditions around the Eid al-Adha in Montréal (i.e. by having to go out to a farm and wait all day to perform one's sacrifice of the lamb), create new traditions which sometimes even go against commonly understood religious traditions (i.e. not fasting on a feast day trumps the tradition of eating from the sacrificed lamb before anything else on the day of the Eid al-Adha). By emphasizing uncommon practices in uncommon ways, religious individuals and groups are living their religious lives through negotiated foodways.

While these negotiated foodways are perhaps different from the "common" religious practices (food or otherwise) of these communities they do not necessarily contradict them. Jeff Wilson, in his chapter, comes closest to addressing the issue of people acting in contradictory ways to the values or practices of a given religious tradition. He shows how writers on and practitioners of "mindful eating" engage in a very un-Buddhist Buddhist practice. He states that mindful eating acts as a

> religious technique that has been largely stripped of its original religious context, then repackaged as a universal panacea that delivers all sorts of practical benefits, especially ones relating to health issues. Because mindfulness is said to deliver practical benefits—such as weight loss and better health—it is enthusiastically picked up by Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike.[1329]

[1327] Something which Levitt does as well in her work *God Needs No Passport,* 100.

[1328] Nora L. Rubel, ""The Feast at the end of the Fast: The Evolution of an American Jewish Ritual," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America*, eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 234-250.

[1329] Jeff Wilson, "Mindful Eating: American Buddhists and Worldly Benefits," in *Religion, Food & Eating in North America*, eds. Benjamin E. Zeller, Marie W. Dallam, Reid L. Neilson and Nora L. Rubel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 230-231.

While some of my informants, who act in contradictory ways in relation to religious food practices, argue away their contradictory behaviour by removing the religious element to the practice, like those mindful eaters whom Wilson describes, most act in contradictory ways without removing the religious implications. For example, they know that the injunction against alcohol is a religious one, but they drink alcohol. Or they know that eating strictly halal meat is a religious foodway, and yet they order potentially non-halal chicken when out for a meal at a restaurant. My work fills a gap in this section of *Religion, Food, & Eating in North America* by adding ways in which religious individuals negotiate the rules and values of their traditions in their daily lives in sometimes directly contradictory ways.

The second recent collection on religion and food is found in the special issue of *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*. Some important distinctions between this and Zeller et al.'s *Religion, Food, & Eating in North America* are obvious from the outset in looking at the content list. First, there is very little overlap in authorship. Arising out of a conference held by the Donner Institute in Finland in June 2014,[1330] the collection has an immediate international flair that is missing in Zeller et al.'s work. The authors in the Donner Institute's anthology come from a vast array of backgrounds and their subject matter is equally vast. While the AAR volume focuses primarily on Judaism and Christianity, the Donner volume covers a variety of religious traditions, albeit with a slight emphasis on Judaism (four of the eighteen articles discuss Jewish foodways). While the AAR anthology purposefully restricted its scope geographically, culturally and temporally (twentieth and twenty-first centuries),[1331] the Donner anthology chose to cover

> the whole span of human history, from antiquity and all the way up until today, from several different theoretical and methodological points of view, exploring several different religious traditions.[1332]

If someone outside of the field were to pick up the AAR volume they might assume that food and religion was mostly about Christians and Jews trying to sort out their lives in America in the last one hundred years. If that person were to pick up the Donner volume, the picture would become a bit more flavourful, giving insight into the ways in which religious individuals

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[1330] Zeller was a visiting fellow at the Donner Institute at the time and actually encouraged them to host the conference.

[1331] Dallam, "Introduction," xxiii.

[1332] Ruth Illman and Bjorn Dahla, "Editorial: Religion and Food," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis,* Vol. 26 (2015): 7.

outside of the American context, and in many religious traditions, also use, or have used in the long ago past, food in similar ways to those presented in *Religion, Food & Eating*. In fact, one can see the Donner volume as an answer to the call that Dallam makes in her introduction to *Religion, Food & Eating in North America* for work outside of the U.S context and outside of Christianity and Judaism.

While there are no separate thematic sections in the Donner anthology the articles are organized according to general approach. First, after a brief editorial, the volume opens with two theoretical articles that show how foodways can provide answers for, and explanations of, what is religion/religious studies. For example, Zeller's article complicates the very idea of "religion" by examining quasi-religious foodways such as veganism, gluten-free, and Paleolithic diets revealing that "one finds religion not only in churches, synagogues, mosques and temples. One also finds it at the grocery store."[1333] Graham Harvey relatedly challenges previous held ideas of what constitutes religion, and suggests that food take up a fundamental role in our understanding of religious studies itself. In fact, he posits that "perhaps religion (as a locus of scholarly attention) ought to be defined not as believing but as eating."[1334] Believing food to be some of the essential "stuff" of religion, my work falls in line with these theoretical positions, arguing that by examining what and how individuals eat or do not eat we as scholars of religion can gain insight into many other arenas of religious life.

After two chapters with a theological focus, Desjardins' exploration of the historical Jesus through the lens of current, anthropological food data, and Pihkala's exploration of ecotheology and Christian theological approaches to food and eating, four historical chapters follow. In these chapters the authors (Moragas & Mazzetto, Filocamo, Gutierrez and Malieckal) present historical accounts of different religious food practices from different time periods and contexts. These articles show how food has historically acted as a means of connecting with the spirits and gods, is a symbol of religious proportions, acts as an identity marker for religious groups, and can be a means of enacting power.

Following these historical accounts are six articles (by Soderlind, Abu Salem, Walsh, Plank, Zamorska, and de Souza) that present more contemporary, ethnographic studies of food

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[1333] Benjamin E. Zeller, ""Totem and Taboo in the Grocery Store: Quasi-religious Foodways in North America," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, Vol. 26 (2015): 27.
[1334] Harvey, "Respectfully Eating," 32.

and religion. They too address the role of food in spiritual communion, its use as religious symbol, its ability to delineate group and individual identity, and its function as a source of power. Furthermore, they address the ways in which food is used by various individuals and communities in the negotiations that individuals go through in the modern, global, often transnational contexts of their lives.

The volume closes with four articles that present Jewish perspectives on religion and food. By separating these articles into their own section, the editors draw attention to the emphasis on this tradition in the anthology. This separation leaves the reader wondering, "what is so special or different about Judaism that it requires its own subsection of this work?" Regardless, these articles present views into the role of food in transnational identity negotiations (Kershenovich Schuster), in ecological activism (Krone), in definitions of religion and religious practice (Mulhern) and in memory (Kasstan).

Other than supporting the theoretical musings presented by Zeller and Harvey, my work falls most in line with the ethnographic articles that make up the bulk of this collection. Much like Paulette Kershenovich Schuster, my work shows how my informants are negotiating their transnational identities through foodways. Whether through food fusion, "the trend of combining foods from more than one culture in the same dish"[1335] (such as my informants who added Maghrébine spices to shepherd's pie), or parallel eating, the trend of eating dishes from different cultures at the same meal, but not in the same dish[1336] (my informant who had lemon meringue pie on the Eid table alongside Maghrébine sweets), my informants were "actively engaging in a reconstruction of an ideal and identity, a home in limbo."[1337] Furthermore, my informants were able to not only define this identity but to proclaim it, both to themselves and to others through their consumption practices. My work is in agreement with Kershenovich Schuster in that we both show that "food plays a central part in their construction of religious, spiritual and cultural identity, which was constructed in a multiethnic and transnational context through everyday social interactions, cooking and eating practices."[1338] Like the habaneros and shwarma that were

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[1335] Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 287. This food fusion is a good example of the way that the "ethnic nationals," presented by Levitt above, engage with their food practices (Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 68, 75).

[1336] Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 290. Parallel eating can be used to describe the process undertaken by "dual nationals" according to Levitt (Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 77).

[1337] Kershenovich Schuster, "Habaneros and Shwarma," 297.

[1338] Ibid., 297.

representative of Kershenovich Schuster's Jewish Mexican informants, the harissa-spiced shepherd's pies, and couscous with baguettes were representative of my Maghrébine Muslim informants. Like the other works in this anthology this dissertation addresses themes of "tradition, memory and nostalgia; boundaries, identity, and control; symbolism, authenticity, and fluidity; and consumption and abstention."[1339]

9.3.2.1 Food and Religion Summary

In this section I situated my research within the field of Food and Religion. While there were many sources I could have addressed, I focused on the two most recent anthologies on the study of religion and food to show the current state of the field and to place myself within it. First, I presented an overview of Zeller et al.'s edited work *Religion, Food and Eating in North America*. After discussing the four subsections of this work: Theological Foodways, Identity Foodways, Negotiated foodways, and Activist foodways, I showed how my work best fits into the Identity and Negotiated foodways sections.

In agreement with the authors in the Identity Foodways section, my work shows how food is a powerful means of expressing identities. It also complicates previously held notions of religious and cultural identifications and shows how the flexibility of foodways to be relabelled in these ways can aid the religious actor in their national identifications. I also described how my work could fall in line with those authors who contributed to the Negotiated Foodways section, showing how everyday religious practice can sometimes conflict with the ideals we may be expecting to see. While the authors in this section discussed the ways that people highlight surprising foodways, none really addressed how people can act in directly contradictory ways to religious food ideals. I suggested that my work can help to fill this gap by discussing situations where my informants acted in blatantly contradictory ways to the religious "norms."

After discussing Zeller et al.'s work I then gave an overview of the special issue of *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* on religion and food. I argued that the Donner Institute's work addressed the call made in Zeller et al.'s work for more studies in food and religion outside of the U.S. and outside of Christian/Jewish traditions; while there was still an emphasis on Jewish foodways in this anthology. Instead of a thematic approach the Donner volume was divided, for the most part, into methodological approach: theoretical, theological, historical,

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[1339] Illman and Dahla, "Editorial: Religion and Food," 7.

ethnographic, and then, strangely, four articles with a specific focus on Judaism. In this methodological visioning, I placed my work alongside the other ethnographic articles. I specifically drew lines between my work and Kershenovich Schuster's work on Jewish Mexican transnational immigrants, showing how my informants were actively reconstructing identity in their transnational contexts through their foodways.

9.4 Limitations

While I have attempted to present a fair and accurate depiction of what the daily lived religion of Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Paris and Montréal looks like, and the effect of these religious lives on my informants' self-understandings as transnational immigrants, the project inevitably suffers from some limitations that impacted the collection of my data as well as its presentation in this dissertation. As much as we may wish to think that we perform perfect work, no project is faultless, or complete. I turn now to some of the limitations that I faced in the field and in the writing of my ethnography.

9.4.1 Method: Access/Time, Snowball, Field Work

First, my time in the field was limited to roughly six months in each location. While this is a significant amount of time for a current PhD project, more time in the field would have allowed me greater access to the communities I was studying and could have significantly changed the outcome of my project. This is especially true of my Paris fieldwork. Because of the suspicious attitude against which I was working for most of my time in the field in Paris, especially in the early days, it took a great deal of time to build rapport and to convince my informants that I had good intentions and was not, in fact, a journalist who would likely misrepresent them later in public. I found that by the end of my time in the field the doors were beginning to open for me and people were starting to trust me enough to pass on my name to their friends and family. My interview schedule picked up in pace significantly in the last month in the field and I am sure I could have gained some more important voices had I had another month or two in that field setting.

For example, my Paris data is missing the voices of older informants. While I have middle aged men and women, and younger men and women, my access to eldery men and women, the early, post-war immigrants to France was limited. I was just beginning to make

connections with families and gaining enough trust within these circles to provide this access when I had to leave. My data set is thus skewed to the younger, first generation immigrant experience in Paris.

Furthermore, while I had a couple of informants who invited me into their homes and allowed me this close access to their real, everyday lived experiences, this access was restricted as well. By the end of my six months in Paris, I was finally making inroads into some other circles and probably could have increased this "Islam at home" experience, but unfortunately six months was just not enough time to break that barrier of mistrust.

In Montréal, on the other hand, my work got underway quickly and I gained access to the inner realms of my informants lives from very early on. Again, more time would have allowed for more data and more access to different people, but in Montréal my stream of interviews and experiences was a never-ending flow of rich ethnographic material. Building rapport was easy, hesitation was not ever on the table, and thus I was able to gain easier and more intimate access in Montréal than I could in Paris. The result is a Paris – Montréal comparison that is uneven in breadth and depth.

Moreover, my data collection was limited by the fieldwork process itself and by the method I employed to recruit informants. Trying to restrict my influence on the data I was collecting as much as possible, I followed a snowball method for recruiting my interviewees. While this allows the data to develop along a natural, informant-led line, it inevitably affects the people and thus the type of data to which I had access. In Paris, while this snowball began at the Grande Mosquée, and with generally more traditional and conservative Muslim informants, as soon as one of those informants introduced me to a "cultural Muslim," one of the flows of informants easily continued along that line. If I had never met a so-called "cultural Muslim" I probably would have not met others and my comparison with the Montréal informants may not have been as different as what it was. Similarly, my snowball effect in Montréal began in two places which affected the two strands of informants to which I had access. One strand began at another well-established mosque with fairly devout, traditional and conservative Muslim informants and continued along that line. Another began with an acquaintance of one of my Paris informants, who saw herself as less traditional, although as I argued in Chapter 5 would fit within many definitions of "traditionally religious" in spite of her self-understanding as quite liberal. This strand of the snowball led me to other informants who did not go to the mosque on a

regular basis and who lived their religious lives purely in their daily lives, outside of the institutional setting of Islam in Québec. Finally, this method most likely meant that I was also limited in the sectarian differences that might influence my informants in both Paris and Montréal. Again, while I did not ask my informants about their sectarian background, by following a snowball method I inevitably narrowed the kinds of views that would be present in my data set.

Despite these limitations, the field provided me with valuable though complicated access to the lives of my informants. By engaging in participant observation, I sometimes encountered problematic and conflicting information to what my informants told me in our interviews. I was able to get glimpses into their lives, that I would not have had access to if I had done skype interviews, or flown in, did a series of interviews back to back and flown back out again, or built my data primarily from surveys. By building the necessary rapport, even if it took me months and months, by showing up every day, by observing even the minute moments of my informants' lives, I was able to gain a more nuanced picture than I could have based on interviews alone. Ethnographic fieldwork has limits, but it also offers opportunities to access to parts of my informants lives in their immigrant context that I would not have had access to if it were not for the time I spent in the field.

9.4.2 Home Context

While this time in the field gave me privileged access to the intricacies of my informants' lives as immigrants in Paris and Montréal I did not have the opportunity to see what those lives looked like "au bled." The scope of this project is such that I could only look at one side of the transnational experience, namely the experience of transnational immigrants in the host society. Levitt suggests that one important aspect of any transnational study is to consider how the migration of certain individuals has an affect on those individuals who stay back home: "sometimes migration is as much about the people who stay behind as it is about people who move."[1340] By focusing solely on the immigrant in his/her host society I do not have insight into the effect of transnational migration on those still in the homeland.

Furthermore, all the information I do have about the home land context I have second hand; I learned everything about what life was like "back home" from people who no longer

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[1340] Levitt, *God Needs No Passport*, 23.

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physically lived in those homes, and consequently had to take them at their word. It is quite possible, as I learned through the process of fieldwork, that my informants were telling me one thing about life in the Maghreb but the "actual" life of the Maghreb might be quite different. In this dissertation I address the changes in practice and identity which my informants engage in from home land to host land, but these documented changes are fully based on the word of these informants. It is possible that my informants did not change their practice or identity at all from what it was in the homeland, but they simply told me that they did. Without any previous knowledge of the Maghrébine context I have no way of knowing how "true" these accounts are. I do not actually know if "halal is a given" or if there is "alcohol but never pork," or if "everyone sacrifices a lamb in their backyard," in the Maghreb.

Whether these statements are factually "true" or not is not particularly important for my study. My concern is with the way that my informants understand themselves and their practices as immigrants, how they see themselves as changed or not through the process of migration, regardless of the ways that things "actually" happen or do not in the homeland. I took my informants at their word, even if I sometimes did not fully understand the full import of their words.

9.4.3 Language

This brings me to the final limitation that I highlight here: language. The issue of what language to use in this project was prevalent throughout my entire ethnographic experience. I was acutely aware of the language question before I even entered in to the field, over and over again in the fieldwork context, and while I was writing up the ethnography that is presented here. I knew that to conduct this project I was going to need to use a language other than my own primary mode of discourse.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, Spradley argues that learning the language of your informants is the "first and most important step to achieving the primary goal of ethnography—to describe a culture on its own terms."[1341] In one sense, I did learn the language of my informants; I was strong in French but not strong enough to have preconceived notions of what words my informants "should be" using to describe any given thing. I was able to learn the French that my informants used in their immigrant context. For some of my informants French

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[1341] Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview,* 18.

was their first language, and for most others it was a secondary language, often being spoken at home or at work. Some of my informants knew French better than Arabic, and it was generally the most common language amongst myself and my informants. All but two of my informants, one in France and one in Montréal, spoke French fluently, so my interviews were generally able to go off without a hitch.[1342]

The problem arose in participant observation. Not knowing Maghrébine Arabic left me sometimes on the outside of the conversation and thus on the outside of the experience. While my informants would mostly speak French when I was around, I know that there were moments missed and good data that was lost in the moments where my informants would break off into an Arabic/French blend and I could not fully understand the conversation. This happened often in the kitchen of the Grande Mosquée in my early days in Paris, and continued to happen in my informants' living rooms in Montréal. It is hard to say exactly what I missed in those moments, but I am certain that my ethnographic account would have been even richer had I been able to understand the Arabic terms and expressions that my informants used; I would have been able to more fully understand the world that was unfolding around me (perhaps even allowing myself to be more prepared for the marriage proposals that seemingly came out of no where). Beyond just getting the data, knowing Arabic could have possibly helped me to build rapport in those early days in the field.

I remember when I was nearing the end of my time in the field in Montréal, sitting in the living room with some of my informants as they got caught up in conversation and thus switched from full French to the common Arabic/French blend that they would speak when I was not in the room. I sat quietly, listening, following what I could. When my host noticed that they had gotten carried away, she quickly apologized and switched back to full French. I told her not to worry and then proceeded to tell her what I had understood of the conversation. I will never forget the look on her face, and the others in the room when they thought that I had learned their language; they were so excited and so proud. I was getting there, the blend of French with the Arabic helped me for sure, but I was not quite there yet. I am sure with more time in the field I could have learned more, and would not have missed out on some of these moments.

[1342] In the case of the two informants who did not speak French fluently I was able to use a translator for their interviews. While I trust the translators, there is inevitably something missed when using a third party in the interview process. I cannot be sure that the nuance of my informants' responses in these two cases are exactly what I have in my transcriptions.

9.5 Future Research

My project was limited by the logistics that I described above, but it was also limited in content. With a year in the field, and two field sites, there was only so much that I could examine and only in particular ways. The data that I gathered from July 2012 until October 2013, in Paris and in Montréal, led to the very specific findings that I have presented in this dissertation, but it also has led me to posit the possible avenues for future research that could grow out of a project such as this.

First, as I mentioned above I did not have access to the homeland context for this project. I am unaware of what the transnational immigrant experience does to those left behind, and to their own negotiations of identity and lived religious experiences. Furthermore, I do not know how people in the Maghreb negotiate their identities and live their religious lives in general. I do not know how many of my conclusions about transnational experience actually has to do with the migration experience itself and how much it has to do with the specific contexts and histories of those who migrate. It would be valuable to do a similar project to this one in the Maghreb to explore the ways that Muslims in the Maghreb negotiate their identities through food and how that compares to the data that I found in this project. This could reveal potentially helpful insights into the role of food in the migration and integration process itself, as well as the role of food in identity construction itself. If food was not highlighted in the Maghreb, if people did not use it as a means of identifying themselves as Muslim or Maghrébine, this could give support to the idea found in this dissertation that food acts as a particularly strong symbol and hence as a tool for the transnational migrant in creating and maintaining his/her transnational identity. It would also allow for an opportunity to explore Levitt's suggestion that migration is often about those left behind, giving me the chance to see how the interactions with those making return trips from France or Québec influence the daily food practice of those "left behind."

Another possible future avenue of research that grows out of the conclusions of this data is to explore the role of food in the immigrant experience in other "secular" contexts. Having lived in Victoria, British Columbia, for the past two years I have become acutely aware of what

it is like to live in an area populated by "religious nones."[1343] I would be curious to see how the dynamics that I describe in this dissertation would get worked out in this secular context. In comparison to locations like France and Québec that both have complex histories with religion, both being highly Catholic dominated contexts having undergone drastic secularization processes, what sorts of pressures might be imposed on an immigrant from a religious minority in a different kind of secular context like British Columbia? How might members of religious minorities in a secular context that is characterized by a religious illiteracy rather than a direct antagonism negotiate their identities? What role might food play in these negotiations? Would religious immigrants begin to relabel their religious practices as cultural to fit in with their "none" neighbours? This kind of project could reveal the real implications of various types of secularism on the lived religious experiences of religious minorities.

The question of re-labelling and re-identification of people and practices as cultural rather than religious is another fruitful research path to explore out of this project. As I described in Chapter 4 of this work, a surprising number of my informants labelled themselves as cultural Muslims. In highly secular and globalized contexts individuals are creating and discovering new ways to "be religious" and to live out the traditions that are affiliated with those identities. Foodways are often the only maintained affiliated practice with the more traditional religious practices by "culturally religious" people. Because this category was only prevalent amongst my Paris informants (my Québec informants almost exclusively saw themselves as "Religious Muslims") I posit that the host context has a large effect on this category. Future work that examines the category of "cultural religion" across different contexts and religious traditions would be highly valuable. Because of the position of foodways for the individuals who claimed this identity in my study, I believe that examining the food practices of individuals who claim this identity is the best way in to understanding this new and exciting realm of religious identification.

Finally, the timeline of my fieldwork inevitably led to a certain picture of the experience of Maghrébine Muslim immigrants in Paris and Montréal. By picking up this dissertation the

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[1343] Those who when asked what their religion is would say "none." In British Columbia, nearly half of the population (44 percent) identifies this way according to the 2011 National Household Survey. "National Household Survey" *Statistics Canada*, accessed March 7, 2016, http://www12.statcan.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=59&Data=Count&SearchText=British%20Columbia&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=Religion&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1).

reader may assume that life is quite comfortable for Muslims in Montréal and even that life is not all that uncomfortable for Muslims in Paris, as long as one is willing to adjust some of their practices to fall in line with French secularism and nationalism. Unfortunately, a few major events have happened in both settings that have drastically impacted the daily lives of my informants, and I am sure many of their compatriots.

First, I finished my fieldwork in Montréal roughly a week before the Charter of Québec Values gained popular media attention in Québec. The Charter, as proposed by the PQ government at the time under the leadership of Pauline Marois, sought to address the controversy around "reasonable accommodation" in Québec by emphasizing state neutrality, most precisely through limiting the wearing of "conspicuous" religious symbols in the public sphere.[1344] My informants went from giving me very pleasant pictures of their lives in Québec, to writing me emails, distraught, and confused as to what was happening in the province that they called home. In fact, in the time since I conducted this fieldwork my informants have expressed feeling not as "at home" as they used to feel, and have described unfortunate situations of discrimination that they have experienced in their daily lives in Montréal. Ultimately, it has become clear to me that the situation of discrimination felt by Muslims in Québec ebbs and flows dependent on what is happening in the world, and in Québec at the time. My research was conducted in a moment where the tide had ebbed, and the picture presented here is accordingly fairly rosy. If I were to have conducted it a year later, it is unclear as to whether the "Mini-France" that I was expecting to see would have in fact appeared.

In France, multiple acts of terrorism have had an impact on the lives of my Muslim informants and others like them in Paris. The attacks on the Charlie Hebdo office in January 2015, the November 2015 attacks, including the massacre at the Bataclan theatre, and the 2016 Bastille Day attacks in Nice, heightened the fear of Islamic extremism in France, and many feared that these events could lead to further marginalization of Muslims in France. While it is hard to know how much the aftermath of such events is a product of the media and how much is true, one cannot help but wonder what the effect of such events might be on the daily lives of Muslims in France. Would these events, and the general increase in awareness of and activity by a group such as ISIS, increase the pressure that my informants felt to alter their identities and

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[1344] Specifically limiting all public-sector employees from wearing any "conspicuous" religious symbols, as well as making it mandatory to show one's face when either providing or receiving public services.

their related food practices in France? Would these kinds of events make French national identity even more elusive? Internal French politics also plays a role in such matters, and if experience can be used as a guide, the upcoming French presidential cycle is likely to fan the flames of intolerance and fear.

Accordingly, what is needed to gain a deeper understanding of these French and Canadian communities would be a series of studies over time, ideally longitudinal studies, that could reveal the lived religious lives of North African Muslims in Paris and Montréal.

9.6 Conclusion

This dissertation is motivated by two research questions: (1) how can food act as a means of reimagining, recreating, reaffirming, and expressing, sometimes complicated and contested identities for minority religious immigrant communities in highly secular contexts? (2) What impact does the context of reception, particularly the host society's unique and complex history and interaction with colonialism, immigration, secularism, and nationalism, have on these identity negotiations? In examining these two principal questions my research has arrived at three key findings: (a) that food is an effective and prevalent tool for the minority religious immigrant to use in their inevitable identity negotiation and integration efforts; (b) that altering how one interacts with, labels, and practices these foodways can change the way an individual enacts their religion and culture, and, relatedly, that the very definitions of religion and culture can be muddied by examining the foodways of religious individuals and finally, (c) that the context of reception has a significant impact on the daily lived religious practices and identities of religious minority immigrants.

First, in regards to finding (a): that food is an effective and prevalent tool for the minority religious immigrant to use in his/her inevitable identity negotiation and integration efforts, I show throughout the dissertation how food is often the most important symbol of identity engaged by my informants. I argue that food may be a more politically or culturally correct symbol of religious identification in highly secular contexts like Montréal and Paris. In secular contexts, where public signs of religiosity are often seen as problematic, I found that subtler and more private expressions of religious identity help the minority religious immigrant to engage with and express their identities in meaningful ways. Additionally, in contexts like France and

Québec, which have strong and distinct food cultures, by taking up some of the foodways of the host context, and/or leaving some of the home food practices that are seen as especially in conflict with the host context behind (i.e. the restriction on alcohol and pork), my participants claim and demonstrate their Québécois or French side of their transnational identity.

This lays the ground work for finding (b): that altering how one interacts with, labels and practices these foodways can change the way an individual enacts their religion and culture and can muddy the waters, so to speak, regarding the definitions of religion and culture themselves. While I entered the field expecting to find fairly consistent definitions, and understandings of, religious and cultural food practices, I quickly realized that these topics were not as clear cut as scholars might like to imagine. In presenting my fourfold typology of food practice in Chapter 5 and Chapter 8, I showed the varied ways that my informants enacted and understood these practices and therefore complicated the very categorization that I set out to make. By choosing to alter the way that they labelled certain practices, some of my informants revealed the difficulty in delimiting the lines of definition for any practice or identity. For example, while not eating pork is often viewed as a religious foodway, for some of my informants, particularly some in Paris, it was a cultural one. On the other end of the religious/cultural spectrum, couscous was most often understood as a cultural foodway that had nothing to do with religion, and yet I had informants in both Paris and Montréal who gave it religious significance. For them, "L'eau, la semoule [couscous] et la respiration. On a besoin que de ça en l'Islam."[1345] Furthermore, some of my informants seemingly changed the label of a given foodway from religious to cultural to make that practice less obligatory and therefore easier to alter, e.g., not drinking alcohol became a cultural practice instead of a religious one in order for some informants to enjoy a drink with their friends after work. In fact, in Paris, my informants relabeled their religious food practices as cultural to two ends: first, this relabelling allowed them to see this practice as more flexible and open to change, and second, if they did not stop these practices, this relabelling made their engagement in said practices more acceptable to the non-Muslim French majority that surrounded them. They consequently presented malleable definitions of both culture and religion, using these categories as a means to continually engage in important foodway practices in light of the tension they faced.

[1345] 121008_001—"Water, couscous and breath. We only need that in Islam."

In Montréal, there was not the same felt pressure to alter the definitions of the terms culture and religion. They stressed that there was in fact often a difference between the two, but there was general consensus on which foodways belonged to which category. In fact, because these "religious" and "cultural" food practices were *so* acceptable, and uncontested, they often emphasized other, more obscure religious food practices as essential to their lives as Maghrébine Muslims in Montréal, i.e. gelatin. Emphasizing the avoidance of gelatin as a "religious" food practice again, further complicates the definitions of these terms. While my Montréal informants would be comfortable labelling a religious food practice as religious, they still often revealed an influence from the Québécois intercultural context to provide cultural, logical, or "scientific" reasons for their religious practices.

This brings me to my final, and most significant finding, finding (c): that the context of reception has a significant impact on the daily lived religious practices and identities of religious minority immigrants. In line with scholarship in religion and migration, I demonstrate throughout this dissertation how a context of reception directly influences the practices and identities of its immigrant communities. In Chapter 2 and Chapter 6, I describe those contexts of reception in depth, particularly related to the most influential factors that shape how immigrants from religious minorities are received in both locales. I show how the differing histories of, and interactions with, colonialism, immigration, secularism and nationalism in both France and Québec provide distinct settings with which any resident must interact and construct their identities in relation to. Then throughout the data chapters, Chapters 3-5 and 7-8, I show how these histories have real effects on the lived religion of my informants.

For example, in Paris, my informants were clearly responding to the post-colonial, immigrant, secular, nationalistic situation which surrounds them. Consequently, they expressed a wide variety of identities such as "born Muslim," "double culture," "cultural Muslim," "French," etcetera, which they represented through the food that they ate and did not eat and the ways that they altered these foodways in Paris. Furthermore, because of the context of reception, and my informants' interactions with it, a kind of transnational identity emerged for my Parisian informants which I discussed in Chapter 4. There was a clear dichotomy presented between "us" and "them" which framed my informants' thinking about, and acting in relation to, integration and transnationalism. For my Parisian informants, foodways played an essential role in defining the differences between "us" and "them," as a tool for or against integration, and in representing

the multiple sides of their transnational identity. Specifically, because of the "French only" approach to nationalism found in France, I argue that members of religious, ethnic or cultural minorities feel excluded from the French national identity and as a result often remain on the margins of that identity. Even those who make efforts to fit within the French national identity frame, that I describe throughout the Paris data chapters, often still feel as though they can never quite claim French identity. Although the French secular national approach is meant to remove distinction, my data shows in fact that it can increase difference and *communautarisme*.

While my Montréal informants were affected by the Québécois context of reception in some ways, they also seemingly bypassed the Québécois context and placed themselves more within the Canadian context as a whole. This led to a much more uniform response from my informants in Montréal in regards to identity and practice, than what emerged from my Paris data. In Chapter 7, I showed how my Montréal informants saw themselves as in conversation with Canadian identity, more than Québécois, and because to them, "Canada is a country of immigrants," and because "what makes you distinct is what makes you Canadian," my informants stressed the identities which made them different from their non-immigrant, non-Maghrébine, non-Muslim neighbours. Again, food acted as an important symbol and practice that represented these identities for my Montréal informants.

What was particularly revealing in the Montréal context was the fact that, because my informants felt as though they could comfortably express their religious identities in Montréal, more specific religious food practices became an important part of their daily religious lives and identities. Because not eating pork, not drinking alcohol, fasting, etcetera, were accepted, non-problematic practices in which to engage, my informants seemed to feel as though they needed something even more distinct with which to represent themselves; gelatin and ingredient verifying consequently took up an important place in my informants' foodways in Montréal. Being comfortable with expressing multiple identities, my informants were able to fully engage their transnational identities in Montréal. Both sides of the transnational identity were respected, promoted and nourished in the Montréal context and foodways were essential in accessing and presenting these transnational identities.

These differences present a culturally and socially important finding of this dissertation, namely, while the fear may be that by maintaining or even increasing practices that indicate difference, that highlight the "homeland" side of one's transnational identity, immigrants may

not integrate fully into the host culture, my research shows the exact opposite effect. In Canada, within multi- and inter-cultural contexts, my Montréal informants felt more Canadian or had a greater desire to "be Canadian," and on the whole felt free to express and engage their individual identities, whether religious, ethnic or cultural, In France, the opposite was true. I use food throughout as the lens to reveal that France's universalistic and assimilationist immigration policies undermine its efforts to emphasize equality.

Ultimately, by emphasizing how the host society's approach to, and interaction with, immigrants drastically impacts those individuals' daily religious lives and self-understandings, my work falls in line with other scholars in the field of religion and migration who highlight the distinct characteristics of the contexts of reception of their informants. Furthermore, since most work conducted in religion and migration is undertaken by sociologists, and mostly with quantitative methods, my work, as a qualitative ethnography, fills a gap in the literature by showing how the general trends that these sociologists find, i.e. Phillip Connor, get worked out on the ground.

My work also fills a gap in the highly Judeo-Christian focussed field of Food and Religion, that I described in section 9.3.2 above. By providing a picture of the daily negotiations of identity that people engage in through their use of food, my work, like many of the articles in both Zeller et al's work and the Donner Institute's special volume on Religion and Food, highlights the essential role of food in the lived religious experience of global and transnational religious actors. My work shows how food can be one of the most important expressions of a variety identities for immigrants in highly secular, often hostile environments.

It is my hope that this work supports the importance of this new, but rapidly increasing field of inquiry, and will lead others to assess people's foodways as an essential aspect of those individual's religious lives, whether majority or minority, immigrant or non-immigrant, women or men, etcetera. Brillat-Savarin famously stated, "we are what we eat." My work shows how by modifying, reimagining and redefining, what we eat we can modify, reimagine and redefine who we are, thus providing a strong tool to the minority immigrant in their inevitable identity negotiations in contexts such as Paris and Montréal.

Appendix A

James Spradley's 12 Step Ethnographic Interview Sequence

1. Greetings
2. Giving Ethnographic explanations
   2.1 Giving project explanations
   2.2 Giving question explanations
   2.3 Giving recording explanations
   2.4 Giving native language explanations
   2.5 Giving interview explanations
3. Asking ethnographic questions
   3.1 Asking descriptive questions
   3.2 Asking structural questions
   3.3 Asking contrast questions
4. Asymmetrical turn taking
5. Expressing interest
6. Expressing cultural ignorance
7. Repeating
8. Restating Informants' terms
9. Incorporating informants' terms
10. Creating hypothetical situations
11. Asking friendly questions
12. Taking leave

Source: James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1979), 67.

REB Approved Research Questions

Exemple du questionnaire en français

Intégration et Ingestion: aliments, boissons et identités religieuses dans les communautés maghrébines musulmanes à Paris et à Montréal

1. Pourriez-vous me donner une idée sur votre lieu d'origine? Êtes-vous né en France (Québec), ou ailleurs?

2. Là d'où je viens au Canada les personnes s'identifient de façons très différente, surtout en fonction du lieu où ils vivent, ou de leur pays d'origine, ou de leur appartenance ethnique, ou de leur religion. Ils sont, par exemple, Torontolais, ou Irlandaise ou Aborigène, ou Catholique. Et vous: comment voulez-vous que je vous identifie?

3. Je suppose que vous êtes musulman/e. Est-ce correct? [Yes; if No, the interview possibly ends, but sometimes a "No" can really mean "I'm not a good Muslim," so a few other questions can be asked to tease out a proper response]. Pourriez-vous me parler du type d'Islam que vous pratiquez?
   (a) Allez-vous à la mosquée pour la prière du vendredi ou pour lire Le Coran ou pour des célébrations religieuses?
   (b) Mangez-vous des aliments halal? Tout le temps?
   (c) Avez-vous jeûné pendant le ramadan? Ou en d'autres occasions?
   (d) Combien de fois priez-vous par jour?
   (e) Vous habillez-vous d'une manière que vous considérez islamique, sur une base régulière?

4. Pensez à votre vie religieuse, à la fois à la maison et dans d'autres endroits, et maintenant penser à la nourriture dans ces contextes. Quels sont les exemples qui viennent à l'esprit?

5. Permettez-moi d'explorer un peu plus loin ce lien entre l'alimentation et votre vie religieuse. La nourriture fait une partie de notre vie de façons différentes, comme faire la cuisine, manger, et célébrer. La plupart d'entre nous utilisent aussi la nourriture spéciale pour les événements religieux spéciaux. Je suis intéressé par toutes ces choses, en particulier en ce qui concerne les liens à votre vie et l'identité religieuses.

(a) Lorsque vous mangez des aliments, chaque jour, est-ce que votre religion guide ce que vous mangez? *(Si oui, comment?)*

(b) Y a-t-il certains aliments que vous ne mangent pas du tout, ou que vous éviter à certains moments, parce que vous êtes musulman/e?

(c) Est-ce que vous préparez votre nourriture vous-même? Y a-t-il des moyens particuliers à préparer votre nourriture de manière musulman?

> *(Or if the interviewee does not prepare food:)* Est-ce qu'il est important pour vous, à l'égard de votre religion, qui prépare la nourriture et / ou comment il est préparé?

(d) S'il vous plaît donner quelques exemples d'aliments que vous préparez et mangez pour des occasions religieuses. Est ce que ces aliments ont une signification particulière pour ces manifestations religieuses?

(e) Y a-t-il des choses que vous mangez qui sont difficiles à préparer, à Paris [Montréal], qui étaient faciles à préparer dans votre pays d'origine? Si oui, lesquels? Pourquoi / Comment?

(f) Pensez-vous que votre nourriture d'origine Maghrébine traverse une transformation à la française [Canadien]? Si oui, comment? Si non, pourquoi pas?

(g) Trouver-vous que les Français [Canadiens] non-musulmans vous obligent ou pas, à changer vos coutumes de nourriture? Si oui, à quel niveau?

(h) Quelle place occupe la nourriture d'origine Maghrébine à Paris [Montréal], dans votre avis?

(i) Est-il important pour vous de manger de la nouriture halal? Si oui, pourquoi? Si non, pourquoi pas?

(j) Trouvez-vous qu'il est difficile de trouver de la viande halal à Paris [Montréal]? Craignez-vous que les viandes halal que vous achetez ne sont pas réellement halal?

(k) Buvez-vous de l'alcool? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas? Connaissez-vous des musulmans qui boivent de l'alcool?

(l) Pensez-vous que la nourriture que vous mangez et la façon dont vous le mangez ont un effet sur vos interactions avec les non-musulmans français (québécois/es)?

6. Lorsque vous entendez le mot «intégration» de quoi pensez-vous? Est-ce que vous vous voyez « intégré? » dans la société française? Vous souciez-vous de cela?

Sample Interview Questions (English)

Integration and Ingestion: Food, Drink and Religious Identity in Maghrébine Muslim Communities in Paris and Montréal

The following set of questions forms the scope of issues that I want to explore. Beyond # 1 and #2, they do not have to be asked in this order, and if participants volunteer the information pertaining to a particular question, then I do not need to ask it. However, each question represents only an opening, and would be followed by probes to encourage further details, stories, descriptions, meanings or explanations on areas where it may be warranted.

1. Could you tell me something about your background? Were you born in France (Québec), or somewhere else?

2. Where I grew up in Canada people identified themselves in a lot of different ways, for example according to the place in which they lived, or their country of origin, their ethnicity, or their religion. I heard people call themselves, for example, Torontonians, or Irish, or Aboriginal, or Catholic. How would you identify yourself?

3. I assume that you are a Muslim. Is this correct? [Yes; if No, the interview possibly ends, but sometimes a "No" can really mean "I'm not a good Muslim," so a few other questions can be asked to tease out a proper response]. Please tell me a bit about the type of Islam that you practice.

>(a) Do you attend Mosque for Friday prayers, Quran readings or other religious ceremonies?
>(b) Do you eat halal food? All the time?
>(c) Do you fast during Ramadan? Or on other occasions?
>(d) How often do you pray?
>(e) Do you dress in a way that you would consider Islamic on a regular basis?

4. Think of your religious life, both at home and in other places and now think about food in those contexts? What examples come to mind? *(Objective: to determine the first thing people think of when confronted with this question.)*

5. Let me explore this connection between food and your religious life. Food is part of our lives in many different ways, like cooking, eating, and celebrating. Most of us also use special food for special events. I am interested in all these things as they are related to your religious life and identity.

(a) When you eat food, on a daily basis, does your religion guide what you eat? *(If so, how?)*

(b) Are there certain foods that you don't eat at all *(if this has not been brought up yet)*, or that you avoid at certain times?

(c) Do you prepare food yourself? Are there ways of preparing food that matter with respect to your religion? Does it matter who prepares the food?

>*(Or if the interviewee does not prepare food:)* Does it matter to you, with respect to your religion, who prepares your food and/or how it is prepared?

(d) Please give some examples of foods that you prepare and eat for religious occasions. Do these foods have any special meaning for these religious events?

(e) Are there things that you eat that are difficult to prepare in Paris [Montréal] that were easy to prepare in your homeland? If yes, which ones? Why/How?

(f) Do you think that your Maghrébine food has gone through a transformation toward being more French [Québécois]? If yes, how? If no, why not?

(g) Do you find that the non-Muslim French [Québécois] expect you to change your food customs in France [Montréal]? If yes, to what level/extent?

(h) What place do you think Maghrébine or Muslim food holds in Paris [Montréal], in your opinion?

(i) Is it important for you to eat halal meat? If so, why? If not, why not?

(j) Do you find it difficult to find halal meat in Paris [Montréal]? Do you ever worry that the meat that you buy is not actually halal?

(k) Do you drink alcohol? Why or why not? Do you know people who drink alcohol?

(l) Do you think that the food you eat and the way you eat it has an affect on your interactions with non-Muslim French?

6. When you hear the word "integration" what do you think of? Do you see yourself as "integrated?" Do you care?

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