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The construction of identity amongst young people of north African origin in France : discourses and experiences

THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

AMONGST YOUNG PEOPLE OF NORTH AFRICAN ORIGIN IN

FRANCE: DISCOURSES AND EXPERIENCES

Suzanne Nadia Kiwan

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to study the construction of identity amongst young people of North African origin living in a socially deprived urban setting in contemporary France. This theme, and, more broadly, the question of North African immigration to France are examined on four levels. The increasingly politicised issue of immigration in the 1980s and 90s constitutes the first level of analysis or discourse. The intellectual debates of the same period constitute the second. One of the main ideas which has informed this thesis is the hypothesis of a disjunction between the preoccupations of these two levels of 'top-down' discourse and the experiences of the people concerned. This disjunction results from two factors: 1. a tendency to conceptualise young people of North African origin in terms of an individual versus community dichotomy and 2. a tendency to conceptualise them in terms of cultural difference or as simply part of a wider *'jeunesse des banlieues'* social phenomenon. Therefore, by empirically studying the construction of identity and subjectivity amongst young people of North African origin (the third layer of analysis), this thesis aims: 1. to adopt a 'bottom-up' approach in order to address the disjunction and 2. to re-articulate the cultural and social registers of analysis. A fourth level of discourse and analysis can be found in the associational milieu. This thesis shows that the notion of disjunction between the political and intellectual discourses and youth experiences is pertinent since the field research reveals that young people are constantly combining individual and community 'values' as well as constantly mixing their references to cultural *and* social origins in a subjective process of identity construction. However, on a collective level, this subjective capacity to articulate individual and community, cultural and social identity, remains one of the major challenges of the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol. The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.

SIGNED: *[signature]*　　　　　　　　DATE: 20/03/2003

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ABBREVIATIONS

PUF = Presses Universitaires de France

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INTRODUCTION

France has an established reputation as '*un pays d'immigration*' and has received numerous waves of immigrants from the nineteenth century onwards. The aim of this thesis is to focus on one of these immigrant groups or rather on the French-born descendants of North African immigrants.[1] For the arrival of migrant workers from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in the post-World War Two reconstruction period has led to the emergence a French-born population of North African origin. This population is, of course, heterogeneous, not least because it is made up of more than one generation, hence the commonly employed expression 'second' and 'third-generation' immigrants. However, these individuals are not immigrants; the vast majority of them are French. They have been educated in the French school system and may never have been to Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia. Very few master Arabic or Berber. Yet, despite being similar to their '*français de souche*' counterparts in many respects, these '*jeunes issus de l'immigration maghrébine*' are constantly portrayed as dangerously 'Other', thus leading to their exclusion through racial or cultural discrimination in many areas of French life, such as in employment and education. Indeed, it has been argued by Nacira Guénif Souilamas and Didier Lapeyronnie that the more similar to the 'host society' or the dominant mainstream the '*Maghrébin*' or the '*immigré*' becomes, the stronger is the imperative to exclude them.[2] It is this '*mise à distance*' or rejection of young people of North African origin, reflected in the public debates of the 1980s and 1990s which can be seen as informing the starting point of this thesis. As we shall see in Chapter 1, a number of factors such as the worsening economic climate, the realisation that North African immigration would no longer be characterised by the temporary male guest worker but by a permanent settlement of families, and the bitter, yet buried memories of the Algerian

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[1] The term 'French-born' is used here for convenience of expression since the author acknowledges that many young people of North African origin in France were brought to France at a young age, i.e. this thesis does not restrict itself to the study of those who were born in France and includes those who arrived as children.

[2] Nacira Guenif Souilamas, *Des "beurettes" aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains* (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 2000), pp. 33-40; Didier Lapeyronnie, 'Les Deux figures de l'immigré' in *Une société fragmentée ? Le multiculturalisme en débat*, ed. by Michel Wieviorka (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), pp. 251-266.

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War and the colonial past in general, led to a growing sense that the French 'nation' was somehow under threat. The result was that immigration, and North African immigrants and their descendants became the object of a polemical public debate.

This research aims to look at four levels of discourse relating to North African immigrants and their descendants. Firstly, the increasingly politicised issue of immigration in the France of the 1980s and 90s can be seen as just one level of discourse concerning North African immigrants and their descendants. A second level of discourse can be found in the intellectual debates of the same period, which often took on a rather ideological character. One of the central ideas that has informed the problematic of this thesis is the hypothesis of a disjunction between the main preoccupations of these two levels of discourse (the public and the intellectual, or 'top-down' discourses) and the experiences of the people concerned. Therefore, by studying the construction of identity amongst young people of North African origin, this thesis aims to concentrate on the register of experience as opposed to that of 'top-down' discourse.[3] That is, by adopting an empirical or a 'bottom-up' approach, the apparent disjunction between the various discourses about young people of North African origin and their experiences can be addressed. It is of course possible to regard the views expressed by the young people themselves as another (third) layer of 'discourse' although this level is generally not accorded the same degree of legitimacy as the 'top-down' discourses. A fourth level of discourse on young people of North African origin, which can be found in the associational milieu will also be addressed.

Thus Chapter 1 will focus on the politicisation of immigration as a process which was essentially reflected in the debates about the reform of the *Code de la nationalité*. These debates signalled a growing '*esprit de fermeture*' towards the descendants of Algerians in particular and North Africans in general.[4] One of the aims of this thesis is to ask whether such considerations about nationality legislation have corresponded to the

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[3] Nacira Guénif Souilamas (2000) uses the term "les registres de l'expérience".
[4] Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 2002) points out that the reforms to the Nationality Code were primarily directed against Algerians and their descendants. See Chapter 6.

concerns of the youth of North African origin. On one level, they have, since changes to the Nationality Code have had direct effects on their rights to naturalisation etc. However, on another level, it is possible to argue that the ideas or suspicions which informed the increasingly restrictive nature of the Code, - i.e. that these individuals were somehow suspect and 'un-integrable' into French society - were ill-informed because they focused on the notion of implacable cultural difference, rather than on their being culturally 'integrated' but socially excluded, or in danger of becoming so. Central to the debate were the changing conceptions of the French 'nation', so Chapter 1 will also include an analysis of the idea of nation and its historical relationship with the concepts of State and citizenship.

Chapter 2 focuses on the second level of discourse relating to immigration or young people of immigrant origin: the intellectual debate. This chapter can also be seen as a literature review of the main aspects of research on immigration to France. It reveals how one of the limitations of recent research concerning populations of 'immigrant-origin', is the tendency either to conceptualise these individuals in terms of their 'cultural difference'- hence the importance of a debate on the place of cultural difference in the Republic - or in terms which make little or no reference to their cultural 'specificities', but which portray them as part of a wider social phenomenon, referred to as '*la jeunesse des banlieues*'. So another main aim of the thesis has been to enquire into whether this tendency to focus on either a cultural or socio-economic register of analysis rather than both, translates into a disjunction between certain aspects of recent academic research and the experiences of the young people concerned.

Once the hypothesis of disjunction between the public and intellectual debates and the experiences of young people of North African and *banlieue* origin was developed, the objectives of the present thesis were set out in an attempt to: 1. establish a link between the often ideologically-motivated political and intellectual debates of the 80s and 90s (characterised for example by the dichotomies of universalism versus multiculturalism/*communautarisme*) and the actual experiences of young people of North African origin by adopting a 'bottom-up' approach; 2. to re-articulate the cultural and

social registers of analysis through an examination of both the cultural and socio-economic specificities of young people of North African origin living in a 'banlieue stigmatisée' setting. For example, how do the public debates about immigration relate to the experiences of young people of North African and banlieue origin? How do the intellectual debates about cultural difference, which in France, became entangled in an ideological battle between 'les républicanistes and 'les démocrates' (often erroneously labelled 'les communautaristes'), relate to young people of North African origin?[5] Do these discussions about the place of cultural difference in the Republic correspond to their problematic? If so, what does the notion of culture or cultural difference represent for French-born individuals of North African origin? That is, how do they perceive themselves in terms of their 'origins' in both the private and public sphere? How do they present their relationships to their parents' country of origin, to language, marriage practices and Islam? Do they conceive of their origins in terms of culture or with greater reference to socio-economic status, or in terms of both? What are the nature of their revendications or demands? Are these articulated in individual, in communautaire terms or in jeunesse des banlieues terms? Are these three registers articulated simultaneously or separately? Do the young people of North African origin collectively express any revendications or demands for recognition at all?

These questions and objectives have been informed by a sociology of the Subject, which is introduced in Chapter 3. The Subject is defined by Alain Touraine as follows: "Le sujet est individu et il est communauté; il n'est ni être naturel, ni être de raison. Il échappe à la communauté par la raison instrumentale et au marché par l'identité collective autant que personnelle."[6] This rejection of the individual versus community dichotomy in Touraine's elaboration of the Subject is complemented by another significant idea: that of the rejection and increasing irrelevance of social and cultural roles. Thus François Dubet's work on the sociology of experience can be seen as complementary to an approach which focuses on the emergence of the Subject. Indeed,

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[5] See Michel Wieviorka, Jocelyne Ohana, eds, La Différence culturelle: une reformulation des débats (Paris: Balland, 2001), Introduction, pp. 7-14.
[6] Alain Touraine, 'La Formation du sujet' in Penser le Sujet : autour d'Alain Touraine ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris: Fayard, 1995), pp. 21-45 (p. 32).

Dubet defines the notion of social experience as "...étant le moins maladroite pour désigner la nature de l'objet rencontré dans quelques études empiriques où les conduites sociales n'apparaissent pas réductibles à de pures applications de codes intériorisées ou à des enchaînements de choix stratégiques...".[7] Whilst Touraine and Dubet's ideas can be seen as informing the empirical and global objectives of the thesis, Michel Wieviorka's *'triangle de l'ethnicité'* can be seen as providing a translation of Touraine's rejection of an individual versus community dichotomy (universalism versus multiculturalism) into an analytical tool. That is, by conceptualising identity in terms of circulation around three poles (individual, community and subjective identity), as opposed to conceptualising it in terms of an oscillation between individual (Republican) and community (*communautaire*) identity or values, we are able to avoid the ideological impasses of the public and intellectual debates of the 1980s and 90s. Two additional analytical tools which are used in conjunction with the triangle of ethnicity or identity are Didier Lapeyronnie's notion of *'construction de soi'* and Roger Bastide's *'sociologie du bricolage'* (*identitaire*) because they facilitate an approach which regards individuals of minority and in this case, North African origin, as *subjects* who are capable of constructing their own sense of identity with reference to multiple registers. The emergence of a sociology of the Subject should be seen in the context of Touraine's analysis of the 'decomposition of modernity', as well as in terms of what Wieviorka refers to as the decline of 'classical' Sociology, and therefore Chapter 3 will also focus on the idea of modernity, its decline and the effect this has had on sociological enquiry.[8]

The semi-structured qualitative interview provided an appropriate way in which to address the notion of interviewee subjectivity and experience. By using individual interviews, group interviews and to a lesser extent participant observation, it was possible to gain an insight into the differences between typical responses in a one-to-one situation and those given in a group situation, where variables such as peer pressure and 'image' would seem to have affected the ways in which the young people presented themselves and their experiences.

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[7] François Dubet, *Sociologie de l'expérience* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), p. 91.

[8] The notion of the decline of classical sociology is dealt with in Michel Wieviorka, 'Sociologie postclassique ou déclin de la sociologie?', *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, 108 (2000), 5-35.

The fieldwork was carried out in Aubervilliers, Seine-Saint-Denis. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of the thesis deal with the discussion of fieldwork data and observations, focusing on elements of individual, collective and subjective identities respectively. Each chapter therefore reflects a different 'pole' of the *'espace identitaire'* as defined by Wieviorka's 'triangle of ethnicity'. Whilst Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the issues which can be governed by individual values and those which can be governed by the community register (in both cultural and socio-economic terms), Chapter 6 presents holistic portraits of interviewees who may otherwise feature partially in Chapters 4 and 5. Chapters 4 and 5 also show that in relation to some issues and in some contexts, interviewees construct their experience in individual terms yet in other respects and other contexts, they subscribe to more community-oriented values.

The first indication that there is a disjunction between the 'top-down' discourses and experience is that the young men and women of North African origin who accepted to participate in the fieldwork reveal that they are constantly mixing their references to their cultural (North African) origins and their social (*banlieusard*) origins. These observations suggest that it is therefore inaccurate to describe French-born youth of North African origin in terms of their cultural specificities *or* their socio-economic specificities. Instead, a more accurate approach integrates both their cultural difference or rather their sentiment that they are part of a culturally or religiously-defined 'community' as well as being part of a socio-economic community, that is the *banlieue*. They also 'hop' around from one 'pole' of the *espace identitaire* to another (the three poles are individual, community and subjective identity), which suggests that the individualism versus community dichotomy is inaccurate. Which pole of identity dominates depends, as we shall see, on the particular context and the interlocutor concerned. The main implication of the observation that the interviewees are capable of combining various registers of identity as well as creating new ones through a process of *bricolage identitaire*, is that it is possible to describe young people of North African origin in the *banlieue* context as subjects. It could be argued that the capacity of certain interviewees to resist social exclusion and construct future plans in the face of racial or cultural discrimination

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demonstrates that they are *actors* who demand cultural and social recognition as full members of French society.

The second indication that there is a disjunction between 'top-down' discourses and the experiences of young people of North African origin concerns a more collective level of action, that is, in the public space. In order to study the relationship between North-African origin youth and the public sphere, one of the objectives of the fieldwork has been to focus on associations in Aubervilliers. Indeed, Chapter 7 shows how on one level, municipal discourse about associations as 'espaces de démocratie' is, to a certain extent, irrelevant to the interviewees' experiences of associations since as we shall see, their relationship to associations is paradoxically characterised by a simultaneous 'passive observation' and 'active complicity' in a process of State-driven instrumentalisation and professionalisation of associations. Furthermore, Chapter 7 reveals how many of the associational activities in Aubervilliers can be seen to be out of step with the concerns of the interviewees, whilst other activities mirror youth expectations of associations as primarily socio-educational 'service providers'. This leads us to develop the following idea: the generalised conception of associations as 'social/educational' service providers reflects a lack of collective consciousness amongst young people of North African origin, or at least a lack of collective consciousness which simultaneously articulates a socio-economic *and* cultural specificity. Although this dual specificity may be articulated on an individual level, it is not expressed on a collective level or in the public space. Of course, the likelihood of a collective expression of demands is reduced amongst the interviewees of high school age but this problematic '*passage de l'individu à la collectivité*' is prevalent amongst young adults as well. One of the main consequences is that participation in 'the political' (in the traditional sense of the word – i.e. party political) remains relatively marginal in their various trajectories.

However, 'the political', in the sense of public debate, can be regarded as a phenomenon that will have had an effect on the climate in which young people of North African origin in France are growing up and living. This debate and the politicisation of immigration will be addressed in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 1

Nation, Nationality and Immigration: the Public Debates of the 1980s and 1990s

Introduction

The aim of the present chapter is to analyse and examine the emergence of immigration as the subject of a public debate, which took place in France from the 1980s onwards. In addition to a discussion of the conceptual framework which formed the parameters of the public debate, this chapter aims to show not only how the question of immigration became politicised but also to reveal *why* this was the case. In other words, particular attention will be paid to the question of how and why what Michel Wieviorka calls the *"face d'ombre"* of national sentiment or nationalism developed in the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s, in the guise of the *Front National* and a general radicalisation of anti-immigrant discourse in the wider sense.[1] This chapter will be divided into two parts. Part I will take the form of a discussion of the following concepts: nation, nationalism, nationality, the State and citizenship. After a general overview of the different ways in which these concepts can be defined, their historical and political development will then be evaluated more specifically within the post-revolutionary French context.[2] Tracing the historical development of the significance of the above concepts will thus facilitate a more comprehensive analysis of the debate surrounding immigration which, emerging in the early 1980s, came primarily to centre around the reform of the Nationality Code or the *Code de la nationalité*. Part II will therefore focus on the debate which took place in the 1980s and 1990s and its various policy outcomes. This debate will be placed in the

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[1] Michel Wieviorka, *La Démocratie à l'épreuve : nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris : La Découverte, 1993) p. 69.

[2] My discussion of the nation, nationalism, nationality, the State, citizenship and immigration will essentially be based on the ideas which emerged in the French debate. It is for this reason that the authors who will be discussed in this chapter are essentially those who featured in the French debate or those who were cited by its French protagonists. However, at some points, and in order to illuminate the discussion further, I have referred to authors who are not traditionally cited in the French debates. These authors include for example Rogers Brubaker, Rainer Bauböck, Alec Hargreaves and Maxim Silverman, who are more present in Anglophone publications.

context of the emergence of the far Right, and will take into account the post-industrial or macro-social transformations which, having gradually eroded many of the certainties associated with developed 'societies' in the industrial age, had an impact on the manner in which immigration in France became politicised.

This chapter thus focuses on one of the possible registers of analysis of the central theme of the thesis, namely, the construction of identity amongst young people of North African origin, residing in a *'banlieue disqualifiée'* setting, to borrow a term employed by Nacira Guénif Souilamas.[3] It provides the political backdrop to the issues which will be discussed later on. If this political *mise en scène* can be seen as one of the possible registers of analysis surrounding our central 'object' of study, it should be pointed out that it is not the only one. Indeed, this thesis focuses on three other levels of analysis. Therefore Chapter 2 will focus on the intellectual debate which has taken place with regard to immigration, paying particular attention once again, to the last two decades. There is of course some degree of overlap between the political and intellectual debate since some eminent and politically committed intellectuals have taken part in the 'public' or political debate (i.e. 'outside' of academia). Nevertheless, as will be illustrated in Chapter 2, the intellectual debate does depart from the political discussions in a number of ways. The third register of analysis forms the central element of this thesis since, as its title suggests, it is the construction of identities which is the privileged dimension. As a result, it is the discourses generated by the people of immigrant origin themselves which form the third level of analysis. This part of the thesis has in fact been divided into two sub-sections, reflecting the dual aims of the fieldwork study. The first 'sub-section' concentrates on the discourses of the young people of North African origin with regard to the construction and presentation of their identity or experience and the second 'sub-section' concentrates less on their *individual* trajectories and more on their *collective* trajectories within the local associative landscape. In addition to focusing on the experiences of the young people with regard to associations, the discourses generated by

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[3] Nacira Guénif Souilamas, *Des "beurettes" aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains* (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 2000), p. 350.

the associations and the local authorities are also taken into account. The associational context can therefore be seen as a fourth layer of discourse and hence, analysis.

PART I: NATIONS AND NATIONALISMS

1.1 The 'Nation': the trials and tribulations of definition

Many authors have argued that it is not only impossible but also undesirable to objectively define what constitutes a 'nation'. Eric J. Hobsbawm claims that the various attempts to do so have all proved unsatisfactory because they have focused too much on objective criteria such as language, ethnicity, common territory, history and cultural traits. Not only does he claim that factors such as language and ethnicity are "fuzzy, shifting and ambiguous" and therefore unhelpful, he also argues that "...since only some members of the large class of entities which fit such definitions can at any time be described as 'nations', exceptions can always be found."[4] He adds that an attempt to define the nation in subjective terms is also problematic since concentrating on how "human beings define and redefine themselves as members of groups..." reduces the notion of choice of one's group to being solely focused on the 'nation' or 'nationality'.[5] Michel Wieviorka's view echoes that of Hobsbawm's : "Il est maladroit, et stérile intellectuellement de chercher à proposer une définition objective de la nation."[6] Instead Wieviorka suggests that a sociology of action should focus on *nationalism*, that is, the phenomenon which galvanises individuals into claiming to act on behalf of a 'nation', rather than an objective definition of the nation.

However, various authors still endeavour to apply some sort of definition to the term 'nation', some preferring to focus on the semantic origins of the word as a starting point, whilst others focus on the notion of a loose, *working* definition as opposed to an objective definition. This working definition allows researchers to then proceed to the question of the political dimension of the concept of 'nation'. Danièle Lochak points out

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[4] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.5-6.
[5] Ibid., p. 8.
[6] Michel Wieviorka (1993), pp. 27-28.

that the word nation comes from the Latin *'natio'*, meaning a group of people sharing the same birth place.[7] Gérard Noiriel also briefly highlights the Latin origin of the word nation which according to him "désigne une communauté dont les membres ont une même origine."[8] Even Hobsbawm who presents the problematic nature of defining the nation, either objectively or subjectively, does nevertheless seem to feel it necessary to give some attention to the origins of the term, highlighting that in medieval French, 'nation' referred to "birth and descent group".[9] Hobsbawm can also be seen as one of those researchers, who despite his refusal to objectively define the concept of 'nation', does attempt to provide some sort of *working* definition. He thus concedes the following starting point: "Nations exist not only as functions of a particular kind of territorial state or the aspiration to establish one [...] but also in the context of a particular stage of technological and economic development."[10] Similarly, Noiriel offers a socio-historical definition of the nation, once again as a *starting point*: "...on peut partir de l'hypothèse qu'une nation est un groupement d'individus qui revendique (ou qui possède) le pouvoir souverain (un État indépendant)."[11]

Whatever stance one takes about the utility or indeed, the futility of defining the 'nation', it soon becomes clear that there is much uncertainty surrounding the term. Indeed, some authors who come from a social science background (as opposed to a legal/diplomatic history approach) lament the lack of a coherent sociological theory of the nation.[12] For example, sociologist Pierre Birnbaum highlights the lack of coherent theorisation of the nation amongst the 'founding fathers' of the discipline such as Max Weber and Émile Durkheim. He claims that this lack of a grounded theory of nations or nationalism is all the more surprising given the political context in which these late

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[7] Danièle Lochak, 'Étrangers et citoyens au regard du droit', in *La Citoyenneté et les changements de structures sociale et nationale de la population française*, ed. by Catherine Wihtol de Wenden (Paris: Edilig: Fondation Diderot – La Nouvelle Encyclopédie, 1988a), pp.73-85 (p. 77).

[8] Gérard Noiriel, *État, nation et immigration : vers une histoire du pouvoir* (Paris: Belin, 2001), p.88.

[9] Hobsbawm (1990), p. 16. It should be pointed out that Hobsbawm then proceeds to highlight the distinction between the "proper and original" meaning of 'nation' and its "modern meaning," p. 17.

[10] Hobsbawm (1990), p. 10.

[11] Noiriel (2001), p. 113.

[12] Noiriel (2001) makes this point about the differences in approach of the social sciences such as sociology or anthropology and legal studies or diplomatic history studies which tend to produce more objective definitions of the nation.

nineteenth/early twentieth century thinkers were working. Birnbaum shows that although Durkheim's work did deal with the notion of *la patrie* as "une 'communauté de souvenirs historiques'" and Weber did write about the nation in terms of a "'communauté de sentiment'" and " 'descendance commune'" with the State at the centre of his analysis, it is not possible to regard this as a clearly outlined sociological theory of the nation.[13] For although Weber wrote about the nation as being part of the " 'sphère des valeurs'" and in terms of "sentiment d'appartenance", he added that not all individuals will automatically share this same sense of belonging. Birnbaum thus concludes: "...pas plus que Durkheim, Marx ou Otto Bauer, Weber ne nous donne une grille d'analyse cohérente pour rendre compte du fait nationaliste en lui-même... "[14] It is this notion of incoherence and contradiction which is the focus of Noiriel's discussion of the lacunae left by the founding fathers of Sociology with regards to theorising the national phenomenon. Noiriel claims that these early sociologists' main preoccupations lay with the analysis of class and that their reticence with regards to theorising the nation stemmed from their 'universalist aspirations'.[15] So if it can generally be agreed that an objective definition of the 'nation' is neither entirely possible nor desirable, then perhaps it is preferable as various authors implicitly or explicitly suggest (Anthony D. Smith, Wieviorka, Hobsbawm), to focus on *nationalism* or nationhood instead.[16] Similarly, Alain Renaut suggests focusing our attention on the *"logiques"* of the nation. It is therefore to this less static phenomenon that we turn in the next section.[17]

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[13] Pierre Birnbaum, ed., *Sociologie des nationalismes* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1997) Birnbaum, p. 4 cites Émile Durkheim, *La science sociale et l'action*, choix de textes présentés par Jean-Claude Filloux (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1970), p. 300. Birnbaum, p.10 cites Max Weber in *From Max Weber* ed. by in H.H. Gerth and W. Mills, (New York: Galaxy Book, 1958), pp.171-173.

[14] Ibid., p. 16.

[15] Noiriel (2001), pp. 104-105.

[16] See Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge, Oxford, Polity Press, 1995), Wieviorka (1993) and Hobsbawm (1990).

[17] Alain Renaut, 'Logiques de la nation', in *Théories du nationalisme*, ed. by Gil Delannoi et Pierre-André Taguieff, (Paris: Kimé, 1991), pp.29-46, (p.32).

1.2 Nationhood and Nationalisms

(i) The Limitations of the French-German Opposition

Michel Wieviorka argues that it is possible to theorise nationalism in three ways or according to three models. Each of these models is bi-polar. The first mode of theorising nationalism is the classic opposition which is often made between nationalism '*à la française*' and nationalism '*à l'allemande*'. The former conception supposedly represents a contractual or '*volontariste*' undertsanding of nationhood, as reflected in Ernest Renan's famous lecture, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, delivered at the Sorbonne in 1882, where it was claimed that a nation was "un plebiscite de tous les jours".[18] The German 'model' is often said to be based more on an ethnic and organic (essentialist) conceptualisation of nationhood, one which is based on Herder's *Volk* and Fichte's pan-Germanist nation.[19] However, Wieviorka, like other researchers, argues that although this dichotomy is useful, the binary opposition should not be taken to the extreme since: "Comme le montre Alain Renaut, construire ainsi une dichotomie entre ces penseurs français et allemands radicalise de manière excessive leur argumentation, car il y a du Renan chez Herder ou Fichte, et vice versa."[20] Indeed, Alain Renaut claims that:

> ...il serait injuste de renvoyer purement et simplement les deux idées de nations, respectivement, à la tradition française et à la tradition allemande. [...] Mais Barrès, Maurras sont-ils allemands [...]? Symétriquement, faut-il vraiment tenir pour "française" l'idée républicaine de la nation selon laquelle c'est en tant que citoyen que l'individu adhère au groupe ? Mais, depuis Kant, l'Allemagne n'a-t-elle pas apporté elle aussi au républicanisme une contribution dont la social-démocratie d'un Bernstein fera fructifier l'héritage, au point de parvenir à s'intégrer les valeurs des droits de l'homme bien avant que le socialisme français y eût songé ?[21]

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[18] Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* in *Œuvres complètes, Tome 1* (Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1947), p. 904.

[19] Louis Dumont, *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1986). See Chapter 4, 'A National Variant, I – German Identity: Herder's *Volk* and Fichte's *Nation*', pp. 113-132.

[20] Wieviorka (1993), p. 30 cites Alain Renaut, 'Logiques de la nation', in *Théories du nationalisme*, (Paris : Kimé, 1992), pp. 29-46 and Alain Renaut's presentation of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Discours à la nation allemande* (Paris : Imprimerie nationale, 1992), pp.7-48.

[21] Alain Renaut in Gil Delannoi et Pierre-André Taguieff (1991), p. 36.

Indeed, Louis Dumont reveals the overlapping of the French and German so-called 'models' of nationhood or nationalism. For example, he demonstrates, in his analysis of Herder's *"Another Philosophy of History"* (published in 1774 and which can be seen as his response to Voltaire) that here lay the foundations of an essentially "holistic" approach to society or culture which focuses on the "right of cultures or 'peoples' in contrast to the Rights of Man."[22] However, Dumont adds that we should not automatically regard Herder's analysis as based exclusively on an holistic outlook:

> Herder, on the one hand, discards [...] individualism in favour of holism on the level of the elements, that is, when he considers individual human beings; but on the other hand he uses the individualistic principle by transferring it to the level of compounds, that is, when he considers collective entities before him were unacknowledged or subordinated[23]

And from the original French edition of Dumont's book: "Herder ne fait pas donc que rejeter la culture universaliste – principalement française - , il en accepte en même temps un trait majeur pour affirmer en face d'elle la culture germanique, et toutes les autres cultures qui ont fleuri dans l'histoire."[24] So although Dumont conceded that Herder did lay the foundations for what later became known as the "ethnic theory" of nationhood as against the "elective (French) theory", he argues that both approaches "apply albeit on different levels, the same modern principle of equalitarian individualism."[25]

Dumont then turns his attention to the German thinker Fichte and in particular, his *Addresses to the German Nation* lecture, delivered in Berlin, a city which at the time was occupied by Napoleon's troops, following the Prussian defeat at Jena.[26] This context may have had something to do with Fichte's own extolling of the virtues of the German 'character', which is why he has often been regarded as "un pré-curseur du pangermanisme ou de la théorie qui lie l'État à la volonté de puissance collective du

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[22] Dumont (1986), p. 117 cites J. G. Herder, *Une autre philosophie de l'histoire*. Translated and introduced by Max Rouché (Paris, 1964).

[23] Dumont (1986), pp. 117-118.

[24] Louis Dumont, *Essais sur l'individualisme: une perspective anthropologique sur l'idéologie moderne* (Paris: Seuil, 1983), p. 119.

[25] Dumont (1986), p. 118.

[26] Dumont (1986) is here referring to a text contained in J. G. Fichte's *Sämmtliche Werke, 1845-46* edited by J. H. Fichte, Berlin.

peuple."[27] However, like Herder, Dumont shows Fichte's thinking to be a mixture of universalism and a more hierarchical approach: "En général, s'il est vrai que Fichte reprend à son compte à cette époque les stéréotypes courants de l'excellence du caractère allemand, de la langue allemande, etc., c'est avant tout pour affirmer une hiérarchie des peuples au nom des valeurs universalistes elles-mêmes."[28] Dumont then compares the similarity between the German idea prevalent at the time that they were 'superior' because they were German and the French idea that they were 'superior' because they had a universalist and therefore superior culture. With regard to the famous French-German theoretical opposition, Dumont thus concludes as follows: "Tous deux expriment une aporie de la nation qui est à la fois collection d'individus et individu collectif, tous deux traduisent dans les faits la difficulté qu'a l'idéologie moderne à donner une image suffisante de la vie sociale (intra- et inter sociale)."[29]

Alain Renaut argues that Fichte's *Discours à la nation allemande* can be seen as proposing a way of overcoming the French-German ('nation révolutionnaire' versus 'nation romantique'/'nation génie') opposition through the introduction of a *third* mode of conceptualising the nation.[30] He thus concludes that:

> Peut-être n'est-il pas impossible en fait de voir s'ébaucher chez Fichte une troisième idée de la nation, corrigeant les insuffisances symétriques des deux précédents, ouvrant la communauté nationale à un avenir sans la fermer totalement à son passé et à sa culture. Là s'esquisse, me semble-t-il, une conception de la nation obéissant à une autre logique que celles du contrat et du génie, - une conception pour laquelle la nationalité est en effet pensée en termes, non pas d'adhésion pure et simple, ni d'appartenance pure et simple, mais *d'éducabilité*.[31]

Gérard Noiriel also criticises what he calls "un comparatisme superficiel" with regards to the French and German models of nationhood since he argues that from 1870 onwards, when war broke out between France and Prussia, the thinkers of these countries

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[27] Dumont (1983), p. 122.
[28] Ibid., p. 124.
[29] Ibid., pp.130-131.
[30] Renaut in Delannoi et Taguieff (1991), introduces these 'opposed' terms on p. 33 and p. 35
[31] Renaut in Delannoi et Taguieff (1991), pp. 44-45.

became the 'spokesmen' and intellectual defenders of their respective countries. As a result, what may appear to later observers as clear oppositions between the French and German models of nationhood should really be seen within a political and intellectual climate of competition and rivalry between the two countries. In particular, Noiriel focuses on the quarrel between French historians, Renan and Fustel de Coulanges and German historians, Mommsen and Strauss. He writes: "Renan est devenu le porte-parole des intérêts de l'État national français. Si l'on oublie ce point, on ne peut pas comprendre les contradictions de son discours sur la nation..."[32] These contradictions, Noiriel argues, become apparent if we examine the famous *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation ?* lecture more closely. One the one hand, Renan seems to extol the notion of voluntarism and national belonging yet Noiriel points out that he used the old Spartan slogan in his speech: "Nous sommes ce que vous fûtes; nous serons ce que vous êtes." In light of this observation, Noiriel thus concludes:

> ...désormais, l'identité nationale est fondée sur une identification entre le monde des morts (les Français du passé) et le monde des vivants (les Français du présent). Dans ces conditions, le "plébiscite de tous les jours" que défend Renan ne concerne que ceux qui ont un passé commun, c'est-à-dire ceux qui ont les mêmes "racines".[33]

Maxim Silverman also signals the ambiguity in Renan's lecture since on the one hand he wrote of the need to separate 'nation' and 'race' ("autant le principe des nations est juste et légitime, autant celui du droit primordial des races est étroit et plein de danger pour le véritable progrès"[34]), yet on the other, the terms and images which are employed, such as the 'fatherland' and the "principe spirituel des nations" would seem to be closer to a more German romanticism reading of nationhood.[35]

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[32] Noiriel (2001), p. 95. Noiriel argues that from 1870 onwards, these historians should be seen as becoming the defenders of their States in a political context of conflict and conquest, since as he puts it: "Comment, dans ces conditions, les universitaires auraient-ils pu éviter de devenir les porte-parole des intérêts de l'État qui leur assurait leurs revenues?", p. 96.

[33] Noiriel (2001), p.95.

[34] Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* in *Oeuvres Complètes, Tome 1*, 1947, p. 895.

[35] See Maxim Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism and Citizenship in Modern France* (London: Routledge, 1992).

(ii) Political or Cultural Nationhood?

Wieviorka argues that a second way in which nationalism can be theorised is to distinguish between nationalism which is essentially political in nature and nationalism which is more cultural and dependent on certain historical representations or narratives. According to Wieviorka, a political understanding of nationalism would focus more on the building of a State and State infrastructure, with little attention given to the notion of common language(s) and culture(s). A more cultural nationalism would however be less concerned with building a centralised authority or State, and therefore would be more 'diasporic' in nature. Wieviorka cites an Occitan activist who once claimed "Maudit soit l'État, il tuera la nation", thus illustrating a nationalism which is more cultural in outlook.[36]

(iii) Nationalism: A Positive or Negative Relationship with Modernity?

Wieviorka argues that if we analyse nationalism as a bi-polar phenomenon, it is perhaps best to do so in terms of examining whether the nationalist phenomenon being studied can be seen as having a positive relationship with modernity or whether it is a negative reaction in the wake of modernity and progress. Wieviorka thus shows that some authors associate the emergence of nationalism with modernisation and progressive forces which aimed to integrate the cultural and the economic sphere within a national territorial space. Others see in the development of nationalism, a dynamic which rejected the development of modernity. Weiviorka cites Hobsbawm in particular who argues that from 1870 onwards, nationalism began to reveal its second more reactionary dimension, leading to xenophobic and anti-Semitic movements.[37]

Whichever one of the above bi-polar theories of nationhood one chooses to focus on, it soon becomes clear that the notion of modernity does seem to be central to the question. Indeed, the nature of the relationship between nationalism and modernity is one which seems to be at the heart of academic enquiry into the phenomenon. Pierre

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[36] Wieviorka (1993), p.31 cites an Occitan activist who took part in empirical research carried out by Alain Touraine, François Dubet, Zsuzsa Hegedus and Michel Wieviorka, leading to the subsequent publication, *Le Pays contre l'État*, (Paris: Seuil, 1981).

[37] On this point, see Wieviorka (1993), pp.31-34.

Birnbaum thus describes the field of enquiry as being divided into two main camps. The first camp he describes as the 'primordialists' who argue that the concept of nation has an essential quality which pre-dates industrialisation and the subsequent modernisation of society. For the primordialists "...la nation [...] conserve une essence identique à travers le temps, et les nationalistes [...] font resurgir des cultures, des identités, des héritages au nom desquels ils justifient leurs mobilisations présentes."[38] Birnbaum then cites Edward Shils, Clifford Geertz and Richard Bendix as researchers who take the primordial approach, Shils arguing that nationalism can be traced back to the Middle Ages and even classical times.[39] This approach is contrasted with the so-called 'modernist' camp whose proponents assert that "...la nation ainsi que le nationalisme s'épanouissent, au contraire, uniquement à l'âge moderne, ils sont l'un comme l'autre dépourvus de tout lien avec un quelconque passé 'ethnique'."[40] Birnbaum cites Ernest Gellner as a 'modernist' since he argues that the rise of nationalism coincides with the new necessities of the industrial age, such as the need to unify vast territorial and cultural spaces through an ever-extending State in order to deal with the economic demands of the industrial revolution. Benedict Anderson is also cited, since it is his famous conceptualisation of the nation as an "imagined community" which, according to Birnbaum, reveals Anderson's purely modernist approach, whereby the nation is nothing but a grand narrative.[41]

How does the above relate to the French context? How can we trace the historical development of French nationhood and more specifically the link between the French

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[38] Birnbaum (1997), p. 18.

[39] Birnbaum (1997), p. 19 cites Edward Shils, 'Primordial, personal, sacred and civic ties', *British Journal of Sociology* 7 (1957); Clifford Geertz (ed.) *Old Societies and New States* (New York: 1963); Richard Bendix, *Nation-building and Citizenship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

[40] Ibid., p. 18.

[41] Ibid., p. 27. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition, (London: Verso, 1991). Anthony D. Smith refuses the quarrel between the so-called 'primordialist' and 'modernist' camps and instead argues that both approaches are limited because the primordialist or 'perennialist' approach does not draw on an historical framework which is wide enough and has "little explanatory power" and the modernist approach simply lacks historical depth and specificity. Instead Smith opts for an alternative approach in his attempt to explain the re-emergence of nationalisms and ethnic conflict in the late twentieth century. He argues that a longer time frame is necessary in addition to "the recovery of the ethnic substraction..." See Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 6.

'nation', the State and citizenship? The next section will focus more closely on the French case.

1.3 Nationhood, State and Citizenship in France

Nationhood

In France, the Revolution of 1789 is widely regarded as the period during which the modern sense of nationhood emerged. Silverman states: "Armed with the Enlightenment concepts of reason, will and individualism, the Revolution established the nation as a voluntary association or contract between free individuals."[42] Likewise, Hobsbawm claims that the essentially political conception of nationhood emerged as a result of the American and French Revolutions: "The primary meaning of 'nation' [...] was political. It equated 'the people' and the state in the manner of the American and French Revolutions."[43] Noiriel also cites the American and French Revolutions as a defining moment in history because of the establishing of links between nation and citizenship which developed as a result. In the following statement he also reveals some of the main characteristics of what has subsequently become known as the Republican conception of nationhood or the Republican tradition:

> En France, ce sont les nécessités de la lutte contre la monarchie et l'aristocratie qui sont à l'origine de la conception républicaine de la nation, développée par la philosophie des Lumières (Rousseau), puis par les militants révolutionnaires. Dans cette perspective, c'est le "peuple souverain" et non le roi qui incarne la nation. [...] Enfin, la nation "une et indivisible", c'est la volonté collective d'exister comme peuple souverain.[44]

Thus the transfer of sovereignty from the monarchy to the 'people', who from then on form an 'indivisible' and unified nation, is key if we are to understand the Republican conception of citizenship as the relationship between the individual and the State, the nation "une et indivisible" reflecting the homogenising dynamic of the Republican nation-building project.

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[42] Silverman (1992), p. 19.
[43] Hobsbawm (1990), p. 18.
[44] Noiriel (2001), pp. 88-89.

With regards to the French context, it is possible to use one of Wieviorka's "bi-polar" tools of analysis, namely, whether nationalism can be conceptualised in terms of its *face de lumière* or instead in terms of its *face d'ombre*. Indeed, some authors claim that the French sense of nationhood or nationalism should be seen as having a symbiotic relationship with modernity. Others, however, would argue that the national phenomenon in France has on the contrary taken the form of successive reactionary backlashes against the progressive trajectory of modernity.

The Nation as a Progressive Phenomenon

Sociologist Dominique Schnapper can be seen as a researcher who argues that the emergence of the nation in France should be regarded as a progressive force since it signalled the 'triumph' of the values of the Enlightenment: reason and universalism. Schnapper claims that the nation should be understood as the idea which allowed the development of what she refers to as *le lien social*. Writing at a time when the French 'nation' was seen by many to be facing a number of divisive threats, Schnapper writes: "Nous vivons aujourd'hui l'affaiblissement du civisme et des liens politiques. Rien ne nous assure que la nation démocratique moderne aura à l'avenir la capacité d'assurer le lien social, comme elle le fit dans le passé."[45] Schnapper's enthusiatic approach to what she calls the "modern democratic" nation becomes clear since she associates the concept with the principle of equality. In illustration of this point, she quotes Raymond Aron as follows:

> "la nation a pour principe et pour finalité la participation de tous les gouvernés à l'Etat. C'est pour participer à l'Etat que les minorités réclament que leur langue soit reconnue (...) Renier la nation moderne, c'est rejeter le transfert à la politique de la revendication éternelle d'égalité. "[46]

The Revolution marks a progressive break with the *Ancien Régime* because from then on, political legitimacy was to be invested in the will of the people: "A l'âge des nations, le

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[45] Dominique Schnapper, *La Communauté des citoyens : sur l'idée moderne de nation* (Paris : Gallimard, 1994), p.11.
[46] Schnapper (1994), p. 13 cites Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations* (Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1962), p. 299.

politique remplace le principe religieux ou dynastique pour unir les hommes."[47] It is this sense of unity which is perhaps one of the reasons why Schnapper's claims that the modern nation should be seen as a "community of citizens", this community being the incarnation of "l'ambition universelle de la transcendance par le politique".[48] Schnapper opposes her understanding of the French 'nation' to the the notion of *ethnie*:

> Elles [les nations politiques modernes] doivent être distinguées des ethnies, quel que soit le nom que les contemporains et les historiens d'aujourd'hui donnent aux ethnies: nations d'avant la Révolution; nationalités du XIXe siècle [...] l'ethnie a deux caractéristiques : c'est un groupe d'appartenance ; il n'a pas nécessairement une expression politique.[49]

She therefore argues that it is erroneous to claim that there are two concepts of nation, the political/civic nation or the ethnic *Volk* nation because she claims that the idea of an 'ethnic nation' is itself a contradiction in terms: "C'est l'effort d'arrachement aux identités et aux appartenances vécues comme naturelles par l'abstraction de la citoyenneté qui caractérise en propre le projet national. *Il existe une seule idée de la nation*." (Italicised by Schnapper).[50]

Finally, Schnapper argues that the nation and nationalism should not be assimilated. She defines nationalism as follows: "Ce terme désigne d'ailleurs soit les revendications des ethnies à être reconnues comme des nations, c'est-à-dire à faire coïncider communauté historico-culturelle (ou ethnie) et organisation politique; soit la volonté de puissance des nations déjà constituées pour s'affirmer aux dépens des autres."[51] It is argued that the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia were not national conflicts, but rather ethnic or nationalist conflicts resulting from the absence of a clearly defined *national* project which would have otherwise united the Serb, Croat, Slovenian, Bosnian and Albanian ethnicities.[52]

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[47] Schnapper (1994), p. 14.
[48] Ibid., p. 24.
[49] Ibid., pp. 29-30.
[50] Ibid., p. 24.
[51] Ibid., p.36.
[52] Ibid., pp.36-37.

Schnapper's definition of the modern nation is thus summed up as follows:

> La nation ne se confond pas ni avec l'ethnie, ni avec l'Etat. Elle se définit dans une double relation dialectique avec la (ou les) premières(s) et avec le second, grâce à laquelle elle s'incarne dans la réalité sociale. La reconnaissance politique des ethnies, intégrées dans la nation, conduit à la désintégration et à l'impotence; l'Etat, lorsqu'il devient trop puissant, tyrannique ou totalitaire, absorbe la nation et détruit la communauté des citoyens. Entre l'ethnie et l'Etat, il faut faire sa place à la nation.[53]

The Nation as a Negative Phenomenon

Dominique Schnapper's definition of the nation thus emphasises the idea of a community of citizens which is inclusive. However, it could be argued that the notion of a community essentially implies that a distinction is made between those who are members and those who are not. In other words, contained within the concept of community is a mechanism of exclusion. This would seem to be the view of Maxim Silverman and Etienne Balibar who both argue that racism or exclusion can arise out of a universalist perspective, even though universalism does not recognise 'race' as a valid category. Silverman refers to a 'cultural racism' which according to him, is closely linked to universalist ideals. He argues that bound up with the myth of the French nation is the notion of a "trans-historical culture" which becomes a manner of essentialising French people and their so-called national or cultural 'character'.[54] Therefore, according to Silverman, this has led to "...the conception of a natural, organic, homogenous and exclusive collectivity as any discourse based overtly on 'race.' It is precisely the ambivalence of the culturalist concept of nation which lies at the heart of racism in France."[55] Likewise in his analysis, Etienne Balibar is also rather sceptical about the notion of universalism and the nation. Silverman cites Balibar as follows: "There is no clear line of "demarcation" between universalism and racism. It is not possible to define two separate entities, one of which includes all ideas, which are (potentially) universalist, whilst the other includes ideas, which are (potentially) racist...universalism and racism

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[53]Ibid. , p. 38. Schnapper does not use the accent on capital letters and so I have reproduced her style in the quotation. Elsewhere, however, French capital letters will feature accents.

[54] Silverman (1992), p. 8.

[55] Ibid., p. 8.

are determined opposites, which means precisely that each one affects the other " 'from within.' "[56]

Pierre Birnbaum is another author who conceptualises French nationhood or nationalism in essentially negative terms. In « *La France aux Français »: histoire des haines nationalistes*, Birnbaum associates nationalism with those anti-Republican forces incarnated by Royalists, fundamentalist Catholic movements, anti-Semitic movements and the fascist leagues of the 1930s such as the *Action Française*. He argues that this *guerre des deux France* became most visible from the Dreyfus Affair onwards. However, where Birnbaum's account differs from Silverman's and Balibar's is that he does oppose racist nationalism and universalism rather than claiming that racism is internal to universalism. Universalist values are thus seen to be a barrage against an external, anti-modern nationalism. Birnbaum argues:

> Ce que Dreyfus ne voit pas, c'est que le temps de l'universalisme est terminé et qu'il se trouve remplacé par un culte de la nation [...] Le nationalisme "à la française" trouve, dans ce contexte particulier, sa spécificité. Il apparaît comme une protestation dressée à l'encontre des principes universalistes de la République énoncée essentiellement au nom d'un catholicisme intransigeant.[57]

Although the positions of Silverman, Balibar and Birnbaum do differ, they do all focus on the negative aspects of French nationhood (Silverman and Balibar) and French nationalism (Birnbaum). Therefore, in that respect their approaches can be seen as distinct to Schnapper's who defends the French universalist vision of the nation both in terms of its progressive character and in terms of its ability to unify or integrate many different *appartenances* within the 'one and indivisible' Republic. Silverman and Balibar attack the notion of the French universalist myth from *within* and Birnbaum expresses a lack of confidence in the perennial nature of the universalist sense of nationhood, which · he shows to come under continuous attack from *external* nationalist or racist forces (the fascist leagues of the 1930s, anti-Semitic movements etc.). Schnapper's interpretation of

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[56] Silverman (1992), p. 26 cites Etienne Balibar, 'Le Racisme: encore un universalisme', Mots, 18 (1989), 7-19 (pp. 13-14).
[57] Pierre Birnbaum, *"La France aux Français": histoire des haines nationalistes* (Paris : Seuil, 1993), p. 287 and p. 290.

French nationhood privileges the political dimension of the 'nation' whereas Silverman, Balibar's and Birnbaum's interpretations focus more on the cultural dimension of the French 'nation' and particularly in Birnbaum's case, on French *nationalism*.

The Nation and State

The term 'nation-state' has over the years become common linguistic currency. The present sub-section will trace the development of the relationship between these two entities in post-revolutionary France. Indeed, in order to understand the varying conceptions of the French nation or French nationhood, the dominant role played by the State should not be overlooked. Gérard Noiriel cites Marcel Mauss, who, when writing on the subject of the nation shortly after the First World War, claimed that from the French Revolution onwards, " 'la société toute entière est devenue, à quelque degré, l'État. Le corps politique souverain, c'est la totalité des citoyens.' "[58]

Dominique Schnapper points out that the Republican 'nation'-builders of 1789 inherited and benefited from the processes of centralisation of France and its '*étatisation*', which had been initiated during the *Ancien Régime*. Furthermore, like Mauss, her enthusiastic approach to the concept of the French nation highlights the necessary link between the nation and the State, the latter being the rational supporting mechanism of the former. The necessity of the link between nation and State is in Schnapper's view what distinguishes the political, modern or democratic sense of (the French/Republican) nation from ethnicised '*groupes d'appartenance*'. This idea is expressed in the following manner:

> *Comme toute unité politique, la nation se définit par sa souveraineté qui s'exerce, à l'intérieur, pour intégrer les populations qu'elle inclut et, à l'extérieur, pour s'affirmer en tant que sujet historique dans un ordre mondial fondé sur l'existence et les relations entre nations-unités politiques. Mais sa spécificité est qu'elle intègre les populations en une communauté des citoyens, dont l'existence légitime l'action intérieure et extérieure de l'Etat.*[59] (Italicised by Schnapper).

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[58] Noiriel (2001), p. 125 cites Marcel Mauss, 'La Nation' (1920) in M. Mauss, *Œuvres*, t. 3 (Paris : Minuit, 1969), p. 593.
[59] Schnapper (1994), p. 28.

This definition reveals the centrality of the State if the nation is defined in political terms. It is the notion of a State as the guarantor of its citizen's interests as a national 'community' which lies at the heart of the Republican myth of nation. Reflecting Schnapper's approach, Michel Wieviorka argues that it is possible to conceptualise what he prefers to refer to as 'nationalism' as opposed to the nation, as a positive phenomenon if it expresses the articulation of "la citoyenneté, la démocratie ou l'État de droit."[60]

The notion of democracy is also central to Noiriel's description of the nation-state and he therefore contrasts the pre-national monarchical State with the nation-state:

> Sous l'Ancien Régime, [...] la noblesse se considérait elle-même comme faisant partie d'une "race" à part, supérieure au peuple par essence. C'est pourquoi celui-ci était maintenu à l'écart de la vie politique. À l'inverse, la légitimité de l'État-nation est fondée sur le postulat qu'il n'existe plus de différence qualitative entre les gouvernants et les gouvernés. Ils forment une communauté d'égaux.[61]

However, as Noiriel points out, the new nation-states were made up of millions of individuals which led to the development of indirect democracy through the delegation of legitimacy from 'the people' to elected representatives. This phenomenon, which he calls "*des liaisons à distance*" was the pre-cursor for the development of the State. He qualifies these links between the ordinary citizens and the State on two levels: *liaisons verticales* and *liaisons horizontales* and argues that these links (*liaisons*) played a very significant role in the construction of what he refers to as "des communautés nationales étatisées."[62] Noiriel defines the vertical links as being incarnated by the elected representatives ("les *représentants* de l'État") and the horizontal links as being incarnated by the "*agents* de l'État (les fonctionnaires)."[63]

The consequence of the development of these *liaisons* is the centralisation and totalisation of the nation-state form.[64] Furthermore, Noiriel shows that in order for the

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[60] Wieviorka (1993), p. 68.
[61] Noiriel (2001), p. 126.
[62] Ibid., p. 126.
[63] Ibid., p. 127.
[64] Ibid., pp. 126-127.

delegation of power from the 'people' to the elected representatives to succeed, a whole range of measures were necessary. These included the "codification" of what are referred to as electoral 'rituals' (such as electoral lists, ballot papers, ballots etc.) and the invention of certain symbols such as a national anthem, a national flag etc. In a similar manner, in order to respect the principle of equality amongst citizens, the *fonctionnaires* were obliged to engage in the establishment of a highly developed state infrastructure in order to render concrete what Noiriel refers to as "l'horizontalité des liens entre les citoyens." This explains the development of certain 'official' publications such as the *Journal officiel*, the *bulletin des lois*, *circulaires* etc. in addition to the creation of a means of identifying members of the population through the introduction of passports.[65]

So if we are to understand what Noiriel refers to as the process of the construction of French national identity, the role of the State should be at the heart of the analysis. He argues that it is possible to consider that in France, the construction of the nation-state, which was undertaken by bourgeois intellectuals in the name of humanist values, patriotism and human rights, took place in two stages. The immediate aftermath of the Revolution marked the first stage: "Sous la Révolution française, la noblesse a perdu l'essentiel de son pouvoir politique et l'égalité juridique des citoyens a été définitivement fixée par le Code civil." The second stage is initiated during the Third Republic (1870-1940) : "La IIIe République achève le processus en facilitant l'intégration des classes populaires au sein de l'État."[66] Indeed, during the early years of the Third Republic, the state was responsible for the institutionalisation of social relations, such as regulating relations between capital and labour, and through the introduction of social welfare.

The Third Republic can also be regarded as a period of further democratisation, accompanied by the project of producing the 'model citizen', an objective which was most ambitiously expressed in the educational and uniformising reforms of Jules Ferry. However, according to some commentators, the egalitarian and democratic myth did not

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[65] Ibid., p. 127.
[66] Ibid., p. 141

always correspond to the 'reality'. Theodore Zeldin provides a critical re-evaluation of the advent of mass education as a mechanism for 'nationalising' French society:

> Mass education [...] made it possible for democracy and universal suffrage to function with greater reality; [...] But it also made them [the people] even more subject to propaganda and to brainwashing, and to persuasion that they should sacrifice their immediate interests and desires to supposedly more important national causes – such as glory or war [...] It was in principle egalitarian, but in practice the very opposite...[67]

The State and the Emergence of the Concepts of Nationality and Immigration

Discussion of the role of the state is extremely important because it was through the developing framework of the Republican state that the concepts of national territorial frontiers, foreigners and later *nationality* came to develop. Danièle Lochak states:

> L'apparition de la figure moderne de l'étranger est historiquement liée à la constitution des États-nations. L'intégration des allégeances jusqu'alors multiples en une allégeance unique envers une entité politique nouvelle – l'État – l'inscription de cette entité politique sur un territoire précisément délimité, l'institutionnalisation du pouvoir, enfin, tous ces termes ont abouti, en objectivant le lien qui relie l'individu à l'État, à cristalliser la condition alternative d'étranger ou de national.[68]

Although Rogers Brubaker argues that "By inventing the national citizen and the legally homogenous national citizenry, the Revolution simultaneously invented the foreigner", other researchers claim that the distinction between the French national and the foreigner was not that significant in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution of 1789.[69] At the time of the Revolution, national frontiers were not even properly defined. For this reason, access to French citizenship for those of foreign origin was fairly straightforward. Gérard Noiriel points out that the term 'immigrant' was very rarely used

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[67] Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945, Volume 2, Taste, Intellect and Anxiety* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp.140-141.
[68] Danièle Lochak, 'Étrangers et citoyens au regard du droit' in Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, ed. (1988a), pp. 73-85, (p. 76).
[69] Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 46.

in the documents dating from the revolutionary period and that it was not until 1888 that immigration became of interest to the Larousse dictionary editors.[70]

So the concept of *nationality* in France should be seen as emerging in the second half of the nineteenth century due to two factors. First of all, Silverman argues that the ever-extending role of the state through the development of state institutions and infrastructure in the second half of the nineteenth century meant that the idea of a natural frontier separating different populations came to develop.[71] Furthermore, Christian Bruschi sees the role of the state during the Third Republic as essential to the emergence of notions of "le territoire" and "la population", which in turn, led to the development of the modern meaning that we still ascribe to 'nationality' today.[72]

The second factor which can be associated with the emergence of the concept of nationality in France is the political and economic climate of the late nineteenth century. The rapid industrialisation of France, coupled with a demographic crisis, had led to an increasing demand for foreign labour.[73] However, as Noiriel points out, the "Great depression" which hit much of Europe during the 1880s led to the development of a consensus which henceforth regarded the nation-state as the provider of economic and social protection for its citizens, measures which were reserved for nationals. From this point on, the distinction between nationals and foreigners thus became increasingly important and it was in such a context, that the first laws on nationality were codified. Various governments implemented national 'solidarity' measures, which according to Noiriel, marked the beginnings of the Welfare State. This new protectionism also led to measures designed to stop the national market from being 'flooded' by foreign goods and

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[70] Gérard Noiriel, *Le Creuset français: histoire de l'immigration, XIXe-XXe siècles* (Paris : Seuil, 1988), p. 78.
[71] Silverman (1992), p.29 cites D. Nordman, 'Des Limites d'État aux frontières nationales' in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, vol. 2, 'La Nation', ed. by P. Nora (1986), (pp. 51-52).
[72] Silverman (1992), p. 29, cites Christian Bruschi, 'La Place du droit dans le processus d'intégration des jeunes d'origine immigrée', pp. 242-279 (pp. 263-264) in *Les Politiques d'intégration des jeunes issus de l'immigration* ed. by B. Lorreyte, (Paris : CIEMI/L'Harmattan, 1989).
[73] See Silverman (1992), p.28.

more importantly by foreign labour. Noiriel reveals: "C'est dans ce contexte que fleurissent dans la plupart des pays développés les premières lois sur l'immigration."[74]

Nationality and the Project of Cultural Homogeneity

It is interesting to note, as Noiriel does, that after the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian war which ended in 1870, a new discourse surrounding nationality developed:

> Forgé au départ pour évoquer une "force spirituelle", le mot sert désormais surtout à désigner des groupes d'individus dont les membres partagent des caractéristiques communes que l'on peut *comptabiliser* grâce à des moyens techniques comme les recensements ou les plébiscites. Définir la nationalité, c'est désormais isoler une "qualité" à la fois individuelle et collective, sélectionner un aspect de l'identité des personnes (leur langue, leur sentiment d'appartenance, etc.) pour en faire un critère définissant le groupe auquel ils sont censés appartenir.[75]

He argues that such changing perspectives meant that the issue of national homogeneity became increasingly salient.

Noiriel also demonstrates how Renan's famous lecture which extols the virtues of a cult of ancestors means that only those individuals who are seen to be the ancestors of the French nation can then take part in the "daily plebiscite". He quotes Renan as claiming that the nation had two main characteristics: "

> 'L'une est la possession en commun d'un riche legs de souvenirs; l'autre est le consentement actuel, le désir de vivre ensemble, la volonté de continuer à faire valoir l'héritage qu'on a reçu indivis [...]. Le culte des ancêtres est de tous le plus légitime, les ancêtres nous ont fait ce que nous sommes'.

The fact that Renan's lecture developed into a general consensus meant that " 'des préoccupations 'assimilationnistes' ", as Noiriel refers to it, were attached to the concept

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[74] Noiriel (2001), p. 131. Indeed, Noiriel elsewhere (p.158) points out that the first law which concerns "*la nationalité française*" was passed in 1889.
[75] Ibid., p. 161.

of nationality as a result.[76] Although there was a polemic about how assimilation and homogeneity were to be achieved (the conservatives focusing on race and genealogical factors and the progressives arguing that State institutions, especially school should be central), it is more important to recognise that the notion of cultural homogeneity became central to the definition of French nationality, for it was only through the assimilation of a homogenous national culture that the transmission of national identity down the generations could be guaranteed.

Silverman claims that the implementation of mass education under Ferry's reforms and the cultural homogenisation this engendered can be seen as a hexagonal equivalent of the *mission civilisatrice*, which was undertaken in France's colonies. He argues that the ideals of both projects were essentially one and the same: cultural assimilation and homogenisation. He concedes that in the colonial context, assimilation was juridical as opposed to political but that "Nevertheless, the requirements of cultural conformity were more or less identical in both forms of assimilation..."[77]

Thus by focusing on the 'nationalisation' of France, that is the circumstances surrounding the increasing salience of nationality and a sense of national culture, we are able to understand more fully why the 'nation' came to offer the almost mythical vision of the French people as constituting a uniform cultural community. Indeed Gino Raymond and Svetlana Raymond-Bajic highlight the significance of the notion of a relatively cohesive community in their study of nation-building in the former Yugoslavia: "A familiar definition is that a nation is a politically mobilised people, with modes of communication based on common assumptions conditioned by participation in a cultural community."[78]

Finally, it is significant that in his lecture, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* Renan specified that "...l'essence d'une nation est que tous les individus aient beaucoup de

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[76] Ibid., p. 162, Noiriel cites Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* 1st edition, Presses Pocket, 1992) 1882.
[77] Silverman (1992), p. 31.
[78] Gino G. Raymond and Svetlana Raymond-Bajic, 'Memory and History: The Discourse of Nation-Building in the Former Yugoslavia', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 31.1, (1997), pp. 21-30, p. 21.

choses en commun, et aussi que tous aient oublié bien des choses."[79] Here, it seems that Renan was referring to the need for 'collective cultural amnesia' as à necessary partner of *Jacobin* cultural homogenisation, that very *jacobinisme français* which Dominique Schnapper shows, has been criticised as " ...destructeur des identités particulières."[80]

We have seen that in France, the development of the concept of the nation-state has been closely linked with that of citizenship. For many authors, it would seem that the main feature of the modern or 'political' nation-state is, to borrow Schnapper's term, a community of citizens. The next section will focus on the concept of citizenship and more importantly, on the evolution of its political salience in the French context.

Citizenship

In their article on the link between citizenship, national identity and the rise of xenophobic movements in Western Europe, Ruud Koopmans and Hanspeter Kriesi agree with Charles Tilly's perplexity when faced with the challenge of defining citizenship, since according to him, the term can be used to refer to a number of phenomena. It can either describe a category of actors (distinguished from one another by their social 'position' or status within a given state); refer to a link ("entre un acteur et les agents de l'État"); refer to a role ("y compris toutes les relations qui unissent un acteur à d'autres acteurs et qui dépendent de sa relation avec un État donné"); or to an identity. The authors of the article decide to opt for a simple definition of citizenship as follows: ".. la citoyenneté doit être considérée comme un ensemble de droits et d'obligations relatifs à un certain État donné."[81]

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[79] Ernest Renan, *Oeuvres complètes, Tome 1,* (1947), p. 892. Anne Donadey uses the term "collective amnesia" with regards to French attitudes to the Franco-Algerian war. See Anne Donadey, ' "Une Certaine Idée de la France": The Algeria Syndrome and Struggles over "French" Identity' in *French Identity Papers: Contested Nationhood in Twentieth Century France* ed. by Steven Ungar and Tom Conley, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 215-232.
[80] Schnapper (1994), p. 17.
[81] Ruud Koopmans and Hanspeter Kriesi, 'Citoyenneté, identité nationale et mobilisation de l'extrême droite : une comparaison entre la France, l'Allemagne, les Pays-Bas et la Suisse', in *Sociologie des nationalismes* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1997) ed. by Pierre Birnbaum, pp. 295-324 (p. 297).

T. H. Marshall's classic definition of citizenship in his essay *Citizenship and Social Class* allows us to understand citizenship in terms of three types of rights: civil, political and social rights. Marshall states:

> The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom –
> liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own
> property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice [...] the right to
> defend and assert all one's rights on terms of equality with others and by due
> process of law.[82]

The institutions most closely linked with what Marshall defined as civil rights are the courts of justice and he illustrates how civil rights (in England) developed during the eighteenth century. Marshall defines the second element of citizenship, political rights as "...the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of the body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body."[83] The corresponding institutions are parliament and councils of local government and the period during which political rights developed, is according to Marshall, the nineteenth century. The third element of citizenship is the social element which is defined as follows:

> ...the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security
> to the right to share in the full heritage and to live the life of a civilised being
> according to the standards prevailing in the society. The institutions most closely
> connected with it are the educational system and the social services.[84]

Social citizenship rights are shown to have developed most during the twentieth century.

In *his* definition of citizenship, Anicet Le Pors tends to focus on the notion of responsibilities, rather than placing rights at the centre of his analysis, unlike Marshall. Le Pors states that the term '*la citoyenneté*' derives from the Latin word, *civitas*, so implying that the citizen should adhere to the laws and regulations of the *cité*. In addition, the notion of a collectivity is central to Le Pors' understanding of the term:

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[82] T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class and other essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), pp.10-11.
[83] T. H. Marshall (1950), p.11.
[84] T. H. Marshall (1950), p.11.

La citoyenneté suppose un pacte social, plus ou moins explicite, liant les citoyens d'une même collectivité. Rousseau écrit à ce sujet : "Chacun de nous met en commun sa personne et toute sa puissance sous la suprême direction de la volonté générale ; et nous recevons en corps chaque membre comme partie indivisible du tout."[85]

The French Context

So as we have seen, the classical definition of citizenship centres on the notion of rights and duties. With regards to French citizenship, the Revolution of 1789 should be seen as the key defining moment. Catherine Wihtol de Wenden points out that the Republican *devise Liberté, égalité, fraternité*, and particularly *fraternité* best defines French citizenship.[86] Republican or French citizenship is defined by the revolutionary principles of universalism and unitarism, as Alec Hargreaves refers to it.[87] In the same manner as a political definition of nation, the transfer of political sovereignty from the monarchy to 'the people' should also be seen as the main characteristic of prevailing understandings of French citizenship. The Constitution of Year I (1793) proclaimed in article 7 that "le peuple souverain est l'universalité des citoyens français", thus laying down the principle that sovereignty was to reside with the people who are conceived of as a body of citizens.[88] The revolutionary universalist ideal has meant that the French citizen is defined as an individual, regardless of his/her cultural *spécificités*. Indeed, it is through *la transcendance par la politique* or *la citoyenneté* (to borrow the formula used by Dominique Schnapper) that individuals can put their cultural/linguistic/religious 'particularisms' aside and become active members of the nation-state.[89]

Citizenship and Nationality

Although these two concepts are often thought of as coterminous, they were not always inexorably linked. Wihtol de Wenden argues that:

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[85] Anicet Le Pors, *La Citoyenneté* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), p. 7 cites Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du contrat social* (GF- Flammarion, 1992), p.40.

[86] Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, 'Immigration policy and the issue of nationality', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 14.3 (1991), 319-332, (p. 329).

[87] Alec Hargreaves, *Immigration, 'Race' and Ethnicity in Contemporary France* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 160.

[88] Anicet Le Pors (1999), p. 6, cites Constitution of Year I.

[89] Schnapper (1994), p. 83.

The notion of citizenship that emerged during the French Revolution was a new conception based on certain philosophical values (adherence to the Revolution, acceptance of the social contract) and was quite separate from the notion of nationality. Hence, in the Constitution of year I (1793), it was possible to become a citizen without being French if the person had accomplished some civic tasks.[90]

Gérard Noiriel also demonstrates that *juristes* or legislators showed little interest in the link between citizenship and nationality until the first law relating to *"la nationalité française"* (1889). He shows that the various juridical documents regarding nationality from the Revolution up until the Second Empire do not feature any direct reference to nationality, focusing instead on terms and the prerequisite conditions regarding the following legal statuses: *"pour être réputé français"* (1790 law); *"la qualité de citoyen"* (1791 Constitution); being *"admis à l'exercice des droits de citoyens"* (1793 Constitution); the *"état politique des citoyens"* (1795 Constitution). The *Code civil* introduced the new term *"la qualité de Français"* (as opposed to the *"qualité d'étranger"*) and revealed how this status was obtained and rescinded. Noiriel thus concludes that the distinction between the citizen and the national had not been established at this stage.[91] Wihtol de Wenden shows that it was during the nineteenth century that the original meaning the revolutionaries attached to citizenship became transformed. Firstly, there was a transfer from a more direct notion of citizenship to one based on election and representation. Secondly, as mentioned briefly in the above sub-section dealing with the 'nationalisation' of France, the economic, military and political rivalry between France and other European powers, particularly Prussia, which resulted in the implementation of many 'protectionist' measures, meant that the question of nationality became increasingly linked to citizenship, thus allowing governments to distinguish who should benefit from citizenship rights and who should not.

The corollary of these historical developments is that the modern sense of French citizenship must be understood as a *national* citizenship. Brubaker corroborates this view by arguing that:

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[90] Wihtol de Wenden (1991), p. 329.
[91] Noiriel (2001), p. 158.

Citizenship in a nation-state is inevitably bound up with nationhood and national identity, membership of the state, membership of the nation [...] Debates about citizenship in France (and Germany) are debates about what it means to belong to the nation-state. The politics of citizenship today is first and foremost a politics of nationhood.[92]

Similarly, he claims that French national self-understanding is embodied in its citizenship laws: "The expansive, assimilationist citizenship law of France, which automatically transforms second-generation immigrants into citizens, reflects the state-centred, assimilationist understanding of the French."[93] So if citizenship is defined in terms of nation and assimilation then it is possible to argue that this has extremely important implications for contemporary France, which, due to immigration in particular, is a culturally diverse country. It is interesting to consider Jean Leca's claim that: "Dans le modèle dominant de l'État-nation moderne, la citoyenneté repose sur la base d'identités a-culturelles, et la politisation culturelle des intérêts est considérée comme illégitime dans un tel espace public."[94] This statement is significant because it shows how French citizenship is formulated in such a way that it cannot accommodate the public assertion of cultural difference. Both Rainer Bauböck and Rogers Brubaker argue that the conjugation of nationality as a prerequisite for citizenship meant that citizenship in France became an instrument of 'social closure' or exclusion.[95] This can be seen as an important contradiction, that is, there is a 'décalage' between the theory of universalist citizenship for all, as expressed in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (August 1789), and the reality whereby citizenship is exercised in a rather more particularist manner.

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[92] Brubaker (1992), p. 182 cites Aristide R. Zolberg, 'Contemporary Transitional Migrations in Historical Perspective', in *Global Trends in Migration* ed. by in Kritz et al, pp. 3-27 and Jean Cohen, 'Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements', *Social Research* 52 (Winter, 1985), 663-716.

[93] Ibid., p.14.

[94] Interview with Jean Leca, 8 December, 1986, in *La Citoyenneté et les changements de structures sociale et nationale de la population française*, ed. by Catherine Wihtol de Wenden (Paris: Edilig: Fondation Diderot – La Nouvelle Encyclopédie, 1988a), p.323.

[95] Rainer Bauböck, *Immigration and the Boundaries of Citizenship. Monograph in Ethnic Relations, No.4*, ESRC, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, (Warwick: Warwick Printing Company, 1992) Brubaker, 1992.

The contemporary manifestations of the perceived link between nationality and citizenship can be illustrated by the various policy debates with regards to the *Code de la nationalité*. In the 1980s, some politicians expressed their concern about the development of a so-called instrumental or pragmatic citizenship whereby young people of North African origin who became French automatically at the age of eighteen were merely becoming '*Français de papier*'. This is exactly the sort of phenomenon that Jacques Toubon, as General Secretary of the *RPR* (*Rassemblement pour la République*) protested against in 1986 when he told *Le Monde*:

> To be French means something. It is not only a paper, a formality, but a value. The current legislation cheapens that value [...] Today we feel the need to revalorise belonging to France [...] One cannot acquire French nationality out of simple convenience. It is necessary to recognise the value of being French [...] for other reasons than for the social and economic advantages it entails.[96]

This statement was symptomatic of a general malaise in France, concerning nationality and citizenship at a time when France found itself confronted with a number of factors which seemed to threaten the 'unity' of the 'one and indivisible' Republic. However, it was the permanent settlement of North and Sub-Saharan African migrants as well as the emergence of a 'second generation' that was the factor which became the most politicised.

PART II: THE POLITICISATION OF IMMIGRATION

In order to understand why the question of immigration became increasingly politicised, the expression of this politicisation taking the form of the debates surrounding the reform of the Nationality Code, it is first of all necessary to return to the mid-1970s.

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[96] Jacques Toubon, quoted in *Le Monde*, 5 November, 1986 in Rogers Brubaker (1992), p.147.

The Economic Downturn

Patrick Weil shows that between 1974 and 1976 the French government believed the economic recession to be temporary.[97] Although labour migration was suspended in 1974, no other austerity measures were taken with regards to immigration. In fact, the Secretary of State, Paul Dijoud oversaw a modernisation of family re-unification and social policy in *favour* of immigrants. However, by 1977, with no sign of an economic recovery, the unemployment and economic crisis became the main preoccupation of the French population. In such a climate, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing made the return of non-European immigrants, especially North African immigrants, one of his priority policies, between 1978 and 1980. Weil points out that this policy was aimed at Algerians in particular, even if they had been resident in France for a number of years. Giscard d'Estaing's policy, if successful, would have led to the renunciation of the Evian Accords (which had sealed the end of the Algerian War, 1962); quotas of non-renewal of residence permits; non-renewal of residence permits for the unemployed of over six months and the deportation of 100,000 foreigners per year.[98] However Weil demonstrates that these policy objectives were finally abandoned by the government in the face of mounting opposition from the Churches, associations, trade unions, political parties on the Left, foreign governments and from *within* government itself.

After the victory of socialist François Mitterrand in the 1981 presidential elections, and the *PS* and *PCF* in the legislative elections held immediately afterwards, government policy towards immigration seemed to undergo a thaw. Not only did the Left in power liberalise entry and residence laws, they also regularised 130,000 foreigners, re-established the family reunification policy, set up a Ministry for National Solidarity to defend immigrants' rights and institutionalised the right of foreign nationals to freely associate (legislation passed on 9 October, 1981).[99] In addition, the arrival of Mitterrand saw the proposal to grant local voting rights to non-French residents. However, faced with opposition from the Right and a half-hearted attitude from the Left, this proposal

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[97] Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris : Grasset & Fasquelle, 2002), p. 167.
[98] Weil (2002), pp.167-168.
[99] See Weil (2002) and Alistair Cole, *French Politics and Society* (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 1998), p. 223. *PS – Parti Socialiste*; *PCF- Parti Communiste Français*.

was abandoned. Then in 1983, the municipal elections marked the arrival of Jean-Marie Le Pen's *Front National* party onto the mainstream political scene. Weil argues that the general failure of the government in the municipal elections led to a 're-centring' of their policy with regards to immigration through the introduction of a new law, (passed in June 1984 and unanimously voted in by the *Assemblée Nationale*) which introduced the *titre unique de dix ans* (ten-year non-renewable residence permit). Weil thus states:

> Cette loi symbolise le premier consensus entre les partis de la droite (UDF, RPR) et de la gauche (PS, PC) sur la politique d'immigration en sonnant le glas des retours forcés. Mais à peine le séjour des immigrés résidents algériens est-il stabilisé que, par un transfert d'agenda, le débat se reporte sur la nationalité de leurs enfants.[100]

1983: The Emergence of the Front National

Catherine Wihtol de Wenden argues that the 1983 municipal elections were a "crucial turning point" and that "the issue of immigration entered French political life through the front door..." We can also see the 1983 municipal elections as a watershed because, in a similar manner to Weil's observation about the emergence of a new 'consensus', Wihtol de Wenden remarks that from then on, immigration became "the object of bargaining between rival political leaders and parties."[101] In addition, the prevailing economic crisis led to increasing challenges to the government's previous policy decisions which had been perceived as 'generous.'

The first major electoral success for the FN in the 1983 municipal elections was soon followed by an 11% score at the European elections held in 1984.[102] The *Front National* emerged into the political mainstream on an anti-immigration and law and order platform, where immigration and crime (*l'insécurité*) were presented as being inextricably linked. Weil points out that as a result, a national debate about French identity was initiated by the far right-wing *Club de l'Horloge*. He also shows that the perceived link between French national identity and nationality legislation was the reason

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[100] Weil (2002), p. 168.
[101] Wihtol de Wenden (1991), p. 323 (all quotations).
[102] Weil (2002), p. 170.

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for the general focus on the reform of the Nationality Code: "Tout naturellement, parce que la croyance sur le lien entre l'identité nationale et le droit de la nationalité est fortement ancrée, le débat va porter sur la législation de la nationalité et se saisir de la situation des enfants d'immigrés algériens, situation paradoxale et juridiquement complexe."[103]

It is first of all useful to look at what constituted French citizenship law *before* the changes and reform proposals were made. Since the Revolution, citizenship regulations have been, (and still remain today) largely based on the *'droit du sol'/'jus soli'* principle (although this has not meant the complete absence of *'droit du sang'/'jus sanguinis'*).[104] In the early stages of the Revolution, legislation passed in 1790 stated that a foreigner (a foreign man) would automatically become French after five years residence in France, after marrying a French national or if he had acquired property or a business in the country. The Constitution of 1791, added that a "prestation de serment" would also be necessary, thus challenging the automatic nature of nationality acquisition. However, in the 1793 Constitution (Year I), the notion of automatic acquisition was re-instated and it was established that all foreigners over twenty-one years of age, who had lived in France for one year, and who worked in the country or had acquired property there, or a wife, a child or an elderly dependent, would be "admis à l'exercice des droits de citoyen français".[105]

After this remarkably open period, the next phase of citizenship law development under the Directory and the Consulate, saw the residence requirement increase to seven years (in Year III - 1795) and then to ten (in Year VIII - 1799). Furthermore, in 1803, the *Code civil* almost totally abandoned *jus soli* and returned to the *jus sanguinis* principle. However, in the mid-nineteenth century, *jus soli* was reaffirmed, as a result of a law which was passed in 1851. This law stipulated that a child born in France to a foreign national who had also been born in France could automatically become French (the

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[103] Ibid., p. 170.
[104] *Droit du sol* or *jus soli* means that nationality and citizenship can be acquired if one is born in a certain country or through residence. *Droit du sang* or *jus sanguinis* means that nationality and citizenship can only be acquired by affiliation, i.e. if the individual concerned has 'blood' links with the country concerned.
[105] Lochak in de Wenden ed. (1988a), p.80 and Weil (2002), pp. 23-25.

double droit du sol). The principle of *jus soli* was further reaffirmed by a law passed in 1889.[106]

Indeed, from 1889 onwards, children born in France to foreign parents (i.e. parents who were born abroad) would become French and be able to exercise political citizenship (i.e. vote) once they had reached the age of majority (eighteen years). This would take place automatically, according to Article 44 of the *Code de la nationalité* and was conditional upon the fact that those eligible for naturalisation had to have been continually resident on French soil for the five years preceding their eighteenth birthday. According to Article 23 of the Code (the so-called *double droit du sol*), those born of parents who had themselves been born in Algeria before it became independent, became French automatically at birth without having to wait until they reached the age of eighteen. This was because before 1962, Algeria had been a '*département*' of the '*Métropole*,' or mainland France.[107]

During the 1980s, the children of Algerian migrants were targeted in particular because under Article 23 of the Nationality Code, they benefited from the *double droit du sol*.[108] When in the 1980s, the emergence of a sizeable 'second generation' of Algerian descent became apparent, many criticised Article 23 because it was felt that young people of Algerian origin were becoming French "*malgré eux*"; others argued that they didn't 'deserve' such treatment. These criticisms stemmed from a deep suspicion with regard to the loyalty and allegiance of the French-born individuals of Algerian origin in a context where the bitter memories of the Algerian War of independence were still fairly recent.

Weil claims that it was the publication of a book by Alain Griotteray (UDF *député* and columnist for the *Figaro-Magazine*) in 1984 which marked the start of the politicised debate about immigration. The book's title, *Les Immigrés: le choc*, in itself illustrated the message which essentially argued that immigrants from Muslim countries were too

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[106] Lochak in de Wenden ed. (1988a), p.80 and Weil (2002).
[107] Lochak in de Wenden, ed. (1988a) and Weil (2002).
[108] Weil (2002), p. 169 points out that nationality was awarded at birth without the possibility of refusal. See corresponding endnotes for statistics regarding people requesting 'liberation' from the "*liens d'allégeance*", i.e. regarding Article 23.

different in their outlook to be able to assimilate French cultural norms in a satisfactory manner and that in any case, a multiracial France was undesirable. In reference to an earlier debate about whether Article 23 needed to be amended or not, Griotteray argued that the Nationality Code should be reformed so that nationality would be "choisie" (chosen) and no longer "subie"(imposed).[109] In other words, Griotteray was arguing for the introduction of an element of voluntarism and he evoked Renan's "daily plebiscite" vision of the French nation in order to defend his point.

Reforming the Code de la Nationalité

Weil suggests that the recommendation in Griotteray's book for a reinforcement of an elective approach to nationality was the precursor of the new proposals of the UDF and RPR with regard to nationality in the run-up to the 1985 legislative elections.[110] The Right won the 1986 elections which also saw the entry of thirty-five *Front National* representatives into the *Assemblée Nationale* for the first time due to the introduction of proportional representation.[111] The newly formed government, headed by Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, proposed changing the Nationality Code by ending the automatic acquisition of French nationality. The proposal had four main objectives which would have lead to the suppression of the principle of *jus soli*, as established in 1889, and a shift towards *jus sanguinis*. First, it was recommended that children would only automatically obtain French nationality if one of their parents were themselves French. This amounted to a reform of Article 23 of the Nationality Code and would have led to the loss of the automatic right to French nationality at birth for 17,000 children of Algerian descent. Second, for those children whose parents were both foreign, they would have actively to demand French nationality when eighteen years old. This request for naturalisation became known as the '*manifestation de volonté*' clause. Third, rules governing the acquisition of French nationality by marriage would be made more rigid. Fourth, French nationality would no longer be automatically acquired for those children whose parents

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[109] Weil (2002), cites and comments on Alain Griotteray's *Immigrés: le choc* (Paris : Plon, 1984), p. 170.
[110] Ibid., p. 170. Weil cites Yvan Gastaut, *L'immigration et l'opinion en France sous la Ve* République (Paris : Seuil, 2000), pp. 546-547. *UDF – Union pour la Démocratie Française.*
[111] Weil (2002), p. 171.

originated from one of France's former colonies and parents would no longer be able to declare their children French whilst they were still minors.[112]

The finalised bill (*projet de loi*) was put forward on 12 November 1986. It called for youths born in France to foreign parents, to manifest their desire to become French between the ages of sixteen and twenty-three. The bill also called for a transition away from the regime of declaration regarding acquisition of nationality through marriage, to a more rigid 'fraud-proof' regime of naturalisation. The *double droit du sol* principle was left untouched. However, the Chirac government was forced to abandon the bill for a number of reasons. Weil alludes to the following coinciding events which led to a government stand-down over their nationality reform proposals. Firstly, at the same time as the bill was put forward, the government suffered a significant defeat over the Devaquet proposals to reform universities. Over 500,000 students protested against the reform on the 4 December 1986 and on the 5 December a young student of Algerian origin, Malik Oussekine, died after being assaulted by police who were trying to disperse the protesting crowds. The emotion surrounding the funeral of Malik and divisions within the cabinet led to a government climb-down over the reform as well as the resignation of the Minister for Education. Immediately afterwards, the bill on nationality reform came up for debate. Not only did the students, affected by the death of Malik Oussekine protest against its introduction, they were aided by certain anti-racist associations such as *SOS-Racisme* or *La Ligue des Droits de l'Homme* and the President of the Republic, François Mitterrand was also opposed to the bill. In such a climate, Chirac's own Justice Minister, withdrew his backing for the bill and as a result Chirac, sensing the time was not right, was forced to decide in favour of abandoning the proposals in January 1987.[113]

1987-1988: The Nationality Commission

Some months later, the government decided to set up a special Nationality Commission (*La Commission de la nationalité*) under the leadership of Marceau Long, vice-president of the *Conseil d'État*. The Commission, which was composed of sixteen *sages*, became

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[112] See Weil (2002), pp. 170-173.
[113] For a fuller account of the circumstances surrounding the formulation of this *projet de loi* and its abandonment see Weil (2002), pp. 170-173.

operative in June 1987. Between 16 September and 21 October 1987 it held fifty public hearings which were broadcast live on French television.[114] Alec Hargreaves points out that the fact that the Commission was given *carte blanche* to discuss issues which were seen to be of importance amongst the public meant that as a result, "...Muslims in general and Algerians in particular occupied centre-stage in the Commission's deliberations."[115] He adds that the Commission's highly unusual decision to broadcast the hearings live meant that the debate became even more media-hyped. Dominique Schnapper, one of the Commission's *sages* is quoted as acknowledging that with hindsight, there was perhaps an excessive focus on issues relating to Islam. Schnapper explains that the Commission was set up to:

> examine head-on the problems preoccupying public opinion, including the most sensitive issues. There is particular public concern over dual nationality, military service and Islam, so we prioritized those problems and perhaps went a bit far. It was only in the final public session that we heard evidence from Asian and Portuguese contributors.[116]

The Commission submitted its report (*Être Français aujourd'hui et demain*) to the government on the 7 January 1988. Amongst various recommendations, the report's authors suggested upholding the proposal to revise Article 44 so as to include an elective dimension for young people born in France of foreign parents. However, instead of requiring a young person to prove his/her residence in France for the five years preceding

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[114] The Nationality Commission was composed of four Law professors; three senior civil servants (*hauts fonctionnaires*) including Marceau Long; three historians; two sociologists (Dominique Schnapper and Alain Touraine); two doctors, a lawyer and a cineaste.

[115] Hargreaves (1995), p. 171.

[116] Hargreaves (1995), p. 171 cites Dominique Schnapper, 'La Commission de la Nationalité, une instance singulière', *Revue européenne des migrations internationales*, 4.1-2 (1988), 9-287, (p. 15). Cole (1998), pp. 230-233 discusses the associations that have been made between Islam and terrorism in France. The Iranian revolution in 1979 became a powerfully symbolic image of radical Islam which many people erroneously associated with the 'second generation' North African origin youths as they became increasingly visible in French society. The 1991 Gulf War is also cited as a period when the descendants of North African immigrants and their loyalty to the Republic came under suspicion. Cole also points out that the banning of the FIS (*Front Islamique de salut*) in Algeria in 1992, and the state of civil war which developed there as a result, meant that the French media in particular became concerned about the consequences for France. The involvement of the FIS in terrorist activities in France in the mid-1990s (hijacking of an Air France aeroplane in Marseilles in December 1994 and a series of bomb attacks in the Paris underground system in 1995) only increased "the view of some white French nationals that Muslims and Islamic fundamentalists are one and the same." (p. 233). Of course, these suspicions will only have become amplified since the 11 September 2001 attacks in New York and Washington.

his/her eighteenth birthday, the Commission recommended that this procedure be made more flexible by extending the window when the demand for naturalisation could be made from sixteen to twenty-one. In addition, as opposed to the Chirac government proposals, the commission report did not recommend an oath of allegiance (*manifestation de volonté*) and as Hargreaves points, out, "Assent to the acquisition of French nationality would be as simple as ticking a box and adding a signature..."[117] The original government proposal had recommended exclusion from naturalisation for some young people with criminal records. The Commission's report recommended that although some criminal offences committed after the age of eighteen would prevent an individual from becoming naturalised, between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, the right to acquire French nationality would not be affected at all. Hargreaves also points out that the commission recommended abandoning the state's right to refuse French nationality on the grounds of inadequate assimilation or "poor morals".[118]

With regards to the *double droit du sol* (Article 23), the Commission recommended that in relation to Algeria and other ex-*départements*, the legislation should remain unchanged but that it should no longer apply to France's other former colonies. However, the Commission still recommended that access to French nationality should be made easier for those individuals originating from independent states where French was now the official language (this of course included many of France's former colonies). With regards to marriage, the Commission recommended that the system of 'declaration' as opposed to the proposed shift to naturalisation was maintained yet the minimum period of marriage before any procedures could be undertaken should be extended from six months to a year.

According to Weil, the report was well received both on the Right and Left of the political spectrum where the general feeling was that the worst had been avoided. However, as Hargreaves shows, it was too late to pass the appropriate legislation in time for the presidential and legislative elections due to be held in the early summer later that

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[117] Hargreaves (1995), p. 172.
[118] Ibid., p. 172.

year (1988). Mitterrand won a second mandate and the Right lost their majority in the parliamentary elections that followed, so Chirac's reforms and the Marceau Long Commission Report had to be postponed. Although the Left's return to Matignon and the Elysée meant a freeze on any nationality reform, Weil claims that this did not, however, signal an end to the debate. In 1989, Jean-Jacques Bresson, an *haut fonctionnaire* and member of the Nationality Commission, translated the report into a bill, with the help of Pierre Mazeaud. On the Right, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing called for the complete abandonment of *jus soli* in favour of *jus sanguinis*.[119]

1993: The Méhaignerie Reform

The 1993 legislative elections saw the return of a centre-right (UDF-RPR) government headed by Edouard Balladur. The new government resumed the process of proposals to reform the Nationality Code and the Justice Minister, Pierre Méhaignerie, became responsible for the drafting of a restrictive bill which was adopted by Parliament in June 1993 and came into effect on 1 January 1994. The Méhaignerie nationality reforms were accompanied by a restrictive immigration policy which became known as the *Lois Pasqua*, (after the then Minister of the Interior, Charles Pasqua) and this represented a stricter attitude vis-à-vis immigration as well. The nationality (Méhaignerie) reform made the following changes:

1. Children born in France of foreign parents would no longer be automatically French at the age of eighteen. Instead, they would have to request French nationality through a '*manifestation de volonté*' between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. This request could be made before a judge, at a town hall, a police station or a *préfecture*. This amounted to a reform of Article 44.

2. Foreign parents of children born in France could no longer request French nationality for their children when they were still minors. This also amounted to a reform to Article 44.

3. Nationality could be declined if, after the age of eighteen, a youth had been convicted of crimes which were perceived as threatening to national security, or if he or

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[119] See Weil (2002), pp. 175-176.

she had served more than six months in prison for such offences as drug trafficking or murder. Nationality could also be declined if he or she had ever been subject to a deportation order.

4. A foreign national would have to wait two years (instead of six months) before obtaining French nationality if he or she had married a French national. The new law could subject the couple to a fraud investigation if the marriage broke down within a year.

5. Children born of parents who themselves were born in one of the French colonies or territories before their independence would no longer be automatically French at birth. Even more significant was the fact that this reform also extended to the children of Algerians. Otherwise, the so-called *double droit du sol* would only come into effect if one of the child's parents had been living in France for the previous five years. This amounted to a reform of Article 23.[120]

Myriam Feldblum shows that the Méhaignerie reforms signalled a serious challenge to the concept of *jus soli* and subsequently, the *jus sanguinis* principle was reinforced.[121]

Alec Hargreaves sums up the debate which culminated in the reform of the nationality laws as follows: "The 1993 reform of the CNF [*Code de la nationalité française*] was calculated to serve as a symbolic gesture of the government's intent to 'do something' about immigration without fundamentally infringing on the values associated with France's Republican tradition."[122] He argues that the shift in the discourse of the centre-right parties was a response to the rise of the *Front National* and the threat this posed in terms of the loss of their traditional electorate. In fact he claims that the debate about nationality and ultimately the reform of the Nationality Code would not have occurred had it not been for the threat emanating from Jean-Marie Le Pen. He thus concludes that it is crucial to see the Nationality Code reforms in a context of political rivalry: "The debate over French nationality laws is thus symptomatic of a party-political

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[120] See Hargreaves (1995); Sami Naïr, *Contre les Lois Pasqua* (Paris: Arléa, 1997) and Myriam Feldblum, *Reconstructing Citizenship: the Politics of Nationality Reform and Immigration in Contemporary France* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 147-151.
[121] Feldblum (1999), p. 149.
[122] Hargreaves (1995), p. 176.

contest in which, since the mid-1980s, a large part of the agenda has been set by the anti-immigrant platform of the FN."[123]

Other observers focus more on the normative aspects of the debate about French nationality. For example, Adrian Favell argues that the changes that were made to the *Code de la nationalité* should be understood as an effort to redefine what belonging to the French nation and more importantly, choosing to become part of the French nation should signify. That is, the introduction of the *manifestation de volonté* clause was designed to re-emphasise the notion of a contractual sense of belonging to the nation. Indeed, Favell cites the report, *Être Français aujourd'hui et demain* which states that "a new mode of organising French society must be found to fit with the idea of individuals expressing a free will to be French".[124] Favell observes that through the *manifestation de volonté* clause, "new members engage in a new moral relation to their adopted nation, which puts the accent on their individual rights and responsibilities."[125]

From Nationality to Integration

Adrian Favell and Alec Hargreaves show that the Left's response to the increasing influence of the *Front National* was to focus on anti-racist discourse as expressed in the slogan *le droit à la différence*. Hargreaves points out that this slogan was actually used by Mitterrand in his 1981 presidential campaign. The early years of the Mitterrand administration were also characterised by a generous stance towards immigrants and the term *insertion* had come to be used as a deliberate and symbolic shift away from the term assimilation which had, by now, become taboo due to its colonial connotations. Although Hargreaves remarks that while the term *multiculturalism* was never actually adopted in the early years of the Mitterrand presidency, the *insertion* policy did reflect a growing openness to the notion of cultural pluralism, that is, "It implied that those concerned could be 'inserted' into the social fabric of France while still retaining a distinctive

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[123] Ibid., p. 176. It could of course be argued that the rise of the *Front National*, most spectacularly expressed after the shift to proportional representation, was not without its advantages for François Mitterrand, since it meant that the Right became increasingly divided.

[124] Adrian Favell, *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave) 2001, p. 68. Favell cites *Être Français aujourd'hui et demain*, p. 90.

[125] Favell (2001), p.68.

cultural identity."[126] However, it was not possible to maintain this stance with regard to immigration for a number of reasons. First of all, in a political climate where the *Front National* was becoming increasingly successful, the Left's *droit à la différence* discourse was hi-jacked by Jean-Marie Le Pen and his associates who used the same slogan to highlight what they believed to be the essential difference and 'inassimilable' qualities of certain minorities. The *FN* therefore used the slogan to justify the return of non-European immigrants to their countries of origin, in a *chacun chez soi* backlash. Secondly, Favell claims that the perceived threat to the French 'nation' (through increasing regionalism, the weakening of social solidarity, the emergence of the European Union as a potential challenge to national sovereignty), added to the increasing influence of *lepéniste* discourse, meant that the policy of *insertion* would have to be abandoned: "Once the issue became linked with wider concerns about French national integrity and the crisis in its institutional and constitutional structure, the mainstream political centre was forced to look for a new framework for its policies on immigration which might respond to Le Pen's claims."[127]

This climate placed increasing pressure on the Left to not be seen as 'soft' on immigration. Hargreaves illustrates that as a result, the *droit à la différence* approach was abandoned and a junior ministry which had been set up to deal with immigrants was abolished and merged into the Ministry of Social Affairs instead. The eruption of the Islamic headscarf affair in 1989 only added to government's desire to be seen to be 'doing something' about immigration. The headscarf affair led to huge media coverage surrounding the expulsion of three Muslim pupils who refused to remove their headscarves in a *collège* in Creil. The head teacher in question believed that their refusal amounted to an assault on the Republic's secular principles of *laïcité*.[128] Hargreaves argues that the affair:

> ...led to a spurt of institutional initiatives designed to reassure the public that people of recent immigrant origin were being successfully incorporated into

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[126] Hargreaves (1995), p. 195.
[127] Favell (2001), p. 55.
[128] For further discussion of the 'headscarf affair', see Feldblum (1999) and Cole (1998).

French society. It was at this point that 'integration' became officially consecrated as the watchword of public policy relating to minority groups, though in practice it had already been structuring policies of both the Left and the Right for several years.[129]

Hargreaves points out that in December 1989, only a few days after the *FN's* victory in local elections held in Dreux, where one of the main campaign aims of the victorious Mme Stirbois was to end "the colonization of France by Arab immigrants"[130], a new government post of Secretary-General for Integration was established with Hubert Prévot appointed as "Mr. Integration".[131] In addition, Prime Minister Rocard set up the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* (HCI) to discuss possible policy proposals. The *Haut Conseil*, which was nominated in March 1990, consisted of nine members and was presided over by Marceau Long, the vice-president of the *Conseil d'État*. The other members were generally *députés, sénateurs* and other political personalities. The HCI was to have a consultative role and report back to the prime minister at regular intervals.

The political scientist, Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux, took part in the discussions surrounding the establishment of a working definition for the concept of integration. Indeed, the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration*'s first report to the prime minister, entitled *Pour un modèle francais d'intégration* (published in 1991), drew on some of the ideas of Costa-Lascoux as expressed in her book entitled *De l'immigré au citoyen.*[132] The *Haut Conseil's* definition of integration is as follows:

> ...il faut concevoir l'intégration non comme une sorte de voie moyenne entre l'assimilation et l'insertion mais comme un processus spécifique: par ce processus, il s'agit de susciter la participation active à la société nationale d'éléments variés et différents, tout en acceptant la subsistance de spécificités culturelles, sociales et morales et en tenant pour vrai que l'ensemble s'enrichit de cette variété, de cette complexité. Sans nier les différences, en sachant les prendre en compte sans les exalter, c'est sur les ressemblances et les convergences, qu'une politique d'intégration met l'accent afin, dans l'égalité des droits et des obligations, de rendre solidaires les différentes composantes ethniques et culturelles de notre société et de donner à chacun, quelle que soit son origine, la

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[129] Hargreaves (1995), p. 195.
[130] Wihtol de Wenden (1991), p. 328.
[131] Wihtol de Wenden (1991), p. 328.
[132] Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux, *De l'immigré au citoyen* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1989).

possibilité de vivre dans cette société dont il a accepté les règles et dont il devient un élément constituant.[133]

Later on in the report, the authors underline that their understanding of a policy of integration is that it should "...obéir à *une logique d'égalité et non à une logique de minorités*."[134] (Italicised in report)

It is claimed by the authors of the *Haut Conseil* report that integration or integration policy does not just deal with immigrant populations. However, the report produced by the *Haut Conseil* does seem to focus on these groups in particular: "La notion d'étranger, la notion d'immigré", "la notion de personnes d'origine étrangère" and the "notion de personnes exclues ou marginalisées", whilst being less specific, would not appear to be central to the HCI's concerns and it is the last category cited.[135] For although there is a brief reference to those "exclus" of French '*de souche*' origin, in the actual definition of integration, only newcomers, i.e. "des nouveaux members", or, in other words, foreigners are referred to.[136] Indeed, the acquisition of nationality is often referred to as being an essential mechanism that favours integration. Favell shows that one of the main aims of the *Haut Conseil à l'intégration* was to obtain data about practices of integration across France. In order to do this, a questionnaire was sent out to 73 *communes* in an attempt to 'measure' the degree of integration across France. Interestingly, the criteria which were used to gauge degrees of integration clearly set apart the French and the '*immigrés*', even though the report did try to claim that integration concerned *all* French people. The criteria were: nationality, family, social advancement and social involvement. With regard to nationality and family, the survey asked questions about attachment to the home country and extent of family reunification, money being sent out of France, applications for French nationality, use of the French language, whether families were polygamous and pregnancy rates. Favell therefore

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[133] Haut Conseil à l'Intégration, *Pour un modèle français d'intégration*, (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1991), p. 18.

[134] Ibid., p.19. In a similar manner to the Nationality Commission's deliberations, the question of Islam, its status in France and its relationship to *la laïcité* formed one of the central aspects of the *Haut Conseil's* deliberations. This focus on Islam reflected a widespread anxiety and suspicion of Islam, France's Muslim immigrants and their descendants.

[135] Ibid., pp.15-17.

[136] Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux cited in *Pour un modèle français d'intégration*, March 1991, p.18.

concludes: "...such official criteria are in fact dependent on a fixed opposition between the behaviour of 'normal' French and the *groupe cible*: the object group, defined as 'made up of immigrants and their second-generation children, whether they are foreigners or French nationals'..."[137] Thus the declared aim for diversity was going to be measured against a certain idea of what being culturally French signified.

Favell shows that the third report published by the HCI, *Les conditions juridiques et culturelles de l'intégration* concerns itself with two main elements. First it identifies certain integration mechanisms, namely, "schools, associations, the media....where the coming together of cultures takes place or ought to take place".[138] Secondly, the report clearly sets out certain normative aims with regard to cultural diversity within political unity. Favell also points out that the shift in public policy from *insertion* to *intégration* signalled a shift from a pragmatic understanding of equality in terms of concrete access to employment, housing etc. to a much more normative or abstract notion of equality.

In a later text published by the *Haut Conseil*, entitled *Affaiblissement du lien social, enfermement dans les particularismes et intégration dans la cité* (1997), a number of observations are made with regard to facilitating integration. The authors of the report claim that children should be kept in school for as long a period as possible so that they can assimilate a maximum of what are referred to as "principes de la vie dans notre société..."[139] The conclusion of the report reads as follows: " ...si nous voulons que ceux qui sont chez nous soient, par l'esprit et la sensibilité, aussi près que possible de nous, jusqu'à nous rejoindre, si nous voulons qu'ils croient à nos principes, essayons de vivre les valeurs auxquelles nous croyons, et dont nous réclamons."[140] On the basis of these

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[137] Favell (2001), p. 73 cites *Pour un modèle français d'intégration*, March 1991, pp. 152-82.
[138] Favell, (2001), p.71 cites *Conditions juridiques et culturelles d'intégration*, March 1992, p. 8. This text was published together with four other reports in *L'Intégration à la française*, (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1993). The other four reports were: *Pour un modèle français d'intégration*, March 1991; *Les étrangers et l'emploi*, March 1993; *La Connaissance de l'immigration et de l'intégration*, November 1991, March 1993. Other HCI publications include *Affaiblissement du lien social, enfermement dans les particularismes et intégration dans la cité* (Paris: La Documentation Française, June 1997) and *L'Islam dans la République* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2001).
[139] Haut Conseil à l'Intégration, Rapport au Premier Ministre, *Affaiblissement du lien social, enfermement dans les particularismes et intégration dans la cité* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1997), p. 57.
[140] Ibid., p.66.

statements made in the 1997 report regarding integration, two observations can be made. First of all, the fact that the report makes several references to "notre société, nos valeurs" reinforces the notion that the report addresses a public, which is perceived to be outside of the mainstream of French society. The use of the possessive pronoun "notre" thus serves to designate an 'us' and a 'them' yet paradoxically, integration is a policy which aims to include all sections of society as an integral whole. In its aim to integrate, such an approach seems to partially segregate. Secondly, this report does not just address those immigrants who have just arrived in France. It concerns children of migrants who have been born and brought up in France. One could, as a result, question the viability of stressing the importance of adhering to certain values when addressing people who have been born and/or educated in France.

In the final analysis, the *Haut Conseil á l'intégration* reaffirmed the principle of integration and the Republican melting pot, even if it was accepted that traditional modes of integration had been challenged and partially replaced by other mechanisms of integration. Weil cites the HCI report published in 1997 as follows:

> L'école reste – elle est plus que jamais – l'âme de ce creuset. [...] L'armée – et surtout le service militaire – ne sont plus au cœur du creuset [...] Le travail, lui aussi, n'occupe plus la même place : l'accès à l'emploi est difficile; la condition de salarié souvent précaire [...] Mais, face à ces reculs, les dernières décennies ont consacré la prodigieuse avancée du monde associatif et.de celui des médias qui n'étaient que de modestes facteurs d'intégration il y a cinquante ans [...] ils sont des piliers du nouveau creuset... [141]

The government's tough stance on immigration continued well into the 1990s, with 1997 seeing the passing of the controversial *Loi Debré* under Alain Juppé's leadership as prime minister. The *Loi Debré* introduced further restrictive measures concerning entry to, and residence in France and made the expulsion of illegal immigrants easier.[142] However, the Left's return to a government headed by socialist

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[141] Weil (2002), p. 177 cites *Affaiblissement du lien social, enfermement dans les particularismes et intégration dans la cité*, Rapport du Haut Conseil à l'intégration, (Paris : La Documentation Française, 1997).
[142] See Jane Freedman, 'Women and Immigration: Nationality and Citizenship', in *Women, Immigration and Identities in France* ed. by Jane Freedman and Carrie Tarr (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp.13-28 (pp. 16-17).

Lionel Jospin signalled a thaw in immigration policy. *The Loi Guigou* was passed on 17 March 1998, under Jospin's 'gauche plurielle' government. It abandoned the *manifestation de volonté* clause, which had been introduced by the Méhaignerie reforms five years earlier and it re-established "*l'acquisition de plein droit de la nationalité*" at the age of eighteen for those born of two foreign parents, provided that the individual had resided on French soil for five years preceding his/her eighteenth birthday. Weil points out that the notion of choice is of greater importance in the Guigou Law since the right of parents to declare their minor child French, *without* the latter's consent, was not re-established. In the six months preceding his/her eighteenth birthday and in the year following it, the youth in question can reject French nationality. In addition, the *Loi Guigou* means that nationality can be acquired at the earlier age of thirteen upwards, with parental consent, and from the age of sixteen upwards, without parental consent. This latest law also re-establishes the granting of French nationality at birth for those whose parents were born in pre-independent Algeria, though not for those from other former French colonies. The most significant aspect of the *Loi Guigou* is the fact that it strengthens the *droit du sol* principle, which had been called into question by the Méhaignerie reform of 1993. Patrick Weil argues that the 1998 legislation can be seen as an attempt by the Jospin government to establish a synthesis or a middle way between the nationality laws of 1889 and 1993: "La nouvelle législation, adoptée en 1998, a voulu opérer une synthèse entre le principe d'égalité d'accès à la nationalité française (institué par la loi de 1889) et l'exigence de l'autonomie de la volonté (renforcée en 1993)."[143]

The passing of the *Loi Guigou* in 1998 seemed to signal an end to the fifteen-year long debate about nationality, citizenship and integration and no more such legislation has been enacted since. What led to this 'fizzling out' of the debate? More importantly, what were the factors which led to the dilution of the negative and xenophobic discourse concerning non-European immigrants and their descendants? In other words, what led to the emergence of what Wieviorka calls the *face d'ombre* of nationalism, principally expressed in the guise of the *Front National* and which factors led to its subsequent demise? We have seen that the municipal elections in 1983 marked a turning point

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[143] Weil (2002), p. 180. See also Feldbum (1999), pp. 153-154.

because of the first major electoral success of the FN. We have also seen that as a result, the mainstream political parties, and especially the centre-right parties began to adopt a harsher stance towards immigration. However, to focus solely on party political dynamics as an explanation for the rise of *un discours de fermeture* in 1980s France is not entirely satisfactory. Indeed, there were other underlying reasons which pre-dated the emergence of the FN in the first place. The next section will therefore focus firstly on the factors which led to an increasingly xenophobic discourse surrounding non-European immigrants and their descendants in the 1980s and early 1990s and secondly, on the reasons for the decline or at least the transformation of such discourse in the late 1990s and the early twenty-first century.

Part III: The Turbulent Trajectory of Xenophobic Discourse on Immigration

On a general level, we have already cited a number of reasons for the rise of the *face d'ombre* of French nationalism in the 1980s, one of the most important ones being the economic recession sparked off by the oil crisis of 1973. The persistence of a recession and increasing unemployment also coincided with the emergence of a 'second-generation' of North African immigrants who, mainly as a result of the *marches pour l'égalité*, were becoming increasingly visible as potential political actors.[144] The realisation that immigration to France was no longer about temporary and cheap male labour but had, instead, led to the permanent settlement of non-European families in France, combined with the economic crisis, meant that the latest waves of immigrants became scapegoats in a context of few employment opportunities for nationals and

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[144] In *La Beurgeoisie: les trois âges de la vie associative issue de l'immigration* (Paris : CNRS Éditions, 2001), Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau provide an outline of the *marches des beurs*. The first '*marche des beurs*' took place between September and December 1983. It included 10,000 people and started from Lyon, ending in Paris. Those involved included youth collectives; immigrant associations such as the MRAP (*Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples*) and the MTI (*Mouvement des travailleurs immigrés*); French political parties and trade unions. The major theme of the March was the fight for equal rights under the Republican slogan 'liberty, equality, fraternity'. It was essentially a North African (Muslim though not Islamist) movement. The second March started on 3 November 1984 and arrived in Paris on 1 December. It was the initiative of a newly created youth collective, *Convergence 1984*. This March met with less success due to internal tensions and disagreements about its objectives. However, de Wenden and Leveau claim that with hindsight, this second March saw the emergence of the 'new citizenship' theme, which marked a break with a '*jacobin*' understanding of the French nation. See pp. 34-38.

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foreigners. The bitter memories of the Algerian War also meant that North Africans (*les Maghrébins*) in general and the Algerians in particular were regarded with the most suspicion of all (this applied to both the *primo arrivants and* their children).

Hargreaves shows that the Single European Act of 1986 added to a growing feeling that the French 'nation' was being challenged since it was argued that with the proposed phasing out of inter-EC state border controls, to be completed by 1992, national sovereignty was gradually being eroded. In addition, the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, which paved the way for the introduction of local voting and eligibility rights for citizens of European Union member States as well as monetary and economic union, increased what Hargreaves refers to as a "partial dilution of national sovereignty".[145] The *malaise* which resulted from the combination of all these factors can be seen as the backdrop to the emergence of a *discours de fermeture* which was channelled primarily against non-European and particularly North African immigrants and their descendants who were subsequently seen as responsible or at least as aggravating the *malaise* in which France found itself.

On a more specific level, how can the rise of the *Front National* as the most visible expression of the growing *fermeture*, be accounted for? Nonna Mayer and Pascal Perrineau show that the rise of the *FN* in France in the 1980s was once again, the result of a combination of factors:

> Le charisme de son leader, la montée du chômage, l'importance de la population immigrée, les angoisses devant la mondialisation, l'arrivée des socialistes au pouvoir, la crise des organisations politiques traditionnelles, le scrutin de liste à la proportionnelle [in 1986 legislative elections], chacun de ces facteurs a joué, mais aucun suffit à expliquer le phénomène.[146]

Indeed, Mayer and Perrineau add that all these conditions have existed in other European countries yet the extreme right does not score as highly as the *FN* in France.

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[145] Hargreaves (1995), p. 168.
[146] Nonna Mayer, Pascal Perrineau, eds, *Le Front National à découvert* (Paris : Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1996), p. 381. For more details about the effects of proportional representation and extreme right electoral scores, see Elisabeth L. Carter, 'Proportional Representation and the Fortunes of Right-Wing Extremist Parties' in *West European Politics*, 25. 3 (2002), 125-146.

However, they do argue that the swing back to the Left in 1981 after a period of twenty-three years during which the French political landscape had been dominated by the Right was the "[moment] *détonateur*."[147] Mayer and Perrineau argue that the rise of the *FN* should thus be seen in the context of the growing disenchantment of electors:

> A la radicalisation des électeurs de l'opposition, exaspérés par le gouvernement des "socialo-communistes", répond le désenchantement des électeurs du 10 mai, déçus par la politique de rigueur menée à partir de 1983, rejoints en 1988 par les déçus de la cohabitation et en 1995 par les frustrés des alternances à répétition.[148]

Indeed, Mayer and Perrineau show how widespread disillusionment with mainstream political parties, regarded by a large proportion of the electorate as untrustworthy and corrupt, was advantageous to the FN since its electoral base consequently grew. The '*vote sanction*' which benefited the FN meant that their electoral base was not restricted to a small number of narrow grass-roots militants and activists. Mayer and Perrineau illustrate that in fact the majority of FN voters did not qualify themselves as extreme right-wing but rather voted for Jean-Marie Le Pen's and/or his party representatives in order to 'punish' the mainstream political parties for their shortcomings and failures. In addition, the FN was able to recruit amongst workers, the unemployed and the *laissés-pour-compte* and therefore build up its electoral base amongst those social 'classes' who were formerly recruited into the Communist Party.[149]

In order to understand the popularity of FN discourse, Mayer and Perrineau also argue that its simplistic message gave the party extraordinary appeal. Therefore slogans such as "Trois millions de chômeurs = trois d'immigrés en trop" and "immigration = insécurité" met with enormous success. Mayer and Perrineau claim that: "...le FN a cristallisé politiquement les inquiétudes et les protestations de nombreux Français qui,

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[147] Nonna Mayer, Pascal Perrineau, eds, *Le Front National à découvert* (Paris : Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1996), p. 381.

[148] Ibid., p. 381.

[149] Mayer and Perrineau (1996), p. 382 point out that contrary to received wisdom, old Communists activists did *not* defect to the *Front National* but there was a lack of continuity in recruitment amongst the younger generations who instead of being 'recruited' by the PCF were directly 'recruited' by the FN instead.

déboussolés par plus de vingt années de crise, sont à la recherche de boucs émissaires : l'État, les immigrés, les délinquants, les minorités...[150] They also argue that this 'crystallisation' of fears was facilitated by the mainstream Right's attitude towards the FN, in Dreux (1983) and in the Bouches-du-Rhône (1988), which transformed the latter into a political 'partner'.

However, whilst the FN continued in the 1980s and 1990s to generate much controversy through its success, it did not really manage to impose itself as a major political force, apart from winning the control of a number of local municipalities (Dreux in 1983; Orange, Marignane and Toulon in 1995; Vitrolles in 1997). Mayer and Perrineau demonstrate that Jean-Marie Le Pen's party did not have a viable or credible action plan to boost the economy since it relied on the following rather extreme measures: repatriating all immigrants, dismissing all civil servants, abolishing all income tax and abolishing social security reimbursement of abortion to supposedly kick-start France's birth-rate. This sort of far-fetched economic policy is most likely linked with the fact that as Mayer and Perrineau show, only 6% of the FN's own voters regarded Jean-Marie Le Pen as a real 'statesman'.[151] In addition, Mayer and Perrineau point out that the FN's electoral base has always been rather volatile and unstable because its success is often the result of a *vote protestataire* which can be massive in a first round of voting but which often dissipates in the second round of voting.[152]

The second half of the 1990s saw an easing of the economic crisis and increasing confidence of voters with regards to unemployment. Michel Marian shows how the creation of 350, 000 public sector jobs for young people for five years (the *emplois jeunes* programme) and the introduction of the thirty-five hour week which created a further

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[150] Ibid., p. 383.
[151] Ibid., p. 386.
[152] Mayer and Perrineau (1996), p. 388 show that this was the case in the 1988 legislative elections when Jean-Marie Le Pen lost nearly two million voters in between the first and second rounds of voting. The *vote protestataire* dimension and the instability it brings with it, was very visible in the 2002 presidential elections when the electorate, many of whom were disillusioned with mainstream party politics and politicians, voted massively for Jean-Marie Le Pen. He gained over 17% of votes in the first round, which meant that for the first time ever, the FN candidate was carried through to the second round, just behind the incumbent Jacques Chirac (who won 20% of the votes) – Source: Gérard Courtois, 'Un important séisme politique', *Le Monde.fr*, 25 June 2002.

250,000 new jobs meant that public perceptions about the economic climate were generally better than they were in the 1980s.[153] In a climate of increasing public confidence, the FN's appeal as an anti-immigration party waned as did the need to find scapegoats. Pascal Perrineau argues that the 'fizzling out' of the public debate about immigration had its consequences on the decline of the FN. Quoted in *Le Monde*, Perrineau also evokes the success of certain sections of the Left in regaining potential voters due to their new tough stance with regard to the globalisation issue: "... la volonté d'une partie de la gauche 'de s'opposer à la mondialisation occupe un terrain où la nouvelle droite et l'extrême droite étaient présentes depuis longtemps.'"[154] This factor, in addition to the emergence of Charles Pasqua's right-wing RPF party meant that some elements of the FN electorate have been 're-absorbed' back into the mainstream, according to Perrineau.[155] Furthermore, however marginal and temporary its effect may have been, it is perhaps also necessary to take into account the 1998 World Cup (hosted by France) and the so-called '*effet coupe mondiale*' which signalled that many people in France were finally beginning to positively accept that France was a 'multiracial' country. The fact that Zinedine Zidane, a Frenchman of Algerian Berber origin emerged as a national 'hero' of French football, whilst clearly not being the reason for the FN's demise, is reflective of a changing political and social climate in the France of the late 1990s.

In addition, the FN became increasingly divided and in 1999, eventually split into two separate parties, the *Front National*, still headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen and the *Mouvement National Républicain* (MNR), headed by Le Pen's former deputy, Bruno Mégret. In addition to a changing economic, social and political climate, this split has also damaged the electoral potential of the 'old' unified FN.

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[153] Michel Marian, 'France 1997-2002: Right-Wing President, Left-Wing Government' in *The Political Quarterly*, 73.3 (2002), 258-265 (pp. 259-260).
[154] Pascal Perrineau cited in 'Les Universitaires analysent l'ampleur du déclin de l'extrême droite en France' by Nicolas Weill in *LeMonde.fr, Thématique: Le parcours du Front National depuis 1995*, 17 April, 2002.
[155] Pascal Perrineau cited in *LeMonde.fr*, Ibid. *RPF – Rassemblement pour la France*.

So in the run-up to the 2002 presidential elections, Jean-Marie Le Pen was not seriously expected to proceed to the second round.[156] Indeed, it was generally assumed that the second round would be a predictable battle between Chirac and Jospin. This widespread assumption was accompanied by a generalised disenchantment with mainstream politicians and numerous political corruption scandals. There was also a sense that Jospin's socialist *'gauche caviare'* government had 'sold out' on its socialist principles and abandoned ordinary people. In addition to these factors, the fragmentation of the Left's candidates (sixteen candidates in the first round, seven of whom were candidates of the Left), an unprecedented abstention rate and the domination of *l'insécurité* throughout the campaign, all contributed to Jean-Marie Le Pen's toppling of Jospin as the runner-up candidate, thus provoking what has come to be known as *'un séisme politique'*.[157]

The massive wave of mobilisation which ensued after the shock result of 21 April 2002, the rallying cry of which was to *"faire barrage au Front National"*, reveals that although 'law and order' (*l'insécurité*) which dominated the run-up to the elections, was in many ways a veiled way of discussing old 'xenophobic' fears about *les jeunes des banlieues* i.e. *les jeunes issus de l'immigration [maghrébine]*, Jean-Marie Le Pen was not going to be allowed to succeed. This suggests that the *'séisme politique'* of April 2002 was essentially the result of a *'vote sanction'* phenomenon rather than the reaffirmation of a *discours de fermeture*. However, the wave of mobilisation which had developed between the first and second round had already waned by the legislative elections which took place on 9 and 16 June. An even higher record abstention rate in the first round of

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[156] The media and the polls were accused of having led voters to believe that the second round of voting was always going to be a duel between Chirac and Jospin. This meant that the 'vote utile' message was not stressed enough to potential voters. Even two hours before the polling stations closed, the exit polls still did not predict that Le Pen would go through to the second round and thus eliminate Jospin. See René Haby, 'La Vie publique en France', *Regards sur l'actualité*, (2001-2002), No. spécial, (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2002), pp. 199-200 for more details.

[157] For example, *Le Monde dossier thématique* about the presidential and legislative elections, 2002 is entitled 'Retour sur un séisme politique'. (*LeMonde.fr*, 25 June, 2002. In the first round of voting, Chirac obtained 19.88% and Le Pen obtained 16.84%. Jospin came third with 16.18%. (Source: René Haby, 'La Vie publique en France', *Regards sur l'actualité*, (2001-2002), No. spécial, (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2002), p. 195.

legislative elections reveals a more profound disillusionment on the part of the French voter with regard to party politics and politicians.[158]

It is possible to argue that the presidential and legislative elections of spring 2002 and the unprecedented success of Jean-Marie Le Pen is different to the earlier electoral gains of the FN. The France of the early 1980s and the first half of the 1990s was one which was beset by economic crisis and as a result immigration became increasingly and negatively politicised reflecting a rather classic scapegoat scenario. As we have seen above, the *malaise* of this period was slightly different to that of the late 1990s and the early twenty-first century. One of the main factors in this shift is an ever-increasing sense of *"la crise du politique"*, and a growing sense of *décalage* between politicians and ordinary French voters.[159] Although this dimension was a feature of the emergence of the FN in the first place, it is possible to argue that the sense of disenchantment with political corruption and *affaires judiciaires* was not as great in the 1980s and early 1990s as it has been in the run-up to the 2002 elections. In addition, whilst immigration was at the forefront of previous elections, it was not as overtly central to the 2002 elections. This difference between the 2002 elections and previous successes of the far right in France can perhaps be qualified in the following manner: whilst past FN victories of the 1980s in particular were the expression of a xenophobic or nationalist backlash directed primarily at non-European and North African immigrants, the 2002 elections were more the expression of a general *populist* backlash, directed against *la classe politique*.[160]

However, the dominance of *l'insécurité* as a theme of the 2002 elections barely masks the spectre of the old fears and suspicions about *les jeunes issus de l'immigration maghrébine*, who are generally referred to in the media and by politicians as though in

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[158] According to Gérard Courtois, the abstention rate in the first round of the legislative elections was ten points higher than the first round of the presidential election on 21 April. See 'L'abstention record assure la victoire de la droite', *LeMonde.fr*, 25/06/02.

[159] Gérard Courtois refers to the *"crise du politique"* in 'Crise du politique, crise de l'État', *LeMonde.fr*, 25 June 2002. The abstention rate at the first round of voting in the presidential elections was 28.4%, (reaching more than 30% in *Ile de France*), the highest abstention rate ever recorded under the Fifth Republic. See René Haby, 'La Vie publique en France', *Regards sur l'actualité*, (2001-2002), No. spécial, (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2002), p.195 for more details.

[160] For more discussion of the dynamics of populism and nationalism, see Wieviorka (1993).

code language, as *les jeunes* or *les jeunes de banlieue*. This generalised preoccupation with *l'insécurité* in France, coupled with renewed concerns about fundamentalist Islam in the post -'9/11' context may indeed lead once again to discourses of *fermeture* vis-à-vis the 'second and third generations' of North African immigrants. Indeed, the re-establishment of the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* in October 2002 could be seen as symptomatic of renewed concerns with regards to immigration. The field research which was conducted as a major element of this dissertation was carried out between September 2000 and September 2001, the two very last interviews conducted in the days following the September 11th attacks and well before the election campaigns officially got underway. As a result, the fieldwork findings which feature in this thesis cannot take into account (with a couple of exceptions) the post September 11th and pre-2002 election context. However, the debate surrounding *l'insécurité* and its ambiguous links with *les jeunes issus de l'immigration* is not entirely new and therefore it is possible to argue that constant media attention surrounding '*la question des banlieues*' in the late 1990s and early twenty-first century has created a climate which will have affected the young people who took part in the field research and the ways in which they construct their own experiences. Another facet of the 2002 elections, the '*crise du politique*' is also another phenomenon which has been developing over the last couple of decades and this is visible in the responses and attitudes of the young French-born individuals of North African origin who took part in the field research. Perhaps most importantly, although the extreme right is faced with many obstacles, the *phénomène FN/MNR* (i.e. the perception that *lepéniste* or extreme right attitudes could imminently impact on one's immediate environment) and the anti-immigration discourses of the 1980s and 90s *do* seem to inform some of the ways in which the young people who were interviewed, construct their own experiences. More specific attention will be paid to the discourses of the young individuals of North African origin in subsequent chapters. However, before doing so, it is helpful if we concentrate on another layer of discourse surrounding immigration in France: the academic debate. This will be the focus of Chapter 2

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review and Fieldwork Objectives: Discourse and Experience

Introduction

When embarking on research in the field of immigration and in this case, immigrant-origin North African populations in France, it soon becomes clear that there is a vast and varied amount of literature in this field. This chapter will serve as a literature review of the main aspects of research into immigration in France, in the attempt to show how the empirical aspect of the present doctoral research can be seen to point to new areas of enquiry which have hitherto been little explored.

We can distinguish three main areas of research which are all-important if we are to understand what it means to talk about North African immigration in contemporary France. First of all there is a corpus of literature which will be referred to as the normative or ideological approach to the question of immigration. This aspect of research concentrates on the implications of immigration (especially *une immigration de peuplement* on a long-term basis) in terms of how this affects majority conceptions of national identity (particularly of the 'receiving society), what status immigrants and their descendants should have in the new society and cultural difference. In the French intellectual debate of the 1980s and 1990s, the discussions often became paralysed around the notion of 'multiculturalism', which was largely seen as an 'American' import and therefore a threat to the Republican 'nation'. It would be impossible to discuss *all* scholarly work carried out in this domain and this chapter will focus primarily on the contributions of the following authors: Emmanuel Todd, Dominique Schnapper, Michel Wieviorka, Alain Touraine, Danilo Martuccelli and Tobie Nathan as far as the French debate is concerned.

The second area of research which I will discuss is that which concentrates on immigrant associations, their history and their changing aims. This approach, which can be seen as part of the wider field of research on immigration, has tended to be dominated by political scientists, particularly Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, Rémy Leveau and Jocelyne Cesari. The work of de Wenden has been particularly important in terms of developing the notion of 'new citizenship'. This concept first emerged in debates over immigrants and their descendants, referring to new modes of political participation and to the eventual separation between nationality and citizenship within the context of the European Union. It could be argued that this area of research is less normative than the work carried out on questions of cultural difference. It maps out the *paysage associatif* as well as describing the main changes that immigrant associations (and *'associations issues de l'immigration'*) have undergone in terms of their aims and outlook, since 1981, when the law governing the formal organisation of foreigners into associations was liberalised.[1]

A third 'specialist' sub-category of research on immigration in France and in particular, on North African immigrants, can be broadly identified as focusing on the descendants of immigrants, or *les jeunes* as they are generically referred to.[2] The literature is normally dominated by the following themes or social 'problems': the *banlieue*, family conflict (particularly where young women are concerned), juvenile delinquency/violence, unemployment and more recently, discrimination. Much of the existing literature on young people of 'immigrant-origin' has taken the notion of *integration* as its framework, thus asking how and to what extent young people of immigrant descent are being integrated into mainstream society. Indeed, the literature which explicitly focuses on the integration of 'immigrant-origin' populations is vast and in order to discuss this subject thoroughly, an entire chapter on integration would be necessary.[3] This chapter will instead focus on the work of the following authors: Michèle

[1] Prior to this law, passed 9 October 1981, non-French nationals wishing to set up their own association were legally obliged to make a declaration to the Ministry of the Interior beforehand.

[2] It is important to point out that in Francophone research, those groups of individuals who are known as *les jeunes* are in fact more often than not, young people of immigrant - notably North African origin. Catherine Neveu notes this in 'L'Anthropologue, l'habitant et le citoyen: le rapport au politique dans une ville du Nord' *Ethnologie française*, 29.4 (1999), 559-567.

[3] The question of integration has been addressed by sociologists: Dominique Schnapper, Didier Lapeyronnie, Françoise Gaspard; by demographers notably Michèle Tribalat; political scientists such as

Tribalat, Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, Didier Lapeyronnie and Nacira Guénif Souilamas (young people of 'immigrant-origin' and integration) ; François Dubet, David Lepoutre, Henri Rey (*la banlieue*); France Aubert, Maryse Tripier, François Vourc'h, Philippe Bataille, Didier Fassin, Michel Wieviorka (racism and discrimination).

These are three main bibliographical areas which are part of a wider category of research on immigration in contemporary France. Since the end of the 1990s and the start of the new millennium, discussions about immigration have shifted slightly to focus on the 'new migration' with a focus on asylum-seekers, whilst the debates about North African-origin individuals has often 'matured' into the question of their political representation or the lack of it within mainstream political groupings.[4] Indeed, some would argue that the debates about the 'Republic' versus 'multiculturalism' are almost exhausted. Nevertheless, it is still essential to consider the debates of the 1980s and 1990s in order to intellectually construct a pertinent research project which deals with the experiences and identities of young people of North African origin. Whilst it may not be possible to argue that these individuals are 'the products' of the political and intellectual climate of the 1980s and 1990s, it is possible to claim that their attitudes will be informed by such a recent climate, its representations and its polemics.

This chapter will take each aspect of research in turn and discuss the various approaches more fully, as well as expose some of the possible shortcomings of the approaches. One of the limitations in all this research is the lack of explicit linking between the different approaches. For example, the more theoretical debates tend to remain normative in character, discussing the merits and disadvantages of universalism and particularism as organising principles in culturally plural societies. Yet, although the

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Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and social historians such as Gérard Noiriel. In addition, *La Documentation Française* published a series of government documents on the subject of integration after the 'hearings' of the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* (HCI). See *L'Intégration à la française* (1993) which included the following reports: *Pour un modèle français d'intégration* (March 1991); *La Connaissance de l'immigration et de l'intégration*, (November 1991, March 1993); *Conditions juridiques et culturelles d'intégration* (March 1992); *Les Étrangers et l'emploi* (March 1993). Other HCI publications include *Affaiblissement du lien social, enfermement dans les particularismes et intégration dans la cité*. (June 1997) and *L'Islam dans la République* (2001).

[4] For a discussion of the challenges of the new migration flows in the European context, see Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, *L'Immigration en Europe* (La Documentation Française, 1999a).

less normative research such as that carried out by Catherine Wihtol de Wenden on immigrant associations, does contain some discussion of the implications of findings for traditional models of integration and citizenship, the voices in the debate which call for an end to the perpetual opposition between universalist and differentialist approaches to immigrant incorporation are rather rare. A second limitation, which, as we shall see below, is remarked upon in the work of Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, is that the register of the normative debate about immigration is often out of step with the empirical 'realities' on the ground. As mentioned in the introduction to this volume, one of the main objectives of this thesis will attempt to re-articulate discourse and experience by combining a 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approach to the question of immigration, or more precisely 'immigrant-origin' individuals. Part I of the present chapter will focus on what I will henceforth refer to as the 'ideological' or 'normative' debate, which is essentially centred on the question of cultural difference in democratic societies. Part II will present the major aspects of a corpus of research which is concerned with collective mobilisation amongst immigrant populations and their descendants, where particular attention is paid to associations as a form of mobilisation. Part III will present the main parameters of research on young people of 'immigrant-origin'. Part IV will take the form of a critical evaluation of this recent and current research on immigration and will suggest ways of renewing the debate as well as presenting the empirical objectives of the thesis.

PART I: AN IDEOLOGICAL DEBATE

2. 1 Four Approaches

As was revealed in Chapter 1, the 1980s and much of the 1990s were characterised by a sense of *malaise*. This *malaise* can be seen as the result of three profound changes, which Michel Wieviorka reveals as having taken place in the France of the 1970s, 80s and 90s.[5] This first major change should be seen as the decline of the centrality of the workers' movement in a context of de-industrialisation. The second was more institutional, that is the institutions of the Republic – school, the police, the justice system, public services –

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[5] Michel Wieviorka, 'L'Insécurité peut-elle être jugulée?', in *Club Ulysse, Le Politique saisi par l'économie : enjeux économiques et sociaux des élections de 2002* (Paris: Economica, 2002), pp. 177-187.

were undergoing a crisis, yet any attempts at reform were generally met with defensiveness on the part of the *fonctionnaires* who feared loss of status. The third major change has been of a cultural nature and is summed up as the growth of individualism (the desire to participate and be a consumer for example). The economic crisis, globalisation, the permanent settlement of non-European-origin immigrants and the rise of the *Front National* were some of the main features of the period.

Since it is not possible to consider political or public discourse as wholly separate from intellectual debate, it is not surprising that the academic discussions in France reflected the *crispation* of the political climate. Wieviorka shows that the growing visibility of '*les identités*' throughout this period led to the development of a negative and politicised debate.[6] He argues that on the whole, the debate about cultural difference and increasing demands for official recognition of difference by 'minority' groups was divided into two camps. The first camp was referred to as *"les républicains"*. Its protagonists took the rather extreme position that any recognition of cultural difference in the public sphere would be contrary to the principles of the 'one and indivisible' Republic and would therefore have a devastating effect. Examples such as civil-war Lebanon or the war in ex-Yugoslavia were often cited as the road France could be going down, if it embraced 'American-style' multiculturalism.[7] The opposing camp, the *"démocrates"* who were less rigid about the recognition of difference, were accused by the *républicains* (also known as '*les républicanistes'*) of being '*communautaristes*' and of wanting to bring an end to the French Republic. One of the main images throughout this debate was America or more specifically, 'American multiculturalism', which was caricatured by the *républicaniste* camp, who argued that the recognition of cultural difference would lead to the increasing fragmentation or 'ghettoisation' of French society. This extremely polarised debate took on an ideological and seemingly irresolvable character.

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[6] See Michel Wieviorka, Jocelyne Ohana, eds, *La Différence culturelle : une reformulation des débats* (Paris : Balland, 2001), Introduction, pp. 7-14. See also Michel Wieviorka (2002), pp. 177-187.
[7] Wieviorka, Ohana, eds (2001), p. 8 points out that in this context, the adjective '*américain*' or '*à l'américaine*' was deliberately added to concepts, such as 'le multiculturalisme' in order to discredit them. Wieviorka points out that Régis Debray, a prominent intellectual figure in the debate, can be seen as a major protagonist of the *républicain* camp.

Since America, or more precisely, 'American multiculturalism' became a highly charged political symbol in French intellectual discourse of the 1980s and 1990s, it would be useful to consider the various positions held within this debate. In his article, 'Le multiculturalisme est-il une réponse?', Michel Wieviorka claims that in terms of the French debate, it is possible to distinguish four ideal-type positions with regards to the issue of cultural difference.[8] The first 'pole' is referred to as one which promotes the principle of assimilation, and is defined as follows:

> Il repose essentiellement sur l'idée que l'universalisme des droits individuels est la meilleure réponse aux risques de discrimination qu'apporte toute catégorisation des personnes sur des bases collectives et notamment culturelles. [...] Dans ses versions les plus radicales, cette orientation a pour projet d'arracher les individus à l'univers de leurs particularismes culturels, minoritaires et donc perçus alors comme nécessairement étroits et plus ou moins fermés sur eux-mêmes, de façon à les faire accéder aux valeurs universelles de la nation et de la citoyenneté.[9]

Wieviorka claims that the position of Emmanuel Todd typifies this position.

The second pole identified by Wieviorka is characterised by 'liberal tolerance' which accepts the expression of cultural specificity in the private sphere and even in the

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[8] The debate on cultural difference and multiculturalism in France should be seen in the wider context of the North American debate about cultural difference, which was effectively launched with the publication of *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls in 1971. This debate, although complex was essentially between two camps, the 'liberals' and the 'communitarians.' Rawls, who can be seen as a 'political liberal' argued that society should be seen as an association of people who should not only all accept the necessary 'rules' so that all members of the society can achieve a better life, they should also accept that some rules are rationally more appropriate than others and therefore more 'just'. Rawls also highlighted the challenge of the pluralism of ideas within a given society and how this should be dealt with, namely, through the *tolerance* of plurality and diversity. In terms of identity, Rawls' individual is considered without any reference to his/her community of 'belonging'. [On this question, see Sylvie Mesure and Alain Renaut, *Alter Ego: les paradoxes de l'identité démocratique*, (Paris : Aubier, 1999), pp. 63-68; p. 108)]. In this publication, Mesure and Renaut designate other 'liberals' such as Richard Dworkin, Charles Larmore, Thomas Nagle, Will Kymlicka and Bruce Ackerman. The 'communitarian camp' have argued that the individualist or 'atomised' vision of identity, which is proposed by political liberalism leads to a false vision since identity is always formed in relation to one's community. Furthermore, in response to Rawls, the communitarians have argued that there should be a priority of the 'good' over the 'just'. [See Philippe de Lara, 'Communauté et Communautarisme', pp. 96-101 in Philippe Reynaud et Stéphane Rials, eds, *Dictionnaire de Philosophie Politique* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1996)]. Well-known 'communitarians' are cited by Mesure and Renaut as Michael Sandel, Michael Walzer, Charles Taylor and A. MacIntyre. It should be noted that the notion of 'camps' within this debate is artificial and merely convenient, since both 'sides' constitute heterogeneous and varied viewpoints.

[9] Michel Wieviorka, 'Le Multiculturalisme est-il une réponse?' *La Revue de la CFDT*, 16 (1999b), 3-23 (p.12).

public sphere "...dans la mesure où ils [les particularismes] n'y causent aucun trouble par leurs demandes, leurs revendications ou même simplement leur visibilité."[10] He argues that Dominique Schnapper's ideas correspond to this approach.[11]

The third ideal-type position is referred to as "*la reconnaissance*":

> Il implique de chercher à concilier les exigences du particularisme culturel et celles de l'universalisme en matière linguistique, religieuse et d'éducation ou d'accès au bien public, à l'emploi, au logement. [...] Il s'agit non plus de tolérer la différence culturelle, mais de mettre en œuvre un équilibre articulé, certes difficile à établir et à maintenir, entre le respect de la différence et celui de droits et de valeurs universels.[12]

Wieviorka identifies his own stance with this position which he claims also typifies the views of political philosopher Charles Taylor.

The fourth position is the *communautariste* school of thought, which, according to Wieviorka promotes the notion that is possible to ensure "...la coexistence de communautés au sein d'un même espace politique, dans la mesure où des règles assez strictes (éventuellement imposées ou gérées par un pouvoir étranger ou lointain) fixent le jeu des relations intercommunautaires et celui du partage et de l'accès au pouvoir."[13] It is argued that Tobie Nathan's ideas correspond to this approach.

This typology of four 'poles' marking the parameters of the debate is useful for our purposes since it allows us to give an overview of the ways in which cultural difference has been discussed in France, particularly during the 1980s and 90s. The

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[10] Ibid., p. 12.

[11] Dominique Schnapper's 'liberal tolerance' approach can be seen as similar to John Rawls (and other North American 'liberals') who advocates the *tolerance* of diversity. This shows that the tendency in some French debates to regard all that is American as excessively '*communautariste*', is inaccurate since the ideas of one of the prominent 'Republicans', i.e., Dominique Schnapper, coincide with an American school of thought.

[12] Ibid., pp.12-13.

[13] Ibid., p.13. However, Wieviorka distinguishes between what he refers to as *communautarisme* in this fourth pole, and *communitarianism*. The communitarian position, which characterises Charles Taylor's position, is one which views the individual as a subject who should be able to define him/herself with reference to his/her specific culture.

intellectual discourses surrounding cultural difference in France were intertwined with the 'question' of immigration, which as we saw in Chapter 1, had by the 1980s and 90s, become an extremely politicised issue.

2.2 Cultural Difference and Multiculturalism

(i) An Assimilationist's View

In his book *Le Destin des immigrés: assimilation et ségrégation dans les démocraties occidentales*, Emmanuel Todd argues that the principle of assimilation should be upheld, not least because it is effective: "Jamais le processus d'assimilation n'a été aussi rapide, jamais la destruction des cultures immigrées n'a été aussi facile."[14] Todd criticises the slogan which became popularised in the 1980s, '*le droit à la différence*', claiming that such a notion is a "facteur d'anomie".[15] It is claimed that "le multiculturalisme anglo-saxon" barely masks its own suspicion of those who are different. Todd argues that rather, assimilation which does not celebrate difference, is a preferable approach: "Un assimilationnisme ouvert permettrait aux Maghrébins, aux Maliens et à bien d'autres de s'orienter avec une efficacité maximale dans leur processus d'adaptation. [...] la France veut faire de leurs enfants des Français à part entière."[16]

(ii) A 'Liberal Tolerance' View

Dominique Schnapper is one of the main French authors in theoretical debates about immigration, cultural difference and citizenship. The nation is central to Schnapper's paradigm, since in her view, a unified national context is the best way to incorporate immigrants and populations of immigrant-origin. The idea of the nation is opposed to the notion of identifying with an ethnicity. Thus Schnapper writes: "Il existe une différence de nature entre l'appartenance ethnique, vécue comme une donnée immédiate, et la participation à la nation, la seconde étant le produit d'une rupture avec le donné."[17] The implication here is that the nation is a rational mode of existence and participation and is

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[14] Emmanuel Todd, *Le Destin des immigrés. Assimilation et ségrégation dans les démocraties occidentales* (Paris : Seuil, 1994), p. 445.
[15] Ibid., p. 456.
[16] Ibid., p. 470.
[17] Dominique Schnapper, *La Communauté des citoyens : sur l'idée moderne des nations* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), p.95.

therefore somehow preferable to *l'appartenance ethnique*, which the immigrant or his/her descendants should engage with in the private sphere only.

The dichotomy between the individual and the group and the private and public sphere is central to Schnapper's approach to cultural difference, whereby it is expected that foreigners should integrate into the nation-state as individuals as opposed to culturally/linguistically-defined groups: "Ce qui fonde le principe - en même temps que les valeurs – de la nation démocratique, c'est l'opposition entre l'universalisme du citoyen et les spécificités de l'homme privé, membre de la société civile."[18] In the public sphere, all citizens are recognised as individuals and their origins are not taken into account. Indeed, according to Schnapper, political citizenship signifies the overcoming of cultural specificities and adhesion to the political project of the nation, that is, democracy. This is what Schnapper calls "La transcendance par la citoyenneté ou le principe de l'arrachement par la société politique aux appartenances concrètes..."[19] This idea is re-affirmed in a later publication, *La Relation à l'Autre* : "...la démocratie repose sur la distinction entre le privé, laissé à la liberté de chacun, et le public."[20]

Schnapper only argues for the visibility of, or reference to, cultural difference in the public sphere if it is *symbolic*, implicit and not officially or legally recognised, i.e. in the Constitution, for example.[21] Thus, the affirmation of cultural difference can be tolerated in the public sphere as long as it does not contradict universalist values. An argument employed against the official recognition of ethnic groups or minorities is that such a process could engender the crystallisation of difference. In other words, those who are recognised as ethnic, religious or cultural minorities will always be seen and stigmatised as such by the majority population.

Schnapper's work is very useful because it typifies a certain approach to immigration and diversity. However, it bears several ambiguities. Firstly, in her

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[18] Schnapper (1994), p.92.
[19] Schnapper (1994), p.113.
[20] Dominique Schnapper, *La Relation à l'Autre, : au cœur de la pensée sociologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), p.410.
[21] See Dominique Schnapper, *L'Europe des immigrés* (Paris: François Bourin, 1992), pp.170-171.

discussion of multicultural-inspired policies, which are portrayed in binary opposition to the universalist integration model, Schnapper tends to use rather extreme examples to demonstrate the *effets pervers* of multicultural policy. For example, in an attempt to reveal the possible *dérives* of a formal recognition of difference in the public sphere, Schnapper refers to the case of pre-civil war Lebanon, where government and parliamentary functions were equally divided to reflect the exact religious and ethnic make-up of Lebanese society:

> ...ces spécificités [culturelles] ne doivent pas fonder une identité *politique* particulière, reconnue en tant que telle à l'intérieur de l'espace public. Ce dernier doit rester le lieu de l'unité politique et du projet politique commun – faute de quoi on retrouverait la situation libanaise, où la Constitution organisait la vie commune de "minorités associées", [...] Ces dispositions constitutionnelles avaient préparé le délabrement de l'Etat et contribué à dissoudre l'identité nationale au profit des seules appartenances communautaires.[22]

In addition, Schnapper portrays the quarrels over the contents of history school textbooks in North America as being equivalent to the dismantling of the coherence of the nation:

> ...dans l'Etat de Californie, on n'a pu se mettre d'accord pour utiliser le même manuel d'histoire dans toutes les écoles; on y enseigne donc une histoire dite afro-américaine, *native*, c'est-à-dire indienne, "hispanique" et "blanche". Au Canada aussi, "l'histoire nationale a cessé d'être à la mode depuis les années 1960", elle est désormais remplacée par l'histoire du Québec et, plus généralement, par des histoires sociales des ethnies [...] N'est-ce pas là un indicateur – avant d'être éventuellement un instrument – de la fragmentation "ethnique" et même sociale des deux grandes sociétés nord-américaines?[23]

It could be argued that Schnapper's use of these rather extreme examples clouds the real issues at stake in France, namely, that social inequality suffered by those of 'immigrant-origin' cannot really be seriously addressed if the Republic continues to adopt a 'colour-blind' universalist policy of abstract equality as opposed to equity. Presenting multicultural policy as a process that could lead to such scenarios as pre-civil war Lebanon or the quarrels over the contents of history textbooks in North America, would

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[22] Schnapper (1994), p. 100.
[23] Ibid., p. 135. Schapper cites Roberto Perin, 'National histories and ethnic history in Canada', *Cahiers de recherche sociologique*, 20 (1993).

appear to be a device to marginalize serious discussion of the recognition of cultural difference or 'origins' in the public sphere.

Thus the approach which is favoured in the work of Dominique Schnapper tends to advocate *tolerance* as opposed to the *recognition* of difference. The framework of her argument is Republican and above all universalist.[24] However, there is an acknowledgement that abstract universalism does not always lead to equality in practice and some 'rectifying' measures are suggested. For example, it is argued that it in the short-term, it is acceptable for local authorities to take into account the cultural/('ethnic') make-up of the local population as far as housing and education policy is concerned. In *L'Europe des immigrés*, it is claimed that during elections, candidate lists could be established to ensure that candidates from a number of minorities appear on the lists in an official or semi-official capacity (the minorities suggested are as follows: women, "*beurs*"[25], Jews, Protestants, "*Méridionaux*", or "*rapatriés*"). Likewise, it is suggested that minorities be made more visible in the media. The fact that this remark is only made

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[24] It is interesting to note that the 'liberal tolerance' approach would in fact appear to cut across the widely accepted notion of the opposition between the French and 'Anglo-Saxon' models since British sociologist, John Rex's definition of a multicultural society is quite similar to that of Dominique Schnapper's definition of the Republican paradigm. See, for example, 'The Concept of a Multicultural Society' in *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration* ed. by Monserrat Guibernau and John Rex, (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 1997), pp. 205-220. Here, Rex argues that the ideal multicultural society is one where the public and private domain should be distinct from one another: "In a multicultural society we should distinguish between the public domain in which there is a single culture based upon the notion of equality between individuals and the private domain, which permits diversity between groups." (p. 218) Rex elaborates on this separation of the private and public domain whereby "The public domain includes the world of law, politics and economics. It also includes education insofar as this is concerned with [...] the perpetuation of civic culture." (pp.218-219). It is claimed that "Moral education, primary socialization and the inculcation of religious belief belong to the private domain." (p. 219). Rex's multicultural model seems to be very similar to a French tolerance model, as defended by Schnapper. An example of the similarities of his position to Schnapper's can be found in the following statement: "...in a society which seeks to achieve *both* equality of opportunity *and* the toleration (underlined by me) of cultural diversity, institutional arrangements will evolve to deal with this tension." (p. 214).

[25] *Beur* is a term which became popular during the 1980s to refer to the descendants of North African immigrants who were born in France or at least arrived at a young age. *Beur* is the *verlanised* form of *arabe*. *Verlan* is the suburban vernacular which inverts the syllables of existing words to create new words. Hence *verlan* is really *l'envers* turned around. In more recent years, the term "beur" has been increasingly rejected as outdated and the rejection of the term is reflected in the inversion of *beur* once again to give *rebeu*, a term which is much more frequently used amongst the 16-25 age-group to refer to themselves. For more details on *verlan*, see Pierre Merle, *Argot, verlan et tchatches* (Paris: Milan, 1997).

with reference to televised news reveals the merely symbolic nature of these suggestions.[26]

Another aspect of Schnapper's approach is the fact that modernity (which is defined by a democratic society) and tradition (which, it is tacitly implied, characterises ethnicity or the cultures of immigrants) tend to be opposed. In this paradigm, tradition would thus seem to have negative connotations and instead, the overcoming of one's cultural specificities is advocated: "Le citoyen se définit précisément par son aptitude à rompre avec les déterminations qui l'enfermeraient dans une culture et un destin imposés par sa naissance, à se libérer des rôles prescrits et des fonctions impératives."[27]

(iii) Recognition and the 'Subject'

I will now discuss the work of those researchers whose approach to the question of cultural difference can be described as reflecting an effort to combine universalism and difference. Amongst these authors, is Michel Wieviorka, who argues that the debate should no longer be about discussing the tensions between the universal and the particular and that the French Republic does not discuss the question of cultural difference openly enough. In his essay 'Culture, société et démocratie', Wieviorka states:

> Il faut finir avec les perspectives manichéennes qui opposent trop facilement deux registres, l'universel et le particulier, la République et le multiculturalisme, en développant une image de plus en plus abstraite et irréaliste du premier, et en caricaturant l'autre pour l'utiliser comme repoussoir. [...] Redisons-le, le problème n'est pas de choisir entre deux termes, entre deux exigences opposées, il est d'apprendre ou de réapprendre à les combiner...[28]

This attempt to combine or reconcile cultural difference and universalism politically is also expressed in the following statement: "...les institutions et le système politique

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[26] For discussion of these measures see Schnapper (1992), pp.170-171.
[27] Schnapper (1994), p. 92.
[28] Michel Wieviorka, 'Culture, société et démocratie' in *Une société fragmentée? Le multiculturalisme en débat*, ed. by Michel Wieviorka (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), pp.11-60 (p.43).

doivent être pensés en des termes autorisant et même promouvant la conciliation du général et du spécifique, de la raison et du droit, d'un côté, et des identités d'un autre."[29]

It is argued that the best way to manage cultural difference within a democratic society is through a politics of recognition.[30] This would promote a situation where the political parties deal with specific demands. This is seen as preferable to institutionalising the recognition of cultural difference through the granting of *droits culturels* which could, according to Wieviorka, lead to laws and principles which are too rigid and which would crystallise and 'freeze' certain groups within their 'otherness'.

The rejection of the notion of *droits culturels figés* leads to the promotion instead of the idea of the *sujet*, an independent individual who is able to make his or her own choices about his or her cultural identity. This links Wieviorka's argument to that of Alain Touraine, and so Wieviorka suggests that the debate on cultural difference should no longer be situated around just two poles/axes (universalism and particularism) but instead around three: universalism, particularism and the *sujet* (subject/actor).[31] The notion of the *sujet* is very useful because it adds a new dimension to the debate on cultural difference, allowing the discussion to progress by no longer being based entirely around two supposedly opposed concepts. The idea of the *sujet* implies that individuals are able to combine their cultural specificities and the principles of universalism so that they are neither subordinated by the cultural 'group', nor by the abstract notion of *l'intégration républicaine*.

Wieviorka also claims that the notion of culture should *not* be the central element of the debate concerning immigrants and their descendants since for the most part, the

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[29] Ibid., p.52.

[30] Here Wieviorka borrows the term used by 'communitarian', Charles Taylor in his book *Multiculturalism and the "Politics of Recognition"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). In the introduction to the French translation of this book, Amy Gutmann points out that Taylor defines ideal liberal democracy as one which combines the protection of universal rights *and* the public *recognition* of specific cultures. (See *Multiculturalisme : différence et démocratie* translated by Denis Armand Canal, (Paris: Aubier, 1994), pp. 24 - 25). Taylor argues that identity is partially formed by recognition, the absence of recognition or stigmatised perceptions. (pp.41-42).

[31] See Michel Wieviorka, (1999b), p.15.

recognition of someone's culture is rather meaningless if their existence is characterised more by poverty, unemployment and discrimination.[32] Thus a multicultural policy which only takes into account culture is criticised for focusing issues which are likely to be less relevant to the wider population than the more middle and upper classes. Instead, a policy of *integrated* multiculturalism is called for: " Le multiculturalisme intégré a pour caractéristique de ne pas séparer les demandes sociales des groupes minoritaires de leurs demandes culturelles, les besoins économiques généraux du pays concerné de ses valeurs politiques, morales et culturelles."[33]

Another sociologist whose work is important in what I have called the 'normative' debate is Alain Touraine. Touraine's research is particularly useful with regards to the notion of the *sujet* and his treatment of cultural difference or diversity places him firmly within the third 'pole' of Wieviorka's typology. In other words, he argues for the combination of universalism and particularism through the introduction of the *sujet*. With regards to immigrants, he clearly rejects the notion of assimilation or acculturation, distinguishing his approach from the more conservative *républicaniste* positions:

> On ne peut pas qualifier de démocratiques les positions libérales qui invitent les immigrés à s'assimiler à une culture et à s'intégrer à une société qui s'identifient elles-mêmes à des valeurs universelles. Passez, leur dit-on de votre monde fermé à notre monde ouvert [...] Quelle arrogance, quel mépris pour les cultures et les expériences différentes ![34]

It is argued that the immigrant's integration cannot be seen as successful if they are just blended into the masses, rather integration can be seen as successful if others recognise and respect their difference. However, a 'politics of recognition' should not lead to

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[32] Ibid., p.20.

[33] Ibid., pp. 6-7. A discussion of the dilemma which cultural minorities have to contend with, in the face of cultural recognition and socio-economic inequality (or *inequity*) can also be found in Nancy Fraser's article 'From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age', *New Left Review*, 212, (1995), 68-93. In this article Fraser argues that a combination of "transformative recognition" ("a deep restructuring of" and deconstruction of power relations between dominant and dominated groups) and "transformative redistribution" through a socialist framework is the ideal way to address both economic and cultural injustices, which can become intersected in the case of 'race' and gender.

[34] Alain Touraine, *Qu'est-ce que la démocratie?* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), p. 202.

cultural relativism: "N'en appelons surtout pas à une revanche de l'affectivité sur la raison, de la tradition sur la modernité ou de l'équilibre sur le changement. Cherchons à combiner et non à opposer ou à choisir."[35] Rather, it is argued that there should be some sort of balance between universalism and the recognition of cultural specificities:

> Il est souhaitable que les minorités soient reconnues dans une société démocratique, mais à conditions qu'elles reconnaissent la loi de la majorité et qu'elles ne soient pas absorbées par l'affirmation et la défense de leur identité. Un multiculturalisme radical, comme celui qui, aux États-Unis se prétend *politically correct*, aboutit à détruire l'appartenance à la société politique et la nation.[36]

In his book *Pourrons-nous vivre ensemble ? Égaux et différents*, Touraine presents his idea of the *sujet* as a means of escaping the endless opposition between universalism and particularism. He develops the observations made in *Critique de la modernité* where he argues that in an era of globalisation, modern society has become separated into two spheres: "Culture et économie, monde instrumental et monde symbolique se séparent."[37] Touraine argues that the main challenge facing contemporary societies is how to combine difference(s) within a unified collectivity in a context of both increasing globalisation and privatisation (in the sense of declining political participation etc.)

He gives a brief overview of three existing responses to this challenge, each of which he claims is seriously flawed. The first response is the 'neo-republican' response : "Elle [la réponse] appelle à la conscience collective et à la volonté générale, à la citoyenneté et à la loi." However, Touraine criticises the 'neo-republican' stance since he claims that its proponents refuse to accept change and so revive past mythical models of integration of minorities : "...par conséquent, (d')idéologies qui, créées pour accueillir, aboutissent à exclure ceux qui ne s'en réclament pas."[38] The second response to the growing demands for recognition of cultural difference is the post-modernist stance which welcomes this process and argues for its acceleration. Touraine, however, criticises

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[35] Ibid., p. 197.
[36] Ibid., p. 98.
[37] Alain Touraine, *Pourrons-nous vivre ensemble ? Égaux et différents* (Paris : Fayard, 1997), p. 14.
[38] Ibid., p. 19. (Both quotes).

this approach for its acceptance of the decline of the political, which according to him, leads to the domination of the markets as the only regulating mechanism of collective life, the end result being one where: "...l'éloge du vide nous laisse sans défense devant la violence, la ségrégation, le racisme..."[39] Touraine qualifies the third response as "la réponse anglaise" due to its pragmatic approach to cultural difference through procedural democracy: "...elle assure le respect des libertés personnelles et collectives, elle organise la représentation des intérêts, elle met en forme le débat public, elle institutionnalise la tolérance."[40] Once again, Touraine finds this approach unsatisfactory on the grounds that it is limited to *tolerance* and co-existence of groups without any real sense of communication between different 'cultures': "Elle [la réponse] nous place devant les autres comme devant les vitrines d'un musée."[41]

Touraine's alternative solution focuses on the concept of the subject as the most satisfactory way to recombine instrumentality and identity. Two main definitions of the *sujet* structure Touraine's alternative. First, he defines the subject in terms of "le projet de vie personnel":

> Ce projet est un effort pour résister au déchirement de la personnalité et pour mobiliser une expérience et une culture dans des activités techniques et économiques [...] pour transformer ces expériences en [...]construction de soi comme acteur. Cet effort de l'individu pour être un acteur est ce que je nomme sujet. [42]

The second aspect of the subject is associated with liberty and choice : "Le Sujet est une affirmation de liberté contre le pouvoir des stratèges et de leurs appareils et contre celui des dictateurs communautaires..."[43] Touraine argues that the Subject and communication between (culturally) different Subjects should be protected on an institutional level so that a truly multicultural society is characterised by the institutionalisation of a politics of recognition, rather than the fragmentation of society into numerous different

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[39] Ibid., p. 20.
[40] Ibid., p. 20 Touraine argues that this type of approach to difference is found in Jürgen Habermas' notion of Constitutional patriotism.
[41] Ibid., p. 21.
[42] Ibid., p. 28.
[43] Ibid., p. 28.

communities. In *Qu'est-ce que la démocratie ?* Touraine qualifies recognition as follows :

> Il ne s'agit pas de reconnaître l'autre dans sa différence, car cela conduit plus souvent à l'indifférence ou à la ségrégation qu'à la communication, mais comme sujet, comme individu cherchant à être acteur et à résister aux forces qui commandent soit le marché, soit l'organisation administrative.[44]

So for Touraine, the key to being able to "vivre ensemble, égaux et différents" lies in the notion of the Subject as a "combinaison d'une identité personnelle et d'une culture particulière avec la participation à un monde rationalisé..."[45]

Tensions and Models: From Analysis to Experience

In his article entitled 'Les Contradictions politiques du multiculturalisme', Danilo Martuccelli describes the multicultural debate as being characterised by four main tensions: *Égalité* versus *équité*; *Égalité* versus *différence*; *Liberté* versus *différence* and *Liberté* versus *équité*.[46] The example he gives to illustrate the first tension between equality and equity in France is the introduction of ZEPs (*Zones d'éducation prioritaire*). Here, equality can be understood as a concept which guarantees equal treatment in only a formal sense, whereas equity gives equality a more concrete character through equal opportunities schemes for example. Instead of seeing the ZEPs as a combination of these two concepts, Martuccelli sees that *équité* fails because the ZEP programme does not adequately take into account pupils' cultural difference. He argues that only taking into account social origins and the performance of pupils in ZEP schools reveals the limits of the ZEP policy.

Equality and difference are also seen as concepts which are not easily reconcilable: "L'égalité implique de recréer, [...] un esprit de solidarité et passe par un langage politique soigneusement universaliste [...] La différence en revanche, consiste à établir un principe de reconnaissance entre les individus. Le langage politique est ici

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[44] Alain Touraine (1994), p. 212.
[45] Alain Touraine (1997), p. 29.
[46] Danilo Martuccelli, 'Les Contradictions politiques du multiculturalisme' in *Une société fragmentée ? Le Multiculturalisme en débat*, ed. by Michel Wieviorka (Paris : La Découverte, 1997), pp. 61-82.

particulariste..."[47] Martuccelli claims that the tension between *liberté* and *différence* is not easily resolved, which can, in turn, lead to an *impasse*:

> ... soit il s'agit d'opérer un "retour" à une conception renvoyant au privé les manifestations des différences (mais le soupçon reste alors permanent aux yeux des minorités quant au caractère discriminatoire de cette liberté négative), soit il s'agit d'opérer "un retour", sous forme de raidissement, vers des positions différencialistes extrêmes, où à terme l'individu est dissous dans le collectif.[48]

The third tension outlined by Martuccelli is liberty versus difference. Here it is claimed that an affirmation of difference leads to a challenge to the notion of negative liberty, a principle which presupposes a division between the private and public spheres. An example of this tension is the 'Islamic headscarf affair' where according to Martuccelli, we can see the *laïque* camp as defending a notion of negative liberty whilst the pupils' desire to wear their headscarves was a bid for recognition in what is referred to as "(d')une institution dépersonnalisante" (i.e. school).[49]

It is argued that the fourth opposition (*liberté* versus *équité*) can lead to extreme tensions:

> ...la volonté d'offrir aux hommes plus d'équité, dans la mesure où elle exige une prise en compte approfondie des situations particulières, les rend aussi plus exposés dans leurs libertés individuelles. Il n'est pas besoin d'être un partisan de la "microphysique du pouvoir" pour comprendre le risque inscrit, pour les libertés individuelles, dans les politiques d'équité.[50]

Here, Martuccelli's argument suggests that focusing on the principle of equity, that is, 'concrete' equality (rather than just formal equality) could lead to a situation where the *normes communautaires* could threaten the member of that minority group in terms of his/her individual choices.

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[47] Ibid.,p. 72.
[48] Ibid.,p. 76.
[49] Ibid.,p. 76.
[50] Ibid.,p.77.

Martuccelli uses these four oppositions to demonstrate the problematic nature of the combination of the "thème identitaire" and "le politique". Indeed, in his conclusion, he argues that all identities necessarily exist in opposition to other identities. Martuccelli also laments the problems faced by minority groups, whose problematic is described as being characterised by choosing between enclosure in one's 'identity' or the construction of the self as a subject ("Le drame identitaire des minorités est qu'elles ne peuvent pas devenir des sujets universels de la modernité, qu'elles sont dans la démocratie, contraintes à exister de manière 'réactive' ou à accepter leur dissolution identitaire."[51]). His approach reveals a weariness about what is referred to as "l'utopie' multiculturaliste"[52] because of the fundamental contradiction between *égalité* and *différence*. In other words, he argues that just because a minority group gains recognition and certain group rights, this does not mean that the *lutte identitaire* comes to an end. Rather, the cause's gains in terms of recognition spur its members onto further action. Is the main motivation behind this the desire for a perpetual recognition of difference (*altérité*)? Indeed, Martuccelli suggests this in the following statement: "L'identité définie, la particularité affirmée, la spécificité obtenue, son objectif se désintègre dans les nouvelles dimensions symboliques acquises par ses membres. Le mouvement est alors contraint de repartir."[53] He argues that the absence of real equity, revealed by continued discrimination against those who define themselves in terms of their cultural difference leads to more and more identity claims.[54]

Martuccelli's approach can be described as 'macro-sociological', in that it is mainly theoretical. Martuccelli himself acknowledges the danger of disjunction between the debate about identity movements and the everyday experiences of immigrants and their descendants.[55] Indeed, while it is useful to construct meaning through the use of analytical tools and certain theoretical models, Martuccelli's article in fact shows how focusing on the normative/philosophical debates about cultural difference and then trying to transpose the debate to the everyday situations of young people of 'immigrant-origin'

[51] Ibid., p.81.
[52] Ibid., p. 79.
[53] Ibid., p. 80.
[54] Ibid., p.82.
[55] Ibid., p.80.

is not always satisfactory. By concentrating on the notion of the 'tension' between various principles, are we not increasingly distancing ourselves from the 'realities' on the ground, which, whilst periodically characterised by dilemmas such as found in the headscarf affair, do not reflect the varied experiences of people from 'minority' backgrounds? Indeed, it would seem that François Dubet argues that this is the case. In his book *Les inégalités multipliées*, Dubet argues that demands for recognition of a specific identity necessarily involve the 'management' of various contending principles and that this is in itself *not* problematic:

> On critique parfois ces mouvements parce qu'ils ne parviennent jamais à se stabiliser sur un principe unique, parce qu'ils oscillent sans cesse entre des pôles contradictoires, parce qu'ils balancent entre des apories inconciliables: l'unité et la différence, l'universalité et la spécificité, le collectif et le plus individuel [...] Il est clair que l'appel à la reconnaissance ne peut se constituer comme une norme universelle de justice et d'égalité, mais comme la possibilité de vivre dans des principes contradictoires.[56]

It is for this reason that a more empirical approach towards the issues concerning those who are seen as 'different' because of their 'origins' may be preferable since a political philosophy or 'macro' approach, whilst essential for constructing theory, can remain rigidly abstract because it is removed from more 'micro'- social considerations.

(iv) A 'Communautariste's' View

The fourth pole of Wieviorka's *'espace des débats'* is the *communautariste* pole, which is defined as an idea which advocates the co-existence of communities within a single political space.[57] The ethno-psychiatrist, Tobie Nathan is cited as one of those rare French authors whose position is perhaps the closest to this approach. Indeed, in his book *L'Influence qui guérit*, Nathan's argument that perhaps people from Africa who suffer from mental health problems would respond better to 'healers' from their own cultures as opposed to the West's 'science' and medicines, places him within a cultural relativism

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[56] François Dubet, *Les Inégalités multipliées* (Paris: Éditions de l'Aube, 2000), pp. 63-64.
[57] Wieviorka (1999b), p. 13.

perspective. He argues that as a result, perhaps psychiatry should be seen as nothing more than one 'influence' amongst many other influences.[58]

The French versus the 'Anglo-Saxon' model: A Critique of the French Debate on Immigration and Cultural Difference

So, much of the academic debate surrounding immigrants and their descendants in the 1990s took the form of a polemic about so-called 'national models' of immigrant incorporation, with a focus on multiculturalism and French Republicanism as two opposed paradigms. French sociologist, Éric Fassin is one commentator who calls for more attention to be paid instead to *empirical* studies of immigration and multiculturalism because he claims that in French discussions of immigration and ethnicity, the most common starting point is to compare France with America, thus obscuring social realities in France.[59] Fassin argues that in French academic circles "...'America' does not refer to the United States; it should be understood only as a French mythical construct purporting to portray the United States."[60]

Central to Fassin's argument is that it is erroneous to oppose France and America in discussions of ethnicity and immigration because national models cannot be essentialised and referred to as if they have not developed and changed over time. Fassin concludes his article by calling for the introduction of what he calls "intellectual hygiene". He claims that "...there is a risk, when discussing social phenomena, that discourse could replace empirical work, if not reality."[61] In this way, he argues that the language or rhetoric that is used to discuss society does not always reflect the social phenomena themselves. Fassin also makes an important observation by claiming: "That 'multiculturalism' should be an intellectual issue, here and there, [i.e. France and

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[58] Tobie Nathan, *L'Influence qui guérit* (Paris : Odile Jacob, 1994).

[59] It should be pointed out that Fassin wrote this article for an Anglophone audience and to refer to a debate on "ethnicity" in the French context would be problematic and unusual. In the French debate, the term ethnicity is nearly always accompanied by inverted commas, which has the effect of discrediting the term somewhat, and alternative terms such as *la différence culturelle* are preferred.

[60] Éric Fassin, ' 'Good to think': The American Reference in French Discourses of Immigration and Ethnicity' in *Multicultural Questions* ed. by Christian Joppke and Steven Lukes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 224-241 (p.224).

[61] Ibid., p.236.

America - added by myself] may not imply that it makes sense socially, neither here, nor there. It may simply indicate that this is the language we have at our disposition now."[62] It is therefore suggested that in order to overcome the shortcomings of discourse, perhaps multiculturalism should not be taken as a starting point, but rather the question of discrimination instead, as it is universal, i.e. experienced in most societies, whereas multiculturalism tends to start from an American premise. The advantage of this more pragmatic approach is that solutions, according to Fassin do not need to be drawn from a particular national model or past. In this way, America is not used in a French context, to provide answers but rather to help to formulate a question. Fassin argues that once this shift in discourse is allowed to take place, discrimination will be more openly discussed in France. The reason why it is *not* discussed widely enough is, suggests Fassin, precisely because the language needed to do so does not exist in France.

Another example of this tendency to oppose national models is visible, to some extent, in the work of Alec Hargreaves. Hargreaves is critical of the French suspicion of multiculturalism and opens his article in the following way: "Multiculturalism is a taboo concept in French political discourse."[63] He discusses, with regret, the 1970s and 1980s in France, which he sees as a time when "...a greater openness to cultural diversity appeared possible."[64] Here Hargreaves is referring to the period when the *Parti Socialiste* adopted the slogans "le droit à la différence" and "cultural democracy". He argues that the idea of the nation as a "daily plebiscite", developed by Ernest Renan (see Chapter 1), is one of the main reasons why in France, the concept of multiculturalism is regarded with suspicion because if an immigrant embraces his/her culture of origin in the public sphere, this is seen as being incongruent with the notion of free individual and rational choice. He dismisses the notion of the "daily plebiscite" as a myth because statistically those who became French nationals became so automatically with no voluntary element involved at all.

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[62] Ibid., p.237.
[63] Ibid., p. 180.
[64] Alec Hargreaves, 'Multiculturalism', in *Political Ideologies in Contemporary France* ed. by Christopher Flood and Laurence Bell (London: Pinter, 1997), 180-199 (p.180).

Furthermore, Hargreaves highlights a rather more restrictive aspect to the French values of universalism:

> The alleged universalism of the republican tradition is not without its own limits, however. Newcomers are welcome to equal status with every other member of the national population only on condition that they abandon their pre-migratory traditions and assimilate as individuals – rather than as ethnically distinct groups – into pre-existing French cultural norms. The openness of the republican tradition stops where cultural differences begin.[65]

Hargreaves claims that such an outlook was clearly reflected in Charles Pasqua's following statement shortly before he took office as Minister of the Interior: "Those who want to live on French soil must become French and assimilate to our culture..."[66] In an attempt to prove his point, Hargreaves also cites the argument made by the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* with regards to Renan's lecture:

> Notions of a 'multicultural society' and the 'right to be different' are unacceptably ambiguous. It is true that the concept of the nation as a cultural community, as put forward in the French tradition by Renan, does appear unusually open to outsiders, since it regards an act of voluntary commitment to a set of values as all that is necessary. But it would be wrong to let anyone think that different cultures can be allowed to become more fully developed in France.[67]

On the whole, Hargreaves' article is very useful because it shows *why* the concept of multiculturalism is a 'taboo' subject in France. In particular, the article reveals how the myth of the French nation, as well as the consequent suspicion regarding multiculturalism, is used as a tactic or defence in a society where Islam is feared. In other words, a lot of the debate about diversity in France is often linked directly to the 'challenge' posed by Islam and Islamic practice, such as the wearing of headscarves by young girls in French state schools and whether this should be accepted or not. Hargreaves cites the circular issued by François Bayrou in 1994, the UDF Minister of Education under the Balladur government, to show how the language of the Republic and

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[65] Ibid., p. 183.
[66] Ibid., p. 184, Hargreaves cites Pasqua in *Le Monde*, 21-22 March, 1993, 'M. Pasqua contre une société "pluriculturelle"'.
[67] Ibid., p.184, Hargreaves cites the *Haut Conseil à L'intégration* report, *Conditions juridiques et culturelles de l'intégration* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1992), p.30.

universalism was used to curb diversity in France's state schools. Bayrou's circular starts of by claiming that "By its very nature, this idea of the nation and of the Republic respects convictions of all kinds, notably religious and political convictions, as well as cultural traditions." Then the circular moves on to discuss the subject of school more explicitly:

> School is the place par excellence where education and integration take place, where all our children and young people meet and learn to live together in mutual respect. The presence within school of emblems or behaviour indicating an incapacity to respect the same obligations, to follow the same classes and programmes as everyone else would negate this mission.[68]

Hargreaves points out that the circular starts off by referring to the values of French republicanism to defend the notion of freedom of conscience yet it ends by reaffirming the notion of cultural homogeneity. It is claimed that "the magic principle of *laïcité*" can be used against Muslim pupils who are seen as threatening to this project of cultural homogeneity.[69]

Despite Hargreaves' successful exposure of the ambiguous nature of republican values and universalism, namely that they can be in theory, very open, yet in practice be closed to cultural diversity, his article is not without its own ambiguities. Indeed, it would seem that Hargreaves was engaging in some sort of cross-Channel polemic with writers such as Emmanuel Todd (who is cited on more than one occasion), and the positions of centre-right governments. It must be pointed out that Emmanuel Todd represents only one aspect of the French academic debate of the time. His position, as mentioned above, is that of a rather enthusiastic advocate of assimilation and to use his argument to represent the wider debate in France would appear inaccurate. For example, Hargreaves quotes Todd as follows:

> British tolerance is based on a mentality of 'differentialism', that is to say, the idea that different races exist and that it is best to keep them separate [...] By

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[68] Hargreaves, p. 196 cites the 'Le Texte du ministre de l'éducation nationale', which appeared in *Le Monde*, 21 September, 1994.
[69] Ibid., p.197.

contrast, the French approach starts out from a universalist assumption: if people behave in a similar way to us, they are welcome! We are in favour of inter-mixing, in favour of populations coming together – and that is incompatible with the maintenance of immigrant cultures.[70]

It would seem that Hargreaves has chosen to quote these passages for a reason: so as to reply to the French situation by tacitly exalting the British one. In addition, the choice of ministerial statements does reveal a certain number of dominant positions, which show themselves to be closed to cultural diversity in France. However, the use of these statements, in the same way as quoting Emmanuel Todd, serves to reinforce the perceived opposition between 'republicanism' and the 'preferable' alternative, just across the Channel.

By opposing France and Britain in this way, the observer is less able to gain an insight into the issues with which the immigrant and immigrant-origin populations *themselves* are concerned. An ideological polemic is therefore less fruitful if our aim is to understand the everyday experiences of the very people concerned.

A corpus of literature which focuses less on the question of multiculturalism and cultural difference and more on empirical questions is the research into immigrant associations and the roles they play in immigrants' and their descendants' everyday lives. In the next section I will consider this area of research and how it contributes to the debate on immigration and its related topics.

PART II: RESEARCH ON *LA VIE ASSOCIATIVE*

Catherine Wihtol de Wenden writes extensively about immigrant associations and associations set up by people of 'immigrant-origin'. Associations in France are governed by the 1901 law which defines them as " 'une convention par laquelle deux ou plusieurs personnes mettent en commun d'une façon permanente leurs connaissances ou leur

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[70] Ibid., p.183, Hargreaves cites Emmanuel Todd, 'Invitons-les à devenir françaises', *L'Express*, 24 November, 1994, pp.27-29.

activité dans un but autre que de partager des bénéfices'..."[71] Wihtol de Wenden's work tends to focus on 'beur' and 'Franco-Maghrebian' associations in particular.

2.3 A Combination of Two Registers of Action: Citizenship and Community

In an article entitled 'Les associations "beur" et immigrées, leurs leaders, leurs stratégies', de Wenden claims that between 1980 and 1990, it was mainly the Franco-Maghrebian associations which set the tone.[72] These associations (which developed after the 1981 law liberalising the association of foreign nationals) are shown as playing an important role in the affirmation of "[les] (d')identités collectives, ethniques, religieuses ou communautaires..."[73] However, despite this reference to the non-'Republican' concepts of ethnicity and community identity, the article argues that research into immigrant associations (or *associations issues de l'immigration*) must be placed at the centre of the debate on the integration of immigrants and their descendants. Thus de Wenden writes: "Plus l'intégration est en marche, plus la diversité s'accentue parmi les modes de présence des populations issues de l'immigration dans l'espace politique, social, économique et culturel, à l'échelon national et local."[74] So it would seem that de Wenden's analysis allows for a combination, rather than the opposition of two registers: the affirmation of identity and integration. She also argues that the immigrant association movement in France has been central in redefining notions of citizenship.

In addition, de Wenden claims that the choice to take action through associations rather than through the traditional party political system represents a certain combination of individualism and cultural difference: "Celui-ci laisse en effet plus de place à l'initiative personnelle et à l'expression des particularismes."[75] However, the choice of associational life should not be seen as a complete break with more mainstream political

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[71] Catherine Wihtol de Wenden cites the 1901 law in Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau, *La Beurgeosie : Les trois âges de la vie associative issue de l'immigration* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2001), p.7.
[72] Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, 'Les associations "beur" et immigrées, leurs leaders, leurs stratégies', in *Regards sur l'actualité*, 178 (February 1992a), 31-44, (p.31).
[73] Ibid., p. 31. On 9 October 1981, a new law was promulgated which gave foreign nationals the right to associate. Foreign nationals had formerly been restricted in their attempts to form associations according to a law passed in 1939. See Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau (2001), p. 7.
[74] Ibid., p.31.
[75] Ibid., p.37.

action and indeed de Wenden argues that the engagement of 'Franco-Maghrebian' actors within associations actually favours integration into the political system: "En même temps, il constitue un lieu d'apprentissage des mécanismes politiques et favorise l'intégration au système politique national en donnant à leurs animateurs un 'professionnalisme', une aptitude à la médiation et à la médiatisation fort utiles."[76]

In the section entitled 'Les leaders et leurs stratégies', de Wenden claims that as far as the choices or orientations of association leaders are concerned, there are "...deux logiques, l'une individuelle, l'autre communautaire [...] (le choix de l'une ou l'autre pouvant s'inverser en cas d'échec dans la voie initialement choisie)."[77] Thus, de Wenden shows that the association movement's elites manage in fact to successfully combine their cultural specificity and the more 'individual' values such as citizenship and democracy. In the same way, it is revealed how certain *élites associatives* readily assume the *'beurgeois'* label and "...jouent l'intégration dans la différence, tout en réaffirmant sans cesse les valeurs de la laïcité, de la citoyenneté et de la démocratie."[78] The combination of the two registers is claimed to be central to the action of the leaders of the association movement: " Les leitmotiv de leur discours sont le cosmopolitanisme, la citoyenneté, la laïcité, l'Europe, le communautarisme -- seuls certaines associations islamistes échappent à ce registre."[79]

Three Types and Three Generations of Assocation 'Franco-Maghrébine'

De Wenden develops the observations made in her 1992 article in a later publication entitled 'Que sont devenues les associations civiques issues de l'immigration?', which discusses the findings of a study of fifty-two associations.[80] The main aim of the study

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[76] Ibid., p.37.
[77] Ibid., p. 38.
[78] Ibid., p.39.
[79] Ibid., p. 44.
[80] Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, 'Que sont devenues les associations civiques issues de l'immigration?', *Hommes et Migrations*, 1206 (1997), 53-66. The study was carried out by the CERI and headed by Catherine Withol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau (CERI - Centre d'études et de recherches internationales, Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Paris). It was commissioned by the FAS (Fonds d'action sociale) and the report was entitled "Associations créées dans les années quatre-vingt par de jeunes militants issus de l'immigration: bilan de leurs activités et de l'engagement de leurs promoteurs." The empirical research took the form of fifty qualitative interviews with association leaders and was carried out in 1996.

was to chart the evolution of immigrant associations (and in particular, *associations franco-maghrébines*) since the *beur* heyday. Its main claim is that Franco-Maghrebian associations have become more *apolitical* than they were in the 1980s and have turned towards more socio-educational activities such as *le soutien scolaire* (homework clubs) or anti-drugs education programmes *(la prévention)*. De Wenden identifies three categories of association: 1. "les associations de militants politiques" (e.g. *Association des travailleurs Marocains en France*); 2. "les associations de militants civiques" (e.g. *JALB - Jeunes Arabes de Lyon et banlieue*) and 3. "les associations de quartier" (e.g. *Les Femmes Francs-Moisins* in the *Cité des francs-moisins* in Saint-Denis).

De Wenden's article shows how this typology corresponds to three generations of militants and leaders. The first group are often linked to the first generation of North African immigrants, whose associations were set up before the associational explosion of the 1980s. They tend to have a worker, trade-union identity and as a reaction to the *beur* movement (which symbolised the emergence of a permanent presence of individuals of North African origin in France), they turned instead towards issues in their countries of origin. The *militants civiques* ('second-generation') associations should be seen as the beneficiaries of the *beur* movement. They tended be politically leftward leaning and very much part of a French secular *(laïque)* context. The theme of 'new citizenship' also played an important role in the emergence of this category of associations. Today, there are differing tendencies amongst the leaders. Some for example, have become more institutional in that they have placed an emphasis on rights and legal issues (e.g. the *Forum des Migrants* and *JALB*). Others have, in the 1990s, tried to constitute themselves as the main associations to deal with the 'real issues' that affect those populations of immigrant-origin (e.g. the *MIB - Mouvement de l'immigration et des banlieues*) and are generally critical of the large mainstream associations which flourished in the 1980s, such as *SOS-Racisme*. They are also very critical of the main French political parties, especially the *Parti Socialiste*, which is seen as having let the *beur* movement down. The 'third-generation' distance themselves from political matters such as the voting rights of immigrants and are purely active around socio-educational/socio-cultural activities. They

tended to emerge in the 1980s but some associations date back to the 1970s when the *bidonvilles* were re-absorbed into the *banlieues* of big cities.

2.4 New Developments in 'La Vie Associative': Growing Depoliticisation in the 1990s

The context of de Wenden' study is important and she describes this as being one of crisis; a crisis in the civic associational movement, in terms of funding, *militantisme*, youth membership and the general disillusionment of those who were politically active during the 1980s. It is also claimed that a new generation of associations has developed in the 1990s which situates itself in opposition to the *beur* movements of the 1980s. One of the main aspects of the '*rupture*' between the associations of the 1990s and the older *beur* associations is that the new generation of associations do not have a highly publicised media image and have more modest expectations. Furthermore, it is argued that associations in the 1990s lack clarity in terms of their aims or goals. Whereas leaders of associations in the 1980s tended to refer to themselves as *médiateurs* or *intermédiaires culturels*, de Wenden claims that by the mid-1990s this image had changed and what she refers to as the "militantisme d'hier" (incarnated by associations such as MRAP, GISTI, LDH and Marxist, *primo arrivant* movements) does not characterise the "professionnels 'du troisième type'" (the third-generation). For example, the women's associations and their leaders seem to have developed independently of what is referred to as the "...grands thèmes de la mobilisation civique (marche de 1983, mouvement des droits civiques)...."[81] The new characteristics of Franco-Maghrebian associations are summed up as follows:

> Rester petit et peu médiatisé, intervenir au niveau local, se préoccuper du domaine social, être présent au quotidien: ainsi peuvent se résumer les objectifs de nombreuses associations, soit par dépit (*"l'avenir des associations ? Je les vois comme un jouet, un support des partis politiques français"*, France Plus ; *"les associations de l'immigration sont en perdition*, Mib), soit par réalisme (*"Derrière le politique il y a l'humain"*).[82]

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[81] Ibid., p.60.
[82] Ibid., p.61.

Part of the trend for a growing *dépoliticisation* is perhaps the shift that has taken place in terms of association projects. De Wenden's and Leveau's study revealed that the debates between "citoyenneté et communautarisme, droit à la différence et droit à l'indifférence" have become increasingly irrelevant. These themes are described as "...à peine cités, de même que les thèmes du foulard, du multiculturalisme."[83] De Wenden further observes that the social issues that are now discussed are seen as more important. This is very significant because it would suggest that much of the normative discussions (which take up the first part of this chapter) is out of step with what de Wenden and her team found as a result of their study. The normative discussion of the ideological contours of the French 'nation' (or French 'national self-understanding') and how it adapts itself to cultural diversity is important. However, if certain limits of the abstract equality model are to be addressed, namely the social and economic exclusion which often develops unchecked, de Wenden and Leveau's study of immigrant associations would suggest that the very populations being discussed are *not* primarily concerned with the complexities of the multiculturalism versus universalism model. Indeed, many associations show that these two aspects can be reconciled : "[les] allégeances sont dans ces cas résolument tournées vers la France, mais avec une résonance communautaire mêlée à une volonté de concilier les grands principes que sont la laïcité, la citoyenneté, la République. Ainsi, l'Association de culture berbère (ACB) a pour mots d'ordre *'berbérité et laïcité'...* "[84]

Catherine Wihtol de Wenden's and Rémy Leveau's research is very useful because it gives a closer insight into the issues that concern immigrant or immigrant-origin populations in France. Of particular importance to our problematic are the two following observations: 1. Demands for recognition of a cultural specificity are not portrayed as existing in opposition with universalist notions of citizenship; 2. Immigrant associations are shown to be increasingly 'apolitical' in their aims. Both these observations would suggest that the public and academic debates about cultural difference and their threat to the Republic are inaccurate on two counts: firstly, because

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[83] Ibid., p. 62.
[84] Ibid., p. 57.

references to ethnicity can be either instrumental and/or articulated in a universalist framework and secondly, because immigrant-origin populations are more concerned with social and economic (apolitical) demands rather than purely cultural or symbolic ones.[85]

Another political scientist whose research has focused on associations, and in particular, Franco-Maghrebian associations in Marseilles, is Jocelyne Cesari. Her book *Être musulman en France: associations, militants et mosques*, contains the findings of a study which concentrates on the different forms of political mobilisation of North African immigrants and those of North African origin, either in associations or in the local party political network. Cesari groups the various sorts of association into different categories. Her typology pre-dates the 1981 law, (which liberalised the association of foreign nationals) and traces the evolution of the association movement from the late 1970s onwards when trotskyist students generally set the tone, to a period when cultural activities such as Franco-Maghrebian theatre groups were more prominent, these groupings being largely indifferent to the political and ideological debates of *gauchiste* movements.

Besides the *associations de quartier*, which are shown to have existed well before 1981, but were just later eclipsed by grander more media-friendly movements such as *SOS-Racisme* and *France Plus*, Cesari's analysis also focuses on what are referred to as *"les associations à référence ethnique ou culturelle"*. It is claimed that the main role of the North African associational milieu can be summed up as follows: "Elle [la fonction] répond plutôt à des fonctions de légitimation du groupe dans l'environnement le plus immédiat."[86] The multiplication of associations with this legitimising role led to the development of what Cesari calls an artificial actor, namely the 'second generation' or

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[85] It could be argued that it is erroneous to regard social and economic demands as 'apolitical' since demands for the redistribution of wealth can be inspired by a socialist (and therefore political or politicised outlook). The use of the term 'apolitical' is instead being employed here to contrast with the association movements of the 1980s, when the '*beur*' leaders sought political representation within the mainstream political structure. The term 'apolitical' could therefore be seen as the antithesis to Politics (with a capital P) rather than politics in a more diffuse sense.

[86] Jocelyne Cesari, *Être musulman en France : associations, militants et mosquées* (Paris and Aix-en-Provence: Karthala et Iremam, 1994), p.179.

the *beurs*, whose situation of cultural integration and socio-political exclusion is rather paradoxical:

> Telle est la situation paradoxale et contradictoire de ces nouvelles générations: pétries des valeurs d'égalité et d'ascension sociale du modèle français, elles ne trouvent pas de place pour les revendications, ni dans les instances du pays d'origine ni dans celles du primo-migrants, et sont, en même temps, dans l'impossibilité d'utiliser les institutions habituelles, pour des raisons liées à la moindre efficacité de celles-ci et aux séquelles d'une histoire conflictuelle entre l'État français et les pays de leurs pères, histoire dont ils sont les enfants 'illégitimes'.[87]

2.5 Demands for Recognition of Social Experience

To a certain extent, Cesari's discussion of the *associations de quartier* echoes de Wenden's argument in that the issues which are more important for the generation of immigrant origin are localised and depoliticised and therefore are not reflective of the discourse which so often (voluntarily or involuntarily) depicts their experience within the framework of the normative debates about cultural difference and multicultural policies. Cesari thus writes:

> Dans les cités, où la population maghrébine est majoritaire sans être dominante, ces associations sont des lieux où la dénomination ethnique n'a pas cours: la spécificité est moins centrée sur la culture que sur l'accentuation de certaines contraintes sociales liées au phénomène d'exclusion. La référence territoriale (le quartier, la cité) et la référence 'jeune' constituent les moteurs de l'action.[88]

This would suggest that there is some disjunction between the academic and political discourses - centred around the complexities of cultural difference and the threat this poses to the public/private dichotomy - and Cesari's findings.

Indeed, it would seem that Cesari's study allows a more flexible approach than is possible from a purely or predominantly normative position. In a similar manner to de Wenden, when discussing the demands or *revendications* of association leaders of

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[87] Ibid., p.180. Here, Cesari is alluding to Abdelmalek Sayad's article, 'Les Enfants illégitimes', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 25 (January 1979), 61-82 and 26/27 (March-April 1979), 117-132.
[88] Ibid., p.183.

immigrant-origin and in particular the '*revendication antiraciste*', Cesari is able to distinguish the reference to a "particularité" on the part of those of immigrant origin from more formalised cultural minority demands (often sensationally referred to as '*la poussée des identités*' in academic or public discourses). For example, Cesari writes:

> La particularité de la revendication antiraciste lorsqu'elle est portée par ces acteurs provient du fait que l'appartenance minoritaire vient en quelque sorte recouvrir l'exclusion sociale et, de ce fait, est vécue comme la raison de cette exclusion. Il en résulte que les demandes sociales se surchargent d'une exigence de la reconnaissance d'une particularité. Cette particularité ne réside véritablement pas dans une culture propre mais dans l'expérience spécifique qu'est le racisme post-colonial. Le paradoxe survient de la relation entre identité culturelle et racisme qui contraint le dominé à s'intégrer et à contester cette intégration, à défendre et à contester sa culture d'origine dans le même mouvement.[89]

Instrumentalised Ethnicity

Furthermore, unlike some of the wider, more ideologically influenced debates, Cesari also points out that the notion of a collective identity is often used for an individual purpose. Thus (echoing de Wenden's and Leveau's '*beurgeois*' analysis) she claims that the "Le registre ethnique est alors utilisé comme moyen de pression vers l'intégration. Cela est le fait d'individus en ascension vers les classes moyennes qui utilisent un héritage culturel ou une spécificité comme ressources politiques."[90] This analysis is rather different from some of the more 'macro-sociological' interpretations that seem to take the '*registre ethnique*' at face value and thus deduct, in some cases, a '*repli identitaire*' and some form of societal fragmentation. Developing the idea of the instrumentality of ethnicity, Cesari argues that the social actors in immigrant (or immigrant-origin) associations are forced to translate their social demands to fit the parameters of the '*offre politique*' which is based on a dual register: civil equality and cultural difference.[91]

So, in a similar manner to the research carried out by Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, Cesari's observations upset the assumptions which are generally made in the

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[89] Ibid., p.197.
[90] Ibid., p.227.
[91] This corresponds to Wihtol de Wenden's *deux logiques*: *une communautaire, l'autre individuelle*. See C. Wihtol de Wenden (1997).

more normative debate regarding the opposition of so-called 'national models' of immigrant incorporation. Cesari upsets these assumption in two ways. Firstly, Cesari shows that demands for recognition should not be interpreted as *revendications culturelles* in a classic multicultural sense. Secondly, and consequently, Cesari illustrates how references to ethnicity and recognition are sometimes an instrumental means to an end, and that demands for such recognition are more oriented towards social experience rather than around abstract cultural recognition.

The question of experience is addressed in the corpus of research which examines the daily life of *les jeunes issus de l'immigration*. The next part of the chapter will now consider this literature.

PART III: RESEARCH ON *LES JEUNES*

This vast and varied area of research tends to concentrate on individuals whose ages range from twelve to twenty-five. In the section below I will discuss some of the research carried out on the following themes: the *banlieue*, the family, juvenile delinquency/urban violence, unemployment and discrimination. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, these various 'sub-disciplines' should all be seen as being constructed within the conceptual framework of integration – whether this is defined by authors in cultural, social, economic or political terms. Since integration tends to be the general framework surrounding existing research, it is worth briefly considering this concept and its development.

2.6 Integration

Although the term 'integration' can be used to describe the socialisation process of adult immigrants (i.e. those not born in France) and one would perhaps assume that the term would be more applicable to this category, the word integration in France has come to refer very often to the children of immigrants. The process of 'integration' was formerly referred to in France as 'assimilation'. As discussed in Chapter 1, the 1970s and 1980s saw successive French governments become increasingly aware of the colonial ring of

the term 'assimilation', and so other words, such as 'insertion' or 'acculturation' were adopted as they appeared to be more neutral. Finally, integration became and has remained the term to describe the process of socialisation and inclusion, which, in the public mind, concerns immigrants and more often than not, their children.[92]

As discussed in more detail in Chapter 1, debates about the integration process of young people of immigrant origin became particularly audible in France during the 1980s and 90s when there was a realisation that the male immigrant workers who had been arriving mainly from the Maghreb (and in particular from Algeria) since the 1950s, were not returning to their countries of origin and that they and their families would, consequently, become a permanent feature of French society. Integration also became a topic for vigorous debate because of the concern that the old integrating mechanisms, in place since the nineteenth century, were no longer functional. The integrating mechanisms in question included school, trade unions (employment), the army, and the Church.[93] By the mid-1970s, de-industrialisation, the economic crisis and subsequent mass unemployment as well as the collapse of the Soviet ideal, had all contributed to the decline of the notion of a working class identity, which had previously developed through employment and trade union membership. Whereas the Church was an applicable integration mechanism for the Italians or the Poles earlier on in the twentieth century, the new immigrant populations were mainly of Muslim heritage. The decline of the army as a tool of socialisation has been called into question more recently, as a result of the end of compulsory national military service. Lastly, school as an institution, has faced increasing criticism, namely, that it is no longer a mechanism of integration but an institution which reproduces social inequality.[94]

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[92] In *L'Immigration en Europe* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1999a), Catherine Wihtol de Wenden argues that even the term *intégration* has colonial roots to a certain extent, since it was employed under French colonial rule in Algeria.

[93] Henri Mendras and Alistair Cole show how the "great institutions", that is the Church, the army, school, the Communist Party and the trade unions have all undergone enormous change. Indeed, in their co-authored book *Social change in modern France: Towards a cultural anthropology of the Fifth Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1991), Mendras and Cole investigate into the decline of these institutions and the processes of reconstruction of new emergent social structures.

[94] Authors such as Christian Baudelot, R. Establet, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron have argued that school has reproduced social inequalities. See *L'École capitaliste en France* (Paris: Maspero, 1971) by

All these factors have contributed over the last two decades, in particular, to an anxiety with regard to the integration of foreigners and their descendants. The setting up of the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* by the government reflects this anxiety. Mirroring this *malaise* regarding the integration of the 'new' waves of migrants, the last two decades in France have seen a proliferation in the numbers of scholarly and journalistic articles and books about integration.

The Republican Model of Integration

The question of integration is dealt with from a number of angles. There is the classical approach, where integration is discussed in the following terms: it is part of the Republican tradition and was used as a policy after the Revolution to integrate regional populations into a 'national culture' and it is therefore also indispensable with regard to immigrant populations. There is normally some discussion of a crisis of integration and as shown above, this often leads to a comparison with other modes of immigrant incorporation such as in Britain and the United States, which generally serve as a path not to go down. The French mode of integration, although revealed as having its flaws, is still presented as the best option to avoid the fragmentation of society.

Integration is also addressed by demographers, most notably Michèle Tribalat in her study entitled *De L'Immigration à l'assimilation: enquête sur les populations d'origine étrangère en France.*[95] The INED (*Institut national d'études démographiques*) carried out a large-scale study, starting in 1992, following the publication of the 1990 census results. The study was called 'Mobilité géographique et insertion sociale' (MGIS) and its aim was set out as follows : "...de mieux comprendre les comportements des

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Baudelot and Establet. Alternatively, see *Les Héritiers: les étudiants et la culture* (Paris : Éditions de Minuit, 1964) and *La Reproduction : les fonctions du système d'enseignement* (Paris : Éditions de Minuit, 1970) by Bourdieu and Passeron. These theories are of course criticised because of their so-called 'anti-sujet' stance, where pupils are not conceived of as *actors* but more as structural victims. For an alternative approach to this question, see François Dubet and Danilo Martuccelli, *À l'École: sociologie de l'expérience scolaire* (Paris: Seuil, 1996).
[95] This book reveals the findings of an INED study, INED being a state institution for demographic and population-related research in France.

immigrés résidant en France et de leurs enfants, et de privilégier les aspects inédits."[96]
What was new about this study and quite radical in the Republican context was that it
constructed 'ethnicised' categories, according to the respondents' mother tongue, their
place of birth and the birthplace of their parents. Up until the MGIS was carried out,
studies of this sort had been legally restricted to questions about the nationality of the
respondent only, as opposed to their origins, i.e. their birthplace or the birthplace of their
parents.[97] The study aimed to show that the descendants of immigrants were actually
relatively well integrated or "assimilated" and the following factors were taken into
consideration: unemployment rates; marriage practices (the proportion of mixed
marriages according to origin); language (which language was most frequently used,
linguistic proficiency in French); levels of participation in the French national military
service (thus monitoring whether descendants of immigrants carried out military service
in their country of origin instead); social relations (*la sociabilité* – frequency of *sorties*
and intermixing); religious practice; culinary habits; participation levels in associations
and in elections. Individuals originating from the following countries and regions were
taken into account: Algeria, Morocco, Portugal, South-East Asia, Spain, Turkey, Sub-
Saharan Africa and France, the inclusion of the '*Français de souche*' category serving as
a comparison, control, or perhaps in reality, as the model to aspire to.

The study showed that the children of immigrants' outlooks were very similar to
their '*français de souche*' counterparts and so it was concluded that their integration or
assimilation, as the book title would suggest, was well underway. Although, the huge
disparity between unemployment rates for young men of Algerian origin (i.e. both of
whose parents were born in Algeria) and those of French origin, 40% as opposed to 11%
was exposed, there is little discussion of discrimination throughout the book. Rather, the
angle which is adopted is that because 'French-origin' young people and those of
immigrant-origin are similar in terms of social and cultural practices, the French model of
integration can be seen as functional. It could be argued that a further ambiguity in this

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[96] Michèle Tribalat, Patrick Simon and Benoit Riandey, *De l'immigration à l'assimilation : enquête sur les populations d'origine étrangère en France* (Paris: La Découverte/INED, 1996), p.19.
[97] This legal restriction is designed to protect individuals from discrimination and should be seen as part of the Republican universalist tradition. See Tribalat *et al* (1996) p.13 and p.19.

study is that Michèle Tribalat and her team chose certain criteria which *they* consider as indicative of integration, and there is no questioning of the pertinence of these categories in the eyes of the respondents. Indeed, Tribalat's methodology came under severe criticism by Hervé Le Bras who argued that the notion of the '*Français de souche*' was invalid and inaccurate because it could not take into account the multiple origins of individuals and because it was opposed to the equally erroneous concept of "la population allogène". Le Bras also argued that Tribalat's research led to the creation of a "fausse ethnicité" because her method of investigating into the origins of interviewees by asking about their mother tongue meant that their ethnicity was assigned to them as a result. Le Bras warns of the dangers of constructing and then imposing ethnicised categories and he argues that the nation should be based on a "mystère des origines", so as to avoid a Vichy-type scenario of ethnic registers. Indeed, he claims that Tribalat's position as a defender of the notion of assimilation and '*les Français de souche*' signals a veering towards a *lepéniste* position.[98]

Ethnologist Camille Lacoste-Dujardin's study of young women of North African origin can be seen as part of a 'Republican' approach with regards to immigrants and their descendants in that her study is firmly placed within a framework of integration. In *Yasmina et les autres de Nanterre et d'ailleurs : filles de parents maghrébins*, Dujardin exposes the results of her study of twenty-one young women in terms of how they have 'dealt with' what are referred to as their 'handicaps' and the extent of their integration.

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[98] See Hervé Le Bras, *Le Démon des origines: démographie et extrême droite* (Paris: Éditions de l'Aube, 1998), p. 228 and 232. Le Bras' criticisms should be placed in the context of a polemic between himself and fellow demographer Michèle Tribalat. This polemic stems from the publication of an article by Le Bras in *Population* 1 (1997) where he discusses the demographic projections made by the *Haut Comité de la population* in 1980 and those made in a *Figaro magazine* article, sensationally-entitled 'Serons-nous encore Français dans 30 ans?' Whilst the *Haut Comité's* projections under-estimated the number of foreigners who would be living in France in 2015, the *Figaro magazine's* projections for the same period were over-estimated. Le Bras' *Population* article was published along with a scathing commentary by Michèle Tribalat, a commentary which Le Bras contends he was given no forewarning of. Parts of Tribalat's commentary are cited in *Le démon des origines* and Le Bras shows that Tribalat defended the *Figaro magazine's* calculations on the basis that its authors were using the notion of the "personnes issues de la population étrangère recensée l'année *t*", thus swelling their projections. Le Bras is very critical of Tribalat's stance for two main reasons. Firstly, he argues that the concept of "personnes issues de la population étrangère" is invalid: "C'est un objet impossible ou, tout au moins, indéfini, pour la raison simple qu'il existe des unions mixtes en nombre non négligeable..."(p. 127). Secondly, Le Bras claims that Tribalat's defence of the *Figaro magazine* article and thus of one of its authors, P. Bourcier de Carbon, is suspect since de Carbon is Jean-Marie Le Pen's adviser on demographic issues.

The criteria used to measure this integration, which is portrayed as being dependent on the young women's own efforts to fight for their 'emancipation' as well as to undertake their 'duties' as a member of French society, are as follows: relationships between the girls and their parents (the latter being qualified as merely 'easy' or 'difficult' parents); family education ('liberal' or leading to 'un repli'); degree of fidelity to Islam, which is described as a "religion étrangère à la culture française"[99] (the less 'faithful', the 'better' the degree of integration); relationship with the Maghreb (the more distant and critical the stance, the 'better' as far as integration is concerned); education levels. The treatment of the parents conceptualises the family unit as a possible 'brake' to a successful integration process and little attention is given throughout the book to more structural obstacles such as the existence of discrimination in French society itself.[100]

A Critique of Integration

In contrast to the researchers above, sociologist Didier Lapeyronnie, questions the concept of integration, in his article entitled 'De l'altérité à la différence. L'identité, facteur d'intégration ou de repli?' He does this by claiming that it is the very process of integration, which constructs or manufactures identity: "Les identités sont construites dans des rapports sociaux inégalitaires, dont l'enjeu est la définition et la maîtrise symboliques et pratiques de l'intégration."[101] Lapeyronnie claims that many young people of North African origin are caught in a paradoxical situation of wanting to receive special recognition of their cultural difference (the positive aspect of 'otherness'), yet at the same time (or in particular contexts - when applying for jobs for example), this same

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[99] Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, *Yasmina et les autres de Nanterre et d'ailleurs : filles de parents maghrébins en France* (Paris : La Découverte, 1992), p. 260.

[100] It should be added that Lacoste-Dujardin's treatment of culture is ambiguous. *'La culture maghrébine'* is constructed in a rather monolithic manner and is referred to as *imported* from the Maghreb, therefore revealing a lack of awareness of the literature which argues that emigration itself constitutes a transformation in the various and heterogeneous family cultures. Indeed, sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad is very critical of the notion of *'la culture d'origine'*. See 'Courants des publication en sciences sociales sur l'immigration depuis 1960', *Current Sociology*, 32.3 (1984), 219-304. For later criticisms of the notion of a static culture of origin, see Nacira Guénif Souilamas, *Des "beurettes" aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains* (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 2000).

[101] Didier Lapeyronnie, 'De l'altérité à la différence. L'Identité, facteur d'intégration ou de repli? in *Immigration et intégration : l'état des savoirs*, ed. by Philippe Dewitte (Paris : La Découverte, 1999), pp. 252-259 (p.253).

population wants to be invisible: "L'immigré cherche à obtenir la reconnaissance d'une identité qu'il souhaite invisible."[102]

In another article entitled 'Les Deux figures de l'immigré', Lapeyronnie describes integration as a process of socialisation which can only occur in modern societies. Modern societies, according to Lapeyronnie are those which are differentiated or heterogenous in nature. Integration is qualified as a voluntary act or desire to adhere to the universal values of the national society; to leave one's 'community' and enter 'modern' society, without totally abandoning one's own cultural specificities.[103]

The first *figure de l'immigré* described by Lapeyronnie is a *primo-arrivant* (or first generation immigrant) and the receiving society is still in the process of 'modernisation'. What follows is a period of cultural and social integration, which takes place over a number of generations, allowing the migrant to move from community to society, from holism to individualism and from prescribed roles to 'freedom' of action.

The second *figure* concerns the descendants of immigrants in a 'modern' society. Lapeyronnie claims that the second *figure* of the immigrant is the *immigré colonisé* : "L'immigré [colonisé] n'est pas un individu qui vient d'un monde traditionnel pour accéder à la modernité de la société qui l'accueille. [...] Il appartient déjà à l'univers de la modernité dans lequel la tradition et l'appartenance communautaire ne sont plus qu'un mythe ou un souvenir. Il est déjà émancipé." [104] However, Lapeyronnie argues that although the *immigré colonisé* is integrated and no longer torn between his/her public and private life, he/she is still subject to stigmatisation:

> La modernité en fait un individu identique à tous les autres. Mais il continue de porter le signe d'une "différence" non intégrable par la majorité de la population. L'immigré minoritaire est colonisé : à partir du signe qu'il porte, il est défini par le "regard" des autres, les dominants, et par l'intériorisation de ce regard.[105]

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[102] Ibid., p. 257.
[103] See Didier Lapeyronnie 'Les Deux figures de l'immigré' in *Une société fragmentée ? Le Multiculturalisme en débat*, ed., by Michel Wieviorka (Paris : La Découverte, 1997), pp. 251-266.
[104] Ibid., p. 260.
[105] Ibid., p. 260. Lapeyronnie cites Franz Fanon *Peau Noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Seuil, 1952).

The *immigré colonisé/minoritaire* is forced to reconstruct some sort of identity that will allow him/her to withstand a stigmatised identity and escape the unexpected consequences of his/her own integration.

Where Lapeyronnie's approach seems to differ from that of Tribalat and Dujardin is that he questions the benefits of integration. He does not claim that it is a negative experience but rather, that it does not necessarily resolve the problems of the immigrant or the descendant of an immigrant (*l'immigré colonisé/minoritaire*) who remains an outsider. Tribalat's study aims to observe the practices of immigrant-origin populations to prove, in a rather celebratory manner, that they are becoming integrated. Integration as an aspirational model is not called into question as it is in the following statement made by Lapeyronnie with regards to the second *figure de l'immigré*:

> Souvent, il s'est pleinement assimilé. Il a oublié sa langue d'origine, il ne pratique plus la religion de ses parents, son conjoint est un national. Son identité a été digérée et ne se manifeste plus, ou presque plus, dans des pratiques culturelles spécifiques. Il n'empêche. À travers la marque de son origine, l'immigré porte surtout la trace de son intégration. Son appartenance est suspecte de fragilité, parce que récente et surtout non naturelle [...] après tout il n'y a aucune nécessité à cette intégration. L'immigré aurait pu choisir de ne pas s'intégrer ou de s'intégrer ailleurs, dans une autre langue ou une autre culture.[106]

Lapeyronnie therefore argues that integration should not be regarded as a solution, but highlights rather the paradoxical nature of integration, described as a process which actually manufactures identity or *altérité*. The negative elements of the integration process are also exposed with regard to the first *figure de l'immigré*. Indeed, the integrated first generation immigrant is said to suffer from solitude and alienation as a result of the integration process.

Michel Wieviorka goes even further in terms of a critique of the notion of integration. In his article 'Faut-il en finir avec la notion d'intégration?', he argues that the term is inappropriate since it is not clear whether it is a normative value to be achieved or

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[106] Lapeyronnie in Dewitte ed. (1999), p.256.

an objective characteristic of the 'real world'. It is argued that the term is closer to an ideology or a myth. As a result, it ignores the shortcomings of the Republic's institutions regarding the delivery of equality for all and instead focuses on 'les immigrés' as the parties at fault, suggesting that they are entirely responsible for their own integration or lack of it. He argues that instead, integration should be envisaged as a concept which calls for a 'policy of recognition' and a certain element of 'conflictualisation' of relations between minorities and dominant 'society' along the lines of the worker-capitalist relationship which structured industrial societies.[107]

A further critique of integration is offered in Nacira Guénif Souilamas' book *Des "beurettes" aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains*, which can be seen as a response to the approach adopted by Lacoste-Dujardin, since it contains a clear critique of the notion of integration:

> ...un modèle fonctionnaliste systémique comme celui de l'intégration républicaine, qui répondait aux exigences du système industriel, est obsolète s'il ne fonctionne qu'à la marge [...] Les filles "arabes" sont-elles seulement justiciables d'une analyse en termes d'intégration ou ne sont-elles pas comme tous les autres individus se tenant à l'intersection de catégories différentes (jeunes, femmes, étrangers) le prétexte à une interrogation sur les formes sociales émergentes ?[108]

Instead, Souilamas calls for a new term which would take into account the various modes of belonging and participation in 'mainstream society' amongst the descendants of immigrants.

2.7 La Banlieue

Although some argue that the focus on the *banlieue* in terms of a negative phenomenon has perhaps been exaggerated and distorted, the fact remains that much of the 'scientific'

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[107] Michel Wieviorka, 'Faut-il en finir avec la notion d'intégration?', *Les Cahiers de la sécurité intérieure*, 45.3 (2001), 9-20 (pp. 19-20). On this question, see also Nacira Guénif Souilamas, 'L'Intégration, une idée épuisée', *Libération*, 12 July 2001. (Cited in Didier Fassin, 'L'invention française de la discrimination', *Revue française de science politique*, 52.4 (2002), 403-423).
[108] Nacira Guénif Souilamas (2000), pp. 322-323.

research carried out on young people of immigrant-origin must be placed in the context of work on the *banlieue*.

In his book, *La Peur des banlieues*, Henri Rey argues that since the riots of the *Cité des Minguettes* in 1981, the *banlieue* has been at the centre of political and media debates. This has obviously also had a knock-on effect on academic fields of enquiry as well. Rey claims that for the last fifteen years, the *banlieue* has become synonymous with notions of a gradually eroding social fabric; unwanted North African and African immigrants; threats to Republican values; insecurity and (particularly youth) crime; USA-style 'ghettoisation'[109] and fundamentalist Islam. In short, according to Rey, the *banlieue* has become a highly symbolic mode of designating all that is "Une forme inédite de contre-société."[110] Jean-Marc Stébé echoes Rey's viewpoint and claims that for the last fifteen years, the discourses about urbanism have focused mainly on the *banlieues*: "...par réduction, confusion et amalgames successifs, on projette sur eux toutes les 'fautes' de la société et toutes les craintes associées aux populations mal connues."[111] François Dubet also argues that the renewal of '*la question urbaine*' has focused on *la banlieue* in three ways : "...comme nouveau visage d'une question sociale, comme espace des mutations politiques publiques, enfin comme lieu de sociabilité."[112]

In this sub-section, I will discuss the research of François Dubet and David Lepoutre in particular. Their work not only focuses on young people in the urban

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[109] Much of the research on *la banlieue* includes a comparison with the violence of American inner cities. For example Sophie Body-Gendrot and Loïc Wacquant's research on urban violence can be seen as using the 'transatlantic comparison' as a model of identification and opposition. Both Body-Gendrot and Wacquant argue that the French *banlieue* is not comparable to an American inner-city or ghetto. However, in his critique of the 'transatlantic comparison', Éric Fassin points out that although these two authors repudiate the notion that French *banlieues* are like American ghettos, their argument seems to warn that they could nevertheless resemble American inner cities in the near future. Fassin (1999), pp.225-226 cites Loïc Wacquant and Sophie Body-Gendrot, 'Ghetto: un mot de trop?', *Le Monde*, 17 July, 1991 ; S. Body-Gendrot, *Ville et violence : l'irruption de nouveaux acteurs* (Paris : PUF, 1993) ; Loïc Wacquant, 'Banlieues françaises et ghetto noir américain', in *Racisme et modernité* ed. by Michel Wieviorka (Paris : La Découverte, 1993).
[110] Henri Rey, *La Peur des banlieues* (Paris : Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1996), p. 7.
[111] Jean-Marc Stébé, *La Crise des banlieues : sociologie des quartiers sensibles* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 2002), p.6.
[112] François Dubet, 'Les Figures de la ville et la banlieue' *Sociologie du travail*, 21, (1995), 127-150 (p. 127).

periphery, but also on those of immigrant-origin. This corpus of literature (although much more extensive than is possible to discuss here) is useful for our purposes since it depicts the daily microcosm of the experiences of immigrant-origin youth to a greater extent than the field research on immigrant associations or the research on theories of cultural difference.

La Banlieue and La 'Galère'

François Dubet's book *La Galère: jeunes en survie* discusses the findings of fieldwork carried out by Dubet and his fellow researchers, Adil Jazouli and Didier Lapeyronnie. Dubet first of all defines what is meant by the term '*la galère*' and how it developed, situating it in the context of the wider economic crisis, triggered by the decline of industrial society. In the first chapter of the book, Dubet claims that it is no longer appropriate to discuss the transformations of society in terms of the social movements of the 1970s, due to the decline of such optimism at the end of the decade and so he argues that it is necessary instead to study what would appear to be the opposite of such social movements: "...l'expérience des jeunes marginalisés, ce qu'ils nomment la galère."[113] Dubet defines *la galère* as follows: "...il faut lire la galère, cette expérience de zonage, d'exclusion et de violence, comme le produit de la destruction d'anciens modes d'action et de régulation, et comme une des conséquences de l'échec des mouvements capables de donner un sens à la domination subie."[114]

Dubet argues that in the past, studies of marginalized youth in the 1950s and 1960s paid a lot of attention to the gang phenomenon, and studies in the 1970s concentrated on the political and cultural critique – i.e. the challenge posed by many young people to authorities of all sorts. He claims that the experience of the 1980s is rather different:

> Aujourd'hui, ces formes cristallisées de conduite de jeunes ont disparu et les jeunes des banlieues des grandes villes sont plongés dans une expérience qu'ils n'ont guère choisie: la galère. Il existe bien des façons de décrire la galère mais

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[113] François Dubet, *La Galère: jeunes en survie* (Paris: Fayard, 1987), p.22.
[114] Ibid., p. 22.

toutes en soulignent le caractère fluide, contradictoire, mal perceptible puisque l'acteur lui-même paraît se perdre dans un temps dilué, dans un flottement des aspirations, dans une ambivalence indéfinie.[115]

He claims that although the sociologist studying youth in the *cités* may be tempted to write about violent gangs and drug-ridden housing estates, as is the case in the media, it nevertheless becomes clear that such images do not correspond to the realities:

> ...il n'y a rien. [...] Les travailleurs sociaux et les animateurs [...] parlent des bandes d'autrefois ou de celles du quartier d'à côté, mais aujourd'hui c'est mort, il y a sans doute des problèmes, le chômage, les stages, les sorties, les activités, la drogue [...], mais tout cela paraît dilué, mal défini, incertain. On est loin des clichés trop héroïques ou trop sordides de la 'jungle' des grandes villes.[116]

La galère is a term that the young people concerned actually use themselves to describe their daily existence which is characterised by uncertainty: " ... l'incertitude, le flottement, la formation de réseaux fragiles à la place des bandes, les longues périodes d'oisiveté entrecoupés de petits boulots, la délinquance présente et peu spectaculaire..."[117]

Dubet situates his study of *la galère* and the *conduites marginales* of young people from the working class suburbs within the theoretical framework of a sociology of 'action', as developed by French sociologist Alain Touraine in particular. What Dubet refers to as the 'sociologie de l'action' concentrates mostly on social movements. Dubet claims that at first, one might think that the *galère* experience, with its increased anomie, apathy, the 'dilution' of social relations and its chaotic and sometimes violent characteristics, would seem to be inconsistent with the notion of social action. However, he argues that it is also possible to regard the trajectories of the *galèriens* in such terms: "Notre propos est [...] d'étudier les conduites marginales des jeunes, la galère aujourd'hui, *comme* des formes d'action, de stratégies, d'esquisses de conflit, de

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[115] Ibid., p.9.
[116] Ibid., p.10.
[117] Ibid., p. 10.

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revendication culturelles larvées..."[118] Dubet analyses *la galère* on three levels : *la désorganisation, l'exclusion, la rage.*

One of the main aims of the research was to get young people to talk about their experiences of *la galère* in their *cité* by using the *intervention sociologique* method.[119] Approximately seventy young people participated in the research and five groups of *jeunes* were formed, which met twice a week for a month.[120] Dubet's study is significant because the *conduites* of today's *galériens* can be seen as reflecting the transformation of industrial society: "Enfin la galère est une conduite marginale liée à la 'sortie' des sociétés industrielles, à l'exclusion et à l'absence de mouvement social."[121] Dubet insists that "les conduites contestataires" of the youths must not be seen simplistically as the result of a lack of social integration or unequal resources, but instead as the result of "la crise d'un système culturel."[122] The originality in this mode of action, concludes Dubet, is

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[118] Ibid., p. 40.

[119] This method was developed by Alain Touraine during the 1970s in order to study the 'new social movements' which had emerged in the wake of the decline of the traditional workers' movement. The method involves the formation of a research group made up of interviewees (*les acteurs*) and two researchers. Groups range from a minimum of four people to a maximum of fifteen, with the norm being between ten and fifteen members. One of the researchers acts as an interpreter and the second researcher acts as the analyst. The 'intervention sociologique' is not a group interview. The emphasis is on *analysis* and *prise de conscience* of one's own actions and experiences rather than simply relating them (*le témoignage*). Whilst the groups which are formed remain artificial and numerically unrepresentative, there is an aim to obtain a diverse cross-section of the particular social 'group' being studied. See Dubet (1987), 'Remarques sur la méthode d'intervention sociologique', pp. 443-448. See also Alain Touraine, *La Voix et le regard* (Paris : Seuil, 1978) for an explanation of the principles of the *intervention sociologique*.

[120] There were five research groups in total. They were based in Orly, Champigny, Vénisssieux, Clichy and Seraing (Belgium). The average research group included fifteen youths and the ages ranged from sixteen to twenty-three. The nationalities of the groups were generally mixed, including those of French nationality and those who are described by Dubet as '*immigrés*'. For each group of young people, a group of adults was formed as Dubet claims that the experience of *la galère* must be considered in terms of the relations between young people and the adults who surround and subordinate them. These adults or *interlocuteurs* were often from the same *cité* and included amongst others, parents, building caretakers, social workers, local shopkeepers/business-owners, policemen/women, judges, teachers, trade union representatives, a company director, politicians, social workers and a musician. They met and took part in the same research groups as the young people. (Where I have used the term '*immigrés*', this is merely to reproduce the word used by Dubet in *La Galère*. Indeed, it would seem problematic to describe those who were born in France or brought to France at a very young age as 'immigrants').

[121] Ibid., p.418.

[122] Ibid., p. 418.

the absence of a structured social movement and the formation "...d'une *action* de classes dangereuses."[123] (Italicised by myself).

A Response to Dubet: Lepoutre's Notion of "une violence codifiée"

Ethnologist David Lepoutre's book *Coeur de banlieue: codes, rites et langages* contains the findings of a study of adolescents and pre-adolescents in La Courneuve, Seine-Saint-Denis. The study looks at the youth culture of adolescents in *Les 4000 (Les Quatre Mille)* housing estate and in particular, the behaviour and daily life of *collègiens*: their use of language, *verlan*, peer groups, neighbourhood relations, social activities etc. Whilst carrying out his research, Lepoutre was a teacher in a *collège*, based in La Courneuve and moved to live in *Les 4000 cité* in order to adopt an ethnographic approach to his research. In some ways, Lepoutre's book can be seen as a response to Dubet's *La Galère* both in terms of methodology and findings. Lepoutre argues that French sociology has focused on the notion of *la désorganisation sociale* and that instead, his ethnological approach aims to concentrate on the cultural dimension of youth experience in the deprived suburbs. Furthermore, Lepoutre claims that on the contrary to what Dubet qualified as *la violence anomique*, his own study focused on the violence (verbal and physical) of inter-personal relationships between adolescents and pre-adolescents as: "une violence signifiante, codifiée, contrôlée et mise en forme, en somme une violence cultivée."[124] This sense of organisation as opposed to Dubet's sense of "flottement" and *désorganisation* is further reflected in Lepoutre's conclusion that the inter-personal violence between adolescents in *Les 4000* bore witness to the existence of a "système culturel" (compare this to Dubet's notion of "crise d'un système culturel"[125]) which he calls a "culture de rues"[126], i.e. "un ensemble ordonné de pratiques, un système unifié d'attitudes personnelles et de relations..."[127]

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[123] Ibid., p.418. The use of the term "les classes dangereuses" is a reference to the expression used in nineteenth-century France and coined by L. Chevalier in *Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses* (Paris : U.G.E., 1978) to denote the emergence of new social actors as society underwent industrialisation. See Dubet (1987), p. 23.

[124] David Lepoutre, *Cœur de banlieue : codes, rites et langages* (Paris : Odile Jacob, 2001), 2nd edn, p. 24.

[125] Dubet (1987), p. 418.

[126] Lepoutre (2001), p. 28.

[127] Lepoutre (2001), pp.27.

2.8 L'insécurité urbaine

Part of the corpus of research on *les banlieues* is dedicated more specifically to the question of urban (or suburban) violence in terms of juvenile delinquency and crime (as opposed to Lepoutre's more diffuse understanding of violence on an inter-personal level). The proliferation of the *insécurité* debate in the political arena from the end of the 1970s onwards, like the wider literature on *les banlieues*, is reflected in terms of intellectual enquiry. Michel Wieviorka points out that in the 1990s in particular, '*la violence urbaine*' occupied a central place in the media which often presented it as a pathological banality of certain '*quartiers populaires*', thus stripping it of any social significance.[128] In addition, the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism, coupled with the wave of terrorist attacks in France in the mid-1990s, encouraged all sorts of imagined associations between violence, Islam, immigrants and *la banlieue*.[129]

A New Paradigm of Violence

In his book *Violence en France* Wieviorka reflects on the development of a new 'paradigm' of violence. He points out that urban violence has been on the rise since the start of the 1980s and that although it was initially the Right who engaged with this issue when the notion of *l'insécurité* became audible in political debates in the 1970s, the Left also appropriated this issue from the mid-1980s onwards.[130]

Wieviorka shows how the violence of the 1980s onwards is different in nature to the violence of the 1960s and 1970s. The violence of the 1960s and 1970s is described as being more a case of *political* or terrorist violence which was either linked to revolutionary leftist movements (e.g. the Maoists, the Palestinian movement) or regional movements (e.g. the Breton movement or the Occitan movement). It is argued that from the 1970s onwards, political violence increasingly lost its legitimacy as the notion of the

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[128] See Michel Wieviorka, 'L'insécurité peut-elle être jugulée ?', in *Club Ulysse, Le Politique saisi par l'économie : enjeux économiques et sociaux des élections de 2002* (Paris: Economica, 2002), pp. 177- 187 (p. 181).

[129] See Wieviorka (2002), p. 181 for further discussion of the suspicion surrounding Islam and '*les jeunes des banlieues*', especially following the Khaled Kelkal 'affair'.

[130] See Michel Wieviorka *Violence en France* (Paris: Seuil, 1999a) pp.28-29. Also on the question of the increasing saliency of the *insécurtité* theme and youth responses, see Nicola Cooper, ' 'Stop la Violence': responses to delinquency and urban violence in contemporary France', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 8.1 (2000), 91-99.

revolutionary advocating direct violent action (supported at the time by intellectual figures such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Frantz Fanon) became less acceptable. Concerns about violence shifted to the question of *l'insécurité urbaine* and the announcement in 1975 by Michel Poniatowski that the objectives of the Ministry of Interior would be primarily concerned with "la sécurité des Français" reflects this change.[131]

Thus the new '*violence infrapolitique*' which emerges during the 1980s is described as follows: "[Elle]...est souvent associée à l'idée d'une crise de la ville – elle est alors dite 'urbaine'." This new "paradigm" of violence translates into four main phenomena: 1. *les rodéos* (joy-riding: "...violence sans objet, purement ludique, et plus ou moins autodestructrice..."[132]); 2. *les émeutes* (riots: [qui] témoigne de l'épuisement des modalités de traitement politique et institutionnel des demandes sociales..."[133]; 3. attacks against state institutions ("agressions de jeunes visant des enseignants ou d'autres catégories de personnel des collèges et lycées, le racket, les dégradations [...] les incendies d'établissements scolaires"[134]) ; and 4. *les incivilités*: (general uncivil behaviour).[135] More importantly for our purposes, Wieviorka points out that the perpetrators of these new forms of violence are perceived in the public mind as being "les nouvelles classes dangereuses" and as mainly made up of youth of immigrant (and particularly North African) origin.[136]

Wieviorka identifies two main causes for the new violence. They can be considered in cultural and in social terms. Indeed, he discusses the process and consequences of "la fragmentation culturelle" which is shown to have developed since the 1960s onwards. The first wave of "fragmentation culturelle" concerned the more or less middle class elements of French society and included regionalist movements, the women's movement, homosexuals, the deaf and dumb movement and other disabled

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[131] Wieviorka (1999a), p. 28.
[132] Ibid., p. 29.
[133] Ibid., p. 30.
[134] Ibid., p. 33.
[135] Ibid., p.35.
[136] Ibid., See pp. 35-36.

groups. This first wave also involved the beginnings of an "ethnicisation"[137] of Jewish French communities.

The early *revendications particularistes* should be seen in cultural terms rather than as social demands. That is, the notion of *l'exclusion sociale* was largely absent from these demands, unlike the experience of the second wave of "fragmentation culturelle". The second wave of cultural fragmentation takes place from the mid-1970s onwards and is linked with the end of industrial society and its structures of social relations. The end of the *Trente Glorieuses* period plus the changing face of immigration in France can also be seen as two main factors leading to this second wave of cultural fragmentation. The emergence of 'second and third generations' of immigrants,[138] whose problematic is described by Wieviorka as one of cultural integration (due, for example, to a Republican education) and social exclusion (due to racism) is summed up as follows:

> A force de dire à des jeunes qu'ils sont différents, de leur interdire l'accès à la boîte de nuit du fait de leur faciès, ou l'accès à l'emploi du fait de leur nom ou de leur adresse, ceux-ci, même s'ils sont français, peuvent rechercher ailleurs que dans les perspectives d'une intégration qui leur est refusée le sens ou les repères de leur existence.[139]

Thus, the "déstructuration" of society, the end of the *banlieues rouges* and post-colonial racism are some of the main reasons for the emergence of 'urban violence'.[140]

Urban Violence as Social Action ?

Wieviorka, like Dubet in his study of *la galère* subscribes to the idea of a sociology of action, where the delinquent and sometimes criminal behaviour of young *jeunes des banlieues* should not solely be seen as the result of the crisis that the post-industrial Republic finds itself in. He claims that such a theory is unsatisfactory because it does not allow for the conception of a renewal of social relations and conflict (conflict here being

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[137] Ibid., p.51.
[138] In actual fact these individuals are not immigrants at all but the descendants of immigrants, born and educated in France and therefore it is inaccurate to refer to them as the 'second' or 'third' generation of migrants. This term is used here simply for convenience.
[139] Ibid, p.68. (The original text does not adopt the use of accents on capital letters).
[140] Ibid., p.53.

used in the positive/structuring sense of the industrial society whereby social relations were largely regulated by worker versus capitalist antagonisms). It is argued instead that the notion of violence as *action* is preferable because it attempts to understand violence from the point of view of the actor, whose violence, it is argued, is the consequence of frustration: " ... les conduites juvéniles de violence urbaine ou scolaire procèdent d'une reconnaissance refusée ou de la conviction insupportable que la société est fermée..."[141] Rejecting a rational choice explanation, Wieviorka claims that the most appropriate model for analysing post-1980s juvenile urban violence is the *perte de sens* model because as he puts it :

> La violence aujourd'hui est assurément une des variantes de la maladie sénile d'une société industrielle en déclin et d'institutions républicaines à bout de souffle, ce qui justifie qu'on l'aborde en termes de crise, mais appelle déjà qu'on l'analyse en termes de sens et de perte de sens; elle est aussi une des modalités de la maladie infantile d'une société qui s'invente, ce qui renforce la nécessité qu'il y a à l'envisager en termes de significations.[142]

The notion of reinvention often translates into the transition from violent action to more peaceful action so Wieviorka refers to the phenomenon of formerly violent young people who then later go on to translate their demands into an association project for example.

By carrying out empirical research in the Parisian public transport system (*la RATP - Régie autonome des transports parisiens*), in schools and in certain urban and/or *banlieue* settings, such as Saint-Denis, Le Havre, Strasbourg and the *Lyonnaise* area, Wieviorka aims to demonstrate the disparity between the media representations of violence in some of the *banlieues populaires*, and the realities on the ground. As mentioned above, he points out that as far as public perceptions are concerned, many people in France associate urban juvenile violence with *les jeunes issus de l'immigration* and imagined suburban pockets of cultural or religious fundamentalism. However, the fieldwork documented in *Violence en France* shows that there are substantial numbers of young people of immigrant origin who are involved in 'urban violence' to differing

[141] Ibid., p.19.
[142] Ibid., p.20.

degrees but that this is rather the result of the fact that substantial numbers face discrimination and marginalisation in '*les quartiers relégués*'. It is argued that their actions cannot be analysed in terms of *communautarisme*: "...les jeunes qui font des rodéos ou passent à l'émeute, ceux qui expriment leur haine ou leur rage, ceux encore qui concrètement se caractérisent par des comportements d'incivilité sont au plus loin de pouvoir être définies par de fortes appartenances identitaires."[143]

On the question of the resolution of violence, Wieviorka argues that a possible way to diffuse violence would be to give a sense of presumed legitimacy to all cultural differences which present themselves in the public domain. However useful it may be to argue for the presumed legitimacy of cultural differences in the public sphere, the fact remains that, as Wieviorka himself points out, the violence expressed in the actions of young people (often of immigrant-origin) are not purely cultural demands as such. Such a solution would therefore appear to be limited. Indeed, in order to understand these phenomena one cannot separate the cultural from the social. That is, one has to see the *demandes de reconnaissance* as being the reaction to a mixture of social relegation *and* cultural or racial discrimination.

2.9 Racism and Racial Discrimination

Another area of research, which is related to immigration and populations of immigrant-origin, is the study of racism. Research on racism in France has been inextricably linked with the discourses surrounding immigration and once again, it can be seen as a field of enquiry, which, like many others linked with the study of immigration, has been dominated by the interminable oppositions between supposed 'national models' of immigrant incorporation. In other words, it is possible to argue that the study of racism in France was for a long time a taboo subject since the dominance of the Republican idea that all men and women are equal, regardless of colour, race etc. entailed a naïve negation of the existence of racial discrimination. This stance has been characterised by the idea that any highlighting of difference (cultural but especially of a 'racial' nature) amounted to a latent form of racism.

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[143] Ibid., p.336.

Indeed, in France empirical studies on racist practices have tended to be more recent and less numerous. In an article entitled 'La discrimination à l'embauche des jeunes issus de l'immigration: du problème social à l'observation sociologique', France Aubert, Maryse Tripier and François Vourc'h describe and explain the lack of research in France into racism and discrimination.[144] They show that whilst there are many references to racism in a general manner, the number of specific empirical studies of racism in France with regards to immigrants remains limited and that racism as a concept is used to explain elements which are already part of a given study, i.e. racism is not investigated itself. A reason Aubert, Tripier and Vourc'h give for the lack of explicit research on racism in France is the problematic nature of demonstrating direct and indirect racism as well as the concern that in attempting to do so "...cette démonstration elle-même 'créerait' des catégories sociales ou ethniques, dans un univers social qui – pour leur dénier toute légitimité – les dénie elles-mêmes, purement et simplement."[145]

However, it could be argued that Michel Wieviorka's work on racism and its various manifestations (*le préjugé, la ségrégation, la discrimination*) does suggest that there is a fairly significant corpus of research on racism in France.[146] The notion of renewal or a reformulation of the approach to racism is central to Wieviorka's own conclusions about the dangers of oscillating between an abstract and defunct universalism and a naïve celebration of cultural difference for its own sake. Instead he argues that a balance needs to be struck between these two registers in order to facilitate a political 'treatment' (resolution) of racism whilst guarding against both the tyranny of the majority and the tyranny of minorities.[147]

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[144] France Aubert, Maryse Tripier and François Vourc'h, 'La Discrimination à l'embauche des jeunes issus de l'immigration: du problème social à l'observation sociologique', in *Jeunes issus de l'immigration : de l'école à l'emploi* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997), pp. 245- 267.
[145] Ibid., p. 267.
[146] See Michel Wieviorka, *Le Racisme : une introduction* (Paris : La Découverte et Syros, 1998); *La France raciste* (Paris : Seuil, 1992), (*L'Espace du racisme* (Paris : Seuil, 1991).
[147] Michel Wieviorka (1998), see pp. 150-153.

In the conclusion to his study of racism in the workplace[148], Philippe Bataille, like Wieviorka, criticises the rigid upholding of a mythical principle of Republican integration in the workplace and its perverse effects:

> Comme d'autres sphères d'activité sociale et culturelle de la société française, le travail demeure associé à une conception désuète de l'intégration, incapable de penser la différence culturelle, et de plus en plus crispée sur la défense d'un 'modèle français d'intégration républicaine', lourd de promesses d'égalité et de solidarité non tenues, au point qu'elles se pervertissent en nationalisme, en racisme et en xénophobie.[149]

Instead, Bataille suggests that in order to tackle racism in employment through trade union action, a policy of recognition both on the individual and collective level needs to be established beforehand :

> Intégrer suppose de lutter contre les inégalités [...], ce qui passe par la reconnaissance individuelle et collective de la subjectivité. Les acteurs sociaux adversaires déclarés du racisme ont tout à gagner à clarifier leurs engagements sur cet idéal, ils ne sauraient se contenter d'appels incantatoires à la République.[150]

In a more recent publication, anthropologist Didier Fassin reiterates Bataille's call for an end to the notion of integration (in the Republican sense) as the framework for combating racism. In 'L'Invention française de la discrimination', Didier Fassin argues that the very terms 'discrimination' and 'lutte contre la discrimination' have only really come into current usage in France since the end of the 1990s, which reflects a shift from the focus on racism, xenophobia, inequality and segregation as separate phenomena.[151] He points out that the turning point, in terms of the linking of the notion of 'racism' and 'discrimination', was the publication of Bataille's *Le Racisme au travail*, which he sees as the launch of the public debate with regards to discrimination. He concludes that this

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[148] This research project was commissioned by the CFDT (*Confédération française du travail*) and the resulting book *Le Racisme au Travail* documents the results of fieldwork conducted in Brittany, Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur, Lorraine, Alsace, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Languedoc-Roussillon, Charente-Maritime, Savoie, les Bouches-du-Rhône, le Centre and Ile-de-France over a period of two years.
[149] Philippe Bataille, *Le Racisme au travail* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), p. 234.
[150] Ibid., p. 234.
[151] Didier Fassin, 'L'Invention française de la discrimination', *Revue française de science politique*, 52.4 (2002), 403-423.

"invention tardive" of the term 'racial discrimination' underlines the need to renew the ways in which the question of immigration and difference is constructed. This, it is claimed, will encourage us to tackle the issue of racial discrimination in ways other than as entwined with immigration policies and models of integration.

PART IV: CONCLUSIONS AND FIELDWORK

Given the vast scope of the corpus of research that is related (directly or indirectly) to North African immigrants and their descendants in France, it would be impossible to discuss each area of research satisfactorily in one chapter, let alone in a thesis and this is not my aim. Rather, by providing an overview of the different areas of research on immigration and its related topics, it has been possible to highlight the main differences between the different academic disciplines (i.e. Sociology, Political Science, Ethnography and French/Cultural Studies). It can be established that the study of immigration and its related issues is very much an interdisciplinary area of research, in the sense that there are a variety of academic disciplines that carry out important work in migration studies. However, I would argue that there is little actual interchange between the disciplines themselves. For example, direct interchange between the sociological discussions of immigration and ethnicity and the Political Science research carried out on the same subject is rare. It is, of course to be expected that each academic discipline have its own methodology or dominant themes. However, it could be argued that in order to make the study of immigration and its related subjects more satisfactory, there should be more communication between the different approaches. For example, in the discussions on cultural difference and multiculturalism, there is little mention of the empirical work carried out on the attitudes of populations of immigrant-origin and the types of *revendication* they make. For example, Catherine Wihtol de Wenden shows that the identities of association leaders of immigrant-origin do not correspond with the ideological debates about how cultural difference should be dealt with in the public sphere - a question which has dominated much of academic enquiry over the last two decades. Instead, de Wenden and Cesari show that many of the associations set up by

militants of immigrant origin are often quite depoliticised and do not have strong *appartenances identitaires*.

It is therefore possible to formulate a critique of the literature on immigration (and its related issues) based on two observations. First of all, it would seem that the literature suffers from a lack of direct cross-discussion between the different approaches to the issues related to immigration. Secondly a lot of research remains influenced by the ideological oppositions of 'French Republicanism' and 'Anglo-Saxon multiculturalism', and this can obscure the empirical realities of the immigrant's experience and more importantly for our purposes, that of his/her children. If one approaches the experiences of immigrants and their descendants within this oppositional framework, we are forced to oscillate between analysing their *revendications* as manifestations of either universalist aspirations *or* demands for recognition of their difference which this ideological approach portrays as purely cultural.[152] Indeed, as de Wenden points out with regard to the notion of opposed national models:

> Ces mythes présentés comme modèles, font l'objet de mirages qui brouillent l'approche de la place réservée aux immigrés dans les sociétés, en opposant l'universalisme au communautarisme, la citoyenneté à l'identité. Il convient en matière d'analyse d'aller au-delà des mythes nationaux et des stéréotypes, de prendre en compte la dimension concrète des situations...[153]

The Triangle of Identity: a Way out of the 'impasse'?

In terms of theory it is possible to overcome this *impasse* by using an analytical tool known as the 'triangle of difference' or identity.[154] This tool of analysis allows the observer to get away from viewing minorities as either an integrated/assimilated individual who participates fully in the mainstream society or as a community-bound

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[152] As early on as 1984, Abdelmalek Sayad criticised the tendency of social science research to focus too much on the polemical or sensational aspects of immigration. He argued that this tendency meant that immigration was more often than not approached on a "problèmes sociaux" register, as opposed to being thoroughly constructed as an "objet d'étude" [sociologique]. See Abdelmalek Sayad, 'Tendances et courants des publications en sciences sociales sur l'immigration depuis 1960', *Current Sociology*, 32.3 (1984) Part 2, 219-304, (p. 238).

[153] Wihtol de Wenden (1999a), p. 122.

[154] The 'triangle of difference' model, developed by Michel Wieviorka, was initially known as '*le triangle de l'ethnicité*'. See Michel Wieviorka, *La Démocratie à l'épreuve : nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris: La Découverte, 1993).

person who, due to his/her *enfermement culturel*, lives on the margins of mainstream society. Instead, this model introduces a third 'pole', the pole of 'subjective identity'. Wieviorka identifies the three poles of the triangle as follows: individual identity (characterised by individual participation in society), collective identity (e.g. religious or community identity) and subjective identity. Subjective identity can be understood as being the result of the successful management of both the individual (instrumental/rational) and collective registers, and as a situation where the individual is able to construct his or her own identity by feeding into the other two poles.[155] The subject is also referred to as *l'acteur*:

> ...le but de l'acteur est de se construire lui-même comme acteur, d'autogérer son existence, d'être libre, indépendant, responsable en tant qu'être particulier. Cette volonté d'individuation définit la subjectivation et celle-ci, le désir d'être Sujet, qui rend possible et nécessaire la combinaison de l'instrumentalité et de l'identité.[156]

The triangle of cultural difference can be useful as an analytical tool in the study of young people of North African origin, whose experiences cannot accurately be translated into the two-dimensional model of *identité individuelle/universelle* or *identité culturelle/particulariste*. Their problematic is not the same as that of the *primo-arrivant* generation and it is not possible to fully understand their experiences and *revendications* unless a social dimension is taken into account as well. In other words, although the young people in question ('the second and third generations') may assert their cultural difference to some extent, this should be seen within the context of discrimination and social exclusion (or the threat of it). As Lapeyronnie writes:

> ...les mouvements beurs éclatés entre leur revendication d'intégration puis leur souci de défendre une identité spécifique sont exemplaires de ce dilemme qui traverse tous les mouvements minoritaires dont l'enjeu n'est pas la défense

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[155] See Michel Wieviorka (1999b).

[156] Alain Touraine 'Faux et vrais problèmes', in *Une société fragmentée ? Le multiculturalisme en débat*, ed., by Michel Wieviorka (Paris : La Découverte, 1997), pp.291-319, (pp.302-303). See also Nadia Kiwan, 'Integration or Self-Realisation? Young people of North African origin in a Parisian *banlieue*', (Unpublished paper presented at Conference of the South Wales and West of England Regional Centre for Contemporary French Studies, University of Bristol, 4 May 2001).

d'intérêts particuliers mais la lutte contre les discriminations et la reconnaissance d'une identité stigmatisée.[157]

It would seem then that it is impossible to separate the social and the cultural if one wants to get an insight into the experiences of *les jeunes issus de l'immigration maghrébine* who, for the most part reside in the former *banlieues rouges* which have now become '*les banlieues stigmatisées*'.

Re-articulating the 'Cultural' and the 'Social'

There is a tendency in the literature on immigration and its related topics to either concentrate on the cultural issues which are thought to concern immigrants and their descendants, or on a more 'social problem' approach. For example, there are studies which look at the 'public philosophies' aspect of cultural difference or on a less 'macro' level, research which examines how the descendants of North African immigrants (particularly young women) juggle the 'constraints' of their cultural heritage with the more 'modern' aspects of their existence.[158] On the other hand, there is research of the type conducted by François Dubet on *la galère*. Despite the fact that a large proportion of the individuals who took part in the study were of North African origin, Dubet claims that their experiences of *la galère* (although somewhat heightened amongst those of North African origin) are not fundamentally different to their '*français de souche*' counterparts. Yet, they are still referred to as '*jeunes immigrés*', thus distinguishing them from their '*français de souche*' peers. Dubet claims that at the start of the research project on *la galère*, he was tempted to discuss the experience of *les jeunes immigrés* as different to the French *banlieusards* but that two factors made him change his mind:

> Dans aucun des groupes, les jeunes n'ont introduit l'immigration comme un clivage fondamental des rapports entre les jeunes du même quartier. [...] Les relations et les amitiés sont pluriethniques. [...] ...depuis leur enfance, les jeunes vivent la même expérience dans des cités qui ne sont pas des ghettos raciaux. [...] Un second fait nous a conduit à mêler Français et immigrés dans le même modèle de la galère: lorsque nous avons proposé ce schéma d'explication à des groupes

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[157] Didier Lapeyronnie, 'Les Deux figures de l'immigré', in Wieviorka ed., (1997), pp.251-266 (pp. 262-263).

[158] See for example Camille Lacoste-Dujardin (1992).

formés de Français et d'immigrés, les jeunes en ont discuté certains points mais jamais ils n'ont critiqué cette interprétation pour souligner les spécificités des Français ou des immigrés, tous se sont reconnus dans la problématique proposée.[159]

If it is claimed that one cannot really differentiate between the *'Français de souche'* and *'jeunes immigrés'* experiences, one must ask what the implications of such a claim are. Indeed, if the same model of *la galère* is used for everyone, does this not translate into an increased risk that the question of racial discrimination will not be adequately addressed by researchers and politicians? If the argument is put forward that 'everyone is in the same boat' then does this not lead to non-action as far as effective equity programmes are concerned? It would seem on the contrary, necessary to have some element of specific analysis of *'les jeunes issus de l'immmigration maghrébine'* as long as the articulation between the social and the cultural registers is always taken into account.

From 'Top-Down' Discourses to Experience

The last two chapters have concentrated on two registers of discourse in relation to North African immigrants and their descendants. Chapter 1 focused on the political debate which dominated throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The focus of the present chapter has been academic discourses. The picture would remain incomplete if we were not to embark on an investigation of a *third* level of analysis, that is the 'discourses' generated in the field by the actors themselves.[160] In other words it is now essential to turn our attention to the 'register of experience', to borrow the term used by Nacira Guénif Souilamas.[161]

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[159] François Dubet (1987), pp.325-326.

[160] Abdelmalek Sayad (1984), p. 248 makes the point that there is a tendency in the 'scientific' study of immigration to associate a series of particular social 'problems' with immigrants and their descendants. According to Sayad, this tendency, which is referred to as "accouplement" presents an obstacle to the construction of a veritable 'sociology of immigration'. Building on Sayad's notion of "accouplement", the empirical objectives of this thesis should be seen as an attempt to focus on the 'voice' of the actors themselves, rather than impose a set of 'issues' such as 'young people of North African origin and housing, employment, health, *insertion sociale'* etc., which become a prism through which the immigrant populations are subsequently 'studied'.

[161] Guénif Souilamas (2000).

It is with this aim in mind that the main objectives of the empirical aspect of the present research were formulated. In other words, the field research was undertaken in an attempt to escape the ideological debates about multiculturalism versus universalism; the a-cultural/social enquiries into immigrant-origin youth as well as the a-social/cultural studies of young women of North African origin. Whilst all these types of approaches to research are valid and useful, they do not allow nor indeed *aim* to study the link between the social and the cultural in a detailed manner. Using the concept of subjectivity, whereby the subject is seen to create his or her own identity, the aim of the field research was to evaluate the social and the cultural in terms of the construction of identity amongst young people of North African origin in a Parisian *banlieue*. Rather than examining the experiences of this heterogeneous group within a framework of urban violence or *les conduites marginales*, (to use the term employed by Dubet in *La Galère*), the main objective of the fieldwork was to study how young men and women, who are *not* involved in *les conduites marginales ou violentes*, constructed their existence socially and culturally.[162]

Regarding definitions, 'the cultural' can be understood in terms of how one defines oneself in relation to one's 'heritage' or how one constructs the notion of '*l'origine*' or '*les origines*'.[163] For our purposes, this would translate into how actors position themselves in relation to '*la culture maghrébine*' if indeed, they re-appropriate this term at all since according to Nacira Guénif Souilamas, it is a misnomer imposed by the dominant 'White' French society.[164] Alternatively the cultural aspect to identity could refer to how actors define themselves in relation to '*la culture berbère/la berbérité*', '*la culture algérienne/marocaine/tunisienne*'. The 'social' can be understood as how actors define themselves in terms of social origins, i.e. in terms of 'class', spatial identity (where they live – a *cité HLM* or *pavillon* for example) or income.

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[162] Dubet (1987).

[163] The notion of 'culture' in the humanities and social sciences is complex and will be further discussed in subsequent chapters. The 'working definition' provided here should be seen as simply introducing the framework of the empirical aspect of the doctoral research.

[164] Guénif Souilamas (2000), pp. 33-40.

Field Research in Seine-Saint-Denis: a 'Profile' of Aubervilliers

With this aim in mind, an extensive field study was carried out in *Aubervilliers*, a Parisian suburb situated in the Seine-Saint-Denis *département*. Aubervilliers seemed to present an interesting town for a case-study primarily because it was traditionally a working class town with a long history of immigration, due to its proximity to several major industrial employers and sites. In this sense, Aubervilliers can be seen as one of the former *banlieues rouges*. The town's immigrants first came from Italy, Spain, Portugal, then the Maghreb and lastly, sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian sub-continent. The last census recorded 29.7% of the 63,524 inhabitants as being of foreign nationality and three quarters of these nationals are from outside the European Union. This is the second highest proportion of foreign nationals in the *département*, the highest proportion being 33%. The overall departmental proportion of foreign nationals is only 18.7%. This means that many more inhabitants are, as a result, of 'foreign *origin*' as well, since those born in France can obtain French nationality at the age of eighteen. A large proportion (41.3%) of its population lives in council housing (*HLMs*) and the unemployment rate is high (22.6% in 1999; 15.8% in 1990) compared to an average of 11.5% (1999) and 8.6% (1990) for the *Ile-de-France* region. In addition, a high proportion of young people residing in the town (aged between sixteen and twenty-five) are under-qualified (33.3% of the population have no qualification whatsoever). 41% of the town's active population are described as 'workers'. The departmental proportion is 32% and the regional proportion is 21%.[165] However, it is important to point out that although Aubervilliers is a *banlieue*, it is also a relatively structured *town* with a certain sense of identity. It is a *banlieue populaire*, with a communist tradition as opposed to being a *banlieue destructurée* or '*sans âme*'. The people who live and work in Aubervilliers are therefore on the whole, conscious of belonging to a *town* with a strong identity.

The field research focused on the younger section of the North African origin population, that is, those aged between 16 and 25, the main objective being to examine

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[165] Statistics from *Recensement de la population de 1999 : les grandes tendances à Aubervilliers et des comparaisons départementales et régionales*, (Observatoire de la Société Locale, Mairie d'Aubervilliers, March 2001) and Anne Foussat, *Aubervilliers à la page, No. 5* (Observatoire de la Société Locale, Mairie d'Aubervilliers, December 1999). This study by A. Foussat contains statistics taken from the earlier 1990 census.

the ways in which they construct their cultural and social identities. In addition, a significant element of the fieldwork examined the nature of the relationship between this age group and associations, since it would seem that involvement in associations could represent an external (more tangible?) form of *construction de soi* in the public space.[166] The age group (16-25 years) was chosen since this period of transition from late adolescence into early adulthood can be seen as one when young people are confronted with the challenges of forming their own personal and professional aspirations. In addition, as regards associations, a significant amount of research has already been carried out on the leaders or *militants* of immigrant-origin associations, yet there is little existing research on the younger, 'new' generation of association members, or beneficiaries, and their relationship to *la vie associative*.[167] The field research thus sets out to describe the attitudes and opinions of a cross-section of the descendants of North African immigrants. More importantly, it gives an insight into how they construct themselves as subjects. By focusing on the notion of subjective identity (integrating both the cultural and social registers), we are able to escape the interminable oppositions between individual and community identity, a dichotomy which is central to some of the French academic and political debates about immigrants and their descendants in terms of cultural difference and the Republic. In this way, we are able to make the transition from 'top-down' discourse to experience.

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[166] Didier Lapeyronnie uses the term '*construction de soi*' in Wieviorka ed. (1997), pp. 251-266.
[167] This 'new generation' of actors can be understood as those who were neither *primo-arrivant* immigrants, nor those old enough to have been observers of, or participants in, the '*beur*' movement of the 1980s.

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Frameworks: Subjectivity and Identity

Introduction

If, as we have seen in the previous chapter, it is not accurate to discuss the experiences of young people of North African origin in France, purely in terms of cultural 'difference', nor purely in terms of social exclusion, then an alternative framework of analysis must be used in order to make some sense of their experiences. This alternative tool of analysis can be located in the sociology of the *subject*. The sociology of the subject should be seen as emerging out of the 'ruins' of classical sociological approaches, from the end of the 1970s onwards. This chapter will thus first provide a brief overview of the 'decline' of classical Sociology and the resulting re-emergence of the subject as a way of renewing social enquiry in a post-industrial context. Part I will focus more closely on the theories of the subject, with particular focus on Alain Touraine's analysis of the 'decomposition' of modernity, the emergence of the theme of the *sujet*, its relationship to social movements and other practical implications. Part I will also involve a discussion of the sociology of *experience*, as developed by François Dubet. The second part of the present chapter will consider ways in which the notion of the subject and the sociology of *experience* can be applied to the fieldwork upon which this thesis is based. This will involve a discussion of the following themes: identity, ethnicity and subjectivity, and particular attention will be paid to Michel Wieviorka's *'triangle de l'éthnicité'* as an analytical tool for the construction of identity amongst young people of North African origin in France.

PART I

3.1 The Decline of Classical Sociology and the Emergence of a Sociology of the Subject

In his article, 'Sociologie postclassique ou déclin de la sociologie?', Michel Wieviorka argues that the dominance of Talcott Parsons' functionalist social theories in the 1940s

and 1950s marked the heyday of classical Sociology.[1] However, he points out that this period also marked the beginning of the 'end' of this type of approach since the vogue for postmodernist and later, globalisation theories, reflected the disintegration of classical Sociology. According to Wieviorka, this period of 'disintegration' was followed by the emergence of the notion of the *subject*.

The main ideas advocated by Parsons and other functionalists (such as Émile Durkheim and Max Weber) or 'neo-functionalists' (such as Vilfredo Pareto or Alfred Marshall), were based on the notion of the existence of an integrated society which could be described as reflecting a pyramid structure (with values at the summit, then norms lower down and finally the notion of roles at the bottom). However, from the mid-1960s onwards, these ideas became increasingly challenged, not least because of the growing strength of protest movements in the United States in particular, such as the anti-Vietnam War and Civil Rights movements. The emergence of such movements challenged the notion of an integrated society, which was supposedly reconciled with itself and marked the coming disintegration of Sociology as a unitary academic discipline.

Despite this initial challenge, Wieviorka argues that in the 1960s and 1970s, it was still possible to regard Sociology as a relatively integrated discipline and he describes it as being characterised by four "*points cardinaux*". The first *point cardinal* was that occupied by 'neo-functionalists' such as Jeffrey C. Alexander, who tried to save Parson's increasingly challenged ideas about society reflecting an integrated pyramid of values, norms and roles. The second pole of discussion in the 1970s is described as *la sociologie critique*. Marxist variations of this *pensée critique* could be found in the structuralist ideas of Louis Althusser or Nicos Poulantzas who both argued that the *subject* was irrelevant to social enquiry since it was the 'system' and the reproduction of roles, within institutions such as the school, which were more pertinent as analytical tools. A neo-Marxist dimension of this 'school of thought' was to be found in the writings of Pierre Bourdieu whose ideas about the *habitus* and the reproduction of social

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[1] Michel Wieviorka, 'Sociologie postclassique ou déclin de la sociologie?', *Cahiers internationaux de Sociologie*, 108 (2000a), 5-35.

subordination or oppression could be considered as stemming from an 'anti-sujet' position. The third pole of sociological enquiry is described as *la sociologie politique* or *la sociologie de la décision* because it focused on rational choice and strategy. Influential authors included Raymond Aron, Thomas Schelling and their work on international relations as well as Michel Crozier and Herbert Simon and their work on organisations. The fourth pole of the 1970s is identified as the *sociologie de l'action*, whose theorists argued that social life should be studied through the activities of social movements. This pole was developed by Alain Touraine in particular.[2]

This 'stage' in the development of Sociology is referred to by Wieviorka as the start of a process of disintegration of a discipline, a process which only accelerated during the second half of the 1970s as the idea that the 'actor' and 'the system' were becoming increasingly separated gained ground. The first pole, that is, functionalism, became increasingly challenged. The second pole, *la sociologie critique*, went into decline in the 1980s, only to reappear with renewed popularity in the second half of the 1990s in the context of the general strike of 1995 in France, from which point on, Bourdieu became its champion spokesman. The third pole, *la sociologie de la décision* was no longer as relevant as it had been during the Cold War and consequently has increasingly restricted itself to narrower areas of enquiry. The fourth pole is described as continuing to develop in parallel with mounting interest in the notion of *interaction* between individual *subjects*, with less and less focus on political and historical contexts, thus reflecting the growing individualism of an era characterised by increasing political and economic neo-liberalism.

Wieviorka argues that "le degré zéro" of Sociology was reached at the start of the 1980s, when post-modernist theories became increasingly popular.[3] Ideas about "le vide social" as described by Jean-François Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard as well as the idea that modernity had 'decomposed' into identities and cultures on the one hand and the market and rationality on the other met with great success. Wieviorka's critique of

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[2] These authors are all cited in Wieviorka (2000a).
[3] Wieviorka (2000a), p. 11.

postmodernism stems from what he regards as postmodernism's bleak suggestion that we choose *between* identity/cultures *or* rationality/universalism. Two authors are cited as providing a response to the postmodernist approach, namely Jürgen Habermas and Alain Touraine. Habermas' notion of 'communicative action' and the revival of the political and Touraine's notion of the *Sujet* are thus identified as possible ways out of the *impasse* presented by postmodernism.

Wieviorka argues that the theme of globalisation has largely succeeded the postmodernist debate, which is depicted as having run out of steam. The debate about globalisation emerged with some delay in France and coincided with the general strike of 1995 when in particular, many *fonctionnaires* began to feel threatened by the growth of neo-liberalism. Anti-globalisation themes have included amongst others, concerns over the increasing polarisation of global capital and impoverished communities; concerns about encroaching cultural homogenisation and new forms of cultural and social domination. Wieviorka argues that sociological analysis in terms of globalisation is useful because :

> [il]...introduit l'idée d'une certaine unité, économique et financière, du monde dans lequel nous vivons, en même temps qu'il reconnaît l'importance de la pluralité et de l'hétérogénéité des formes culturelles et sociales qu'elle engendre ou renforce. Il a le mérite de nous inviter à refuser de choisir, entre la thèse de la seule uniformité, que peut symboliser l'idée de la Fin de l'histoire, et celle des conséquences les plus extrêmes du différencialisme et de la fragmentation culturelle, qu'a pu signifier par exemple l'idée d'un "clash" des civilisations.[4]

However, Wieviorka claims that the danger of the globalisation theme is that it can be used to explain everything, thus becoming a sort of "explication passe-partout"[5] which focuses excessively on the notion of 'the system' and of asocial determinism, with nation-states being simplistically portrayed as powerless entities in the face of an 'abstract' notion of global capitalism.

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[4] Ibid., p. 18.
[5] Ibid., p. 15.

Instead, Wieviorka argues that the most appropriate manner of proceeding once the observation that 'markets' are becoming increasingly separated from individuals and their cultures has been accepted, is to adopt a bottom-up perspective, that is, by starting with "la personne singulière, non pas comme individu participant à la vie collective, comme consommateur agissant sur des marchés, mais comme sujet."[6] By focusing on the subject, we can proceed from the simple observation of the disassociation of these two spheres (an observation which forms the basic premise of a globalisation approach) to an analysis which highlights the ways in which these two realms can be articulated or rather re-articulated. Thus a return to the notion of the *subject* can be seen to breathe new life into sociological enquiry, which had hitherto been engaged in a denial of the subject either due to the *sociologie critique* approach or because of functionalist or rationalist reasoning (*sociologie de la décision/sociologie politique*) which all theorise in terms of 'the system'. A return to the subject allows for the conceptualisation of the creativity of the actor.

This 'return' to the subject is visible in the work of other authors and in disciplines outside of Sociology. For example, the philosophers Alain Renaut and Sylvie Mesure have focused on the theme of the subject or subjectivity in *La Guerre des dieux: essai sur la querelle des valeurs*. Alain Renaut's *L'Ère de l'individu: contribution à une histoire de la subjectivité* also reflects this renewed interest in the notion of the subject and subjectivity in other disciplines.[7] Transformations of modernity and the emergence of the subject have also been the source of debate for anthropologists, as Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman's *Modernity and Identity* demonstrates.[8] Renaut and Mesure's definition of the *sujet moderne* focuses on "...la manière dont il s'est affirmé comme l'auteur, ou si l'on préfère, comme le fondement ultime de ses actes aussi bien que ses idées ou de ses représentations".[9] Whilst such a definition is useful, their essentially philosophical and historical approach does not provide an analytical tool which can be used to interpret empirical 'data' gathered about young people of North African origin.

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[6] Ibid., p. 19.
[7] Alain Renaut, *L'Ère de l'individu: contribution à une histoire de la subjectivité* (Paris : Gallimard, 1989).
[8] Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman, eds, *Modernity and Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).
[9] Sylvie Mesure and Alain Renaut, *La Guerre des dieux: essai sur la querelle des valeurs* (Paris : Grasset & Fasquelle, 1996), p. 200.

Likewise, it becomes clear in Scott Lash's and Jonathan Friedman's introductory chapter to their co-edited volume ("Introduction: subjectivity and modernity's Other"), that they adopt an essentially abstract approach to the notion of the subject and subjectivity rather than envisaging subjectivity in terms of *action* and *experience*. It is for this reason that this thesis concentrates on the theories of the subject and subjectivity as developed by Alain Touraine since, whilst remaining abstract, they translate more easily into a mode of analysis of the *experiences* of young people of immigrant-origin than the more philosophical approaches.

Wieviorka's article shows that the decline of classical Sociology reflects a fundamental challenge to the notion of modernity. Indeed, modernity and all its certainties associated with rationality, progress and universalism has been questioned to such an extent that it is no longer accurate to oppose 'modernity' and 'tradition', as was once the case. For our purposes, it is therefore no longer possible to analyse immigrant-origin youth by using a simplistic model of integration versus '*enfermement culturel*' or '*communautarisme*'. Before proceeding to a discussion of the relevance of the theme of the subject to young people of immigrant-origin and the ways in which they construct their identities, it is first of all necessary to turn our attention to Alain Touraine's theories surrounding the 'decomposition' of modernity and the emergence of the subject.

3.2 The 'Decomposition' of Modernity or the Estrangement of *"le monde objectif"* and *"le monde subjectif"*

In *Critique de la Modernité*, Touraine defines modernity in terms of: "...cette correspondance d'une culture scientifique, d'une société ordonnée et d'individus libres, [...] une correspondance entre l'action humaine et l'ordre du monde..."[10] He argues that it was this definition of modernity, which placed reason above all other principles, which has been increasingly criticised. For example, critics have pointed out that there is no necessary link between personal happiness, liberty, democracy, economic growth and the concept of reason. Touraine shows how more radical critics of the notion of modernity have argued that modernity as the dominance of reason has led to an overbearing

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[10] Alain Touraine , *Critique de la modernité* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), p. 11.

'system' with little regard for the 'actors': "...le règne de la raison n'est-il pas l'emprise croissante du système sur les acteurs, la normalisation et la standardisation qui, après avoir détruit l'autonomie des travailleurs, s'étendent au monde de la consommation et de la communication?"[11] Indeed, Touraine's own critique of modernity is that it has focused excessively on the notion of reason, science, progress and the process of rationalisation, to the detriment of the Subject. It is argued that modernity should be understood as being made up of two halves, one being reason, progress etc. and the other being the *Subject*, that is, the more 'human' face of modernity which is represented by the values of freedom and creativity.

Touraine points out that the idea of the Subject is in fact the secularised version of natural law whereby it is claimed that all men and women are created equal and thus should receive the same rights since they are all the creation of God. He shows that despite the efforts of certain thinkers such as Descartes and the humanists to maintain a combination of reason (*'le monde objectif*') and subjectivity (*'le monde subjectif*') within the modernist outlook, these two axes of modernity became increasingly separate, especially in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The domination of reason, progress and science led to the eclipse of the Subject.

Thus, the 'triumphalist' advance of reason, progress and 'objectivity'; the dominance of 'the system', the utility of 'social roles' and in the worst cases, totalitarianism, is shown to have led to the negation of the Subject. Touraine describes the resulting modern society as "(d')une société sans acteurs"[12] and he proposes that modernity be redefined through a re-articulation of its two estranged facets : reason *and* subjectivity.

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[11] Ibid., p. 12.
[12] Ibid., p. 238.

3.3 The Subject[13]

This effort to rearticulate what has been becoming increasingly disassociated (reason and subjectivity) involves a return to the old or 'lost' idea of modernity and the *Subject*, which initially emerged at the same time as rationalisation. The 'end' of the pre-modern era implied the replacement of "le logos divin" with "l'impersonnalité de la loi scientifique, mais aussi et en même temps [...] le Je du Sujet ... "[14] The Subject is defined by Touraine as follows

> *Le Sujet est la volonté d'un individu d'agir et d'être reconnu comme acteur.* (Italicised by Touraine) [...] Le Sujet est le passage de Ça au Je, le contrôle exercé sur le vécu pour qu'il ait un sens personnel, pour que l'individu se transforme en acteur qui s'insère dans des relations sociales en les transformant, mais sans jamais s'identifier complètement à aucun groupe, à aucune collectivité. Car l'acteur n'est pas celui qui agit conformément à la place qu'il occupe dans l'organisation sociale, mais celui qui modifie l'environnement matériel et surtout social dans lequel il est placé en transformant la division du travail, les modes de décision, les rapports de domination ou les orientations culturelles.[15]

Touraine argues that the idea of the subject is indistinguishable from that of the 'actor' since it is only through the conjunction of these two concepts that the actor is able to resist the tyrannies of the 'system' which only promotes reason and progress and prescribes certain social 'roles' to be fulfilled by the workers, citizens etc.

3.3 (i) *Sujet ou Acteur Social?*

However, Touraine's actor or subject should not be confused with the 'social actor', which Khosrokhavar points out is a term more frequently employed in Touraine's earlier research (the 1970s in particular) on social action. Indeed, Khosrokhavar shows that Touraine's subject has come to focus increasingly on the personal, individual and non-social dimensions of action. In *La Recherche de soi*, Touraine presents this idea in the following manner :

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[13] Touraine mostly refers to the subject with the 's' in the upper case as though it were a proper noun. To avoid confusion, I shall reproduce this pattern when referring to Touraine's work. Otherwise, I shall simply refer to the subject as a common noun so as to avoid portraying the latter as a concrete being. When possible, the term *subjectivity* will be employed instead of the *subject* as this conveys the notion of *action* rather than a concrete being.

[14] Ibid., p. 240.

[15] Ibid., pp. 242-243.

Pouvoir dire "Je" devient la principale force de limitation de l'emprise du social sur l'acteur. [...] Je me suis d'abord battu pendant trente ans pour défendre l'idée d'*acteur*, mais aujourd'hui il me semble beaucoup plus pertinent d'insister sur l'idée de *sujet*, car on n'est acteur que dans la mesure où l'on se constitue soi-même comme sujet de sa propre vie et de ses actes.[16]

3. 3 (ii) Subjectivation

'Subjectivation' can be understood as the *process* by which the Subject emerges. It is defined by Touraine in the following way: "La *subjectivation* est la pénétration du Sujet dans l'individu et donc la transformation – partielle - de l'individu en Sujet."[17] Subjectivation can also be understood as the process by which the notion of 'social roles' is challenged:

> Ce qui était ordre du monde devient principe d'orientation des conduites. La subjectivation est le contraire de la soumission de l'individu à des valeurs transcendantes [...] le principe central de la moralité devient la liberté, une créativité qui est sa propre fin et s'oppose à toutes les formes de dépendance.[18]

Subjectivation should therefore be seen almost as a defence mechanism against an oppressive modernisation process:

> Pour résister à l'oppression totale, il faut mobiliser le sujet total, l'héritage religieux et les souvenirs d'enfance, les idées et le courage. Max Horkheimer a formulé une des idées les plus profondes de ce siècle quand il a écrit : "La raison ne suffit pas pour défendre la raison". [19]

François Dubet points out that the subject should not be conceived of as an *être* – as someone who can be objectively observed. Rather, the social researcher is able to 'monitor' the subject through his/her *activity* in the face of domination: "...le travail du sujet ne devient à son tour action que dans la mesure où il se heurte à des obstacles

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[16] Alain Touraine, Farhad Khosrokhavar, *La Recherche de soi : dialogue sur le sujet* (Paris: Fayard, 2000), p. 111 and p. 113.
[17] Touraine (1992), p. 244 The transformation is "partielle" because as we shall see below, complete 'subjectivity' is never completely achieved since it is a process rather than a state.
[18] Ibid., pp.244-245.
[19] Ibid., p. 246.

sociaux et à des rapports de domination."[20] This framework of analysis lends itself well to the experiences of young people of immigrant-origin, who if dominated, are not able to construct their own experiences and as a result, oscillate between a desire to integrate or a desire to define themselves entirely in terms of their 'cultural origins'. Dubet writes : "...le sujet n'existe jamais pleinement, sinon dans sa volonté de surmonter cette dualité au nom de son authenticité."[21]

One of the most significant implications to emerge from Touraine's critique of modernity, is that it is erroneous to oppose modernity and tradition, since to do so, is to highlight only one facet of modernity, that is, rationalisation and ignore the equally important second facet, subjectivation, where all is not simply progress, reason and science, but human creativity and liberty, and reference to one's *communauté d'appartenance*. The fact that the main aim of the process of subjectivation is the reunification of the two separated spheres (the objective and the subjective) places the idea of *reconstruction* at the centre of any analysis: "...la subjectivation est plus profondément la force d'intégration du monde de l'objectivité et du monde des subjectivités, des marchés et des communautés."[22] This process of reconstruction allows subjects to become: "des agents actifs de recomposition d'un monde qui tend de plus en plus à se diviser entre le centre et la périphérie."[23]

3.3 (iii) The Subject is Not the Individual

It should be pointed out that the subject is not merely a synonym for the individual. François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka argue that the subject should not be conceptualised as "le moi" nor as "l'individu".[24] In *La Recherche de soi*, Touraine also argues that we should not regard the subject as "un individu concret" and that "L'individualisme consommateur et l'individualisme du sujet" are two very different phenomena.[25] The

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[20] François Dubet, 'Sociologie du sujet et sociologie de l'expérience' in *Penser le Sujet : autour d'Alain Touraine* ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris : Fayard, 1995), pp. 103- 121 (p.118).
[21] Dubet in Dubet and Wieviorka, eds, (1995), p. 118.
[22] Alain Touraine, 'La Formation du Sujet' in *Penser le Sujet : autour d'Alain Touraine* ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris : Fayard, 1995) pp. 21-45 (p.28).
[23] Ibid., (p. 30).
[24] Dubet and Wieviorka, eds, (1995), p. 9.
[25] See Touraine, Khosorkhavar, (2000), p. 138.

individualist consumer is not an 'actor' in that he/she does not challenge the *status quo* through the simple act of consuming. Rather it is the individual *subject* who is able to reject "...toute définition de l'être humain qui se fonde sur le respect des règles, des normes etc."[26] Furthermore, Touraine argues that the subject is distinct from the individual because the subject manages to combine both individual and community identity:

> ...ce que nous nommons sujet ne peut pas être réduit à la conception du sujet comme présence dans l'individu d'un principe universaliste, la raison ou la création divine. Le sujet est individu et il est communauté ; il n'est ni être naturel ni être de raison. Il échappe à la communauté par la raison instrumentale et au marché par l'identité collective autant que personnelle.[27]

In this way, the process of subjectivation is relevant to the experiences of immigrants and their descendants.

3.3 (iv)The Fragility of the Subject

Since the subject should not be conceived of as a concrete being, the implication is that *subjectivation* is a rather unstable process. In his dialogue with Khosrokhavar, Touraine talks about the subject in terms of "la fragilité, l'instabilité".[28] He argues that it would be erroneous to conceive of the subject in heroic terms and he even goes so far as to claim that the subject "est plutôt un *loser*, c'est-à-dire quelqu'un qui est constamment menacé d'être vaincu."[29] This constant struggle for the actor to assert him or herself as a subject leads Khorsrokhavar and Touraine to discuss *désubjectivation*. One of the possible scenarios of desubjectivation is narcissism which is described by Touraine in the following terms: "Le narcissisme est le contraire du sujet puisqu'il est l'incapacité de séparer, de distancier le Je du Moi."[30] In other words, narcissism means that the individual is unable to have any distance regarding his/her own motivations and is therefore unable to take any action. This narcissism can operate in two ways. It can either lead to a purely individualistic approach (where the individual is only a 'selfish'

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[26] Ibid., p. 101.
[27] Touraine *in* Dubet and Wieviorka, eds, (1995), p.32.
[28] Touraine, Khosrokhavar (2000), p. 103. Re. non-success of subjectivation, see p. 101.
[29] Touraine, Khosrokhavar (2000), p. 157.
[30] Ibid., p.131.

consumer) or it can lead to a rather more 'communautariste' approach whereby the individual and his or her will is threatened by the dominance of 'community' norms and expectations.[31]

3.3 (v) The Subject and Social Movements

Closely linked with Touraine's theory of the subject and subjectivation is the notion of social movements. In *La Recherche de soi*, Khosrokhavar asks Touraine to distinguish between the following three types of *collective* movement: *les mouvements historiques, les mouvements culturels* and *les mouvements sociaux*. Touraine describes historical movements as follows: "Ils sont, pour, l'essentiel, des mouvements qui mettent en cause l'État, donc ce sont des mouvements vraiment politiques, comme par exemple le socialisme, le libéralisme, la lutte contre la dépendance." Cultural movements are defined as focusing on "les orientations culturelles d'une société." Social movements are defined as focusing instead on social relations, especially relations of production as was the case of the worker movement, which is portrayed as the social movement *par excellence*. Touraine argues that cultural and social movements should be seen as complementary.[32]

Two major elements of Touraine's definition of social movements are the notions of *collective action* and the *conflictualisation* of social relations:

> Quand je parle de mouvements sociaux, je ne parle pas des crises, des éruptions, des bouleversements d'un système social. Je parle, je ne parle que d'un acteur collectif qui porte en lui le sens, non pas de ces crises, mais d'une volonté de changement et de réappropriation de la société. [...] Un mouvement social est un rappel à soi et à la liberté créatrice d'un acteur qui lutte contre sa déshumanisation, son exploitation, sa dépendance. Et ce rapport à soi suppose une conscience possible, un sens de l'action qui est renforcé par l'action elle-même.[33]

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[31] Robert Fraisse echoes these concerns when he criticises the "sujet absolu" for "cette incapacité du sujet à ouvrir sur autre chose que soi-même..." See Robert Fraisse, 'Pour une politique des sujets singuliers', in *Penser le Sujet : autour d'Alain Touraine* ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris : Fayard, 1995), pp. 551-563 (p. 552).

[32] For Touraine and Khosrokhavar's discussion and location of quotes, see Touraine and Khosrokhavar (2000), pp. 166-167.

[33] Ibid., p. 168.

Action is thus central to Touraine's definition of social movements because as he points out, the mere denunciation of a scandalous situation or of exclusion does not constitute the formation of a social movement since it does not indicate what course of (re)action will follow, if any does at all.

Touraine argues that the study of social movements is relevant to the *subject* since it involves an analysis which becomes devolved from ' the system' to the 'actor' in terms of their struggles for equality and liberty. This leads him on to argue that social movement and subject should be seen as synonymous since : "...l'appel au sujet se fait entendre sous forme de combativité sociale, qui ensuite se transcrit en règles institutionnelles, lesquelles enfin se transforment en modes d'organisation sociale."[34]

However, in a similar manner to subjectivity itself, Touraine argues that social movements are rarely pure and never complete and it is for this reason that it is more appropriate to search for the existence "*du* mouvement social" within a given configuration of actors, rather than expect to stumble across a 'perfect' social movement.[35]

3.3 (vi)*Une Politique du Sujet?*

What are the practical implications of such an approach? In *Pourrons-nous vivre ensemble? Égaux et différents*, Touraine argues for the institutional protection of "le Sujet personnel" and communication between subjects. However, instead of organising this 'protection' by means of democracy which Touraine describes as "[la] participation à la volonté générale", he suggests replacing this sort of approach with a "politique du Sujet".[36] Such a policy would for example, involve a re-centring of the institution of school around the pupil, as opposed to around knowledge acquisition. In hospitals, this would involve re-focusing the concerns around the patient, as opposed to merely combating the disease (i.e. a transition from *cure* to *care*).[37]

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[34] Ibid., pp.171-172.
[35] See Touraine, Khosrokhavar (2000), p. 158.
[36] Alain Touraine, *Pourrons-nous vivre ensemble? Égaux et différents* (Paris : Fayard, 1997), p. 29.
[37] For a discussion of this '*aggiornamento*' of institutions, see Michel Wieviorka (2000a).

3.4 From the Prescriptive to the Analytical

How does a sociology of the subject or a sociology of subjectivity relate to the empirical aspect of this thesis? In other words, how is it possible to move from Touraine's rather prescriptive approach to one which allows the 'observer' or the researcher to proceed to a more analytical approach? Two ideas in particular are of direct relevance to the field research findings which will be discussed in the following chapters. The first is Touraine's insistence on the rejection of roles and the notion of the creativity of the Subject. How do, and to what extent, do the young men and women who participated in the field research construct their own sense of identity in a *volontariste* manner? The second idea developed by Touraine, which has an impact on the analysis of the field interviews and observations is the rejection of the opposition between tradition and modernity (*communautarisme* versus *universalisme*), a dichotomy found in some of the public and intellectual debates of the 1980s and 90s. Touraine also acknowledges the fallibility of both these terms when addressed separately. Such an assumption 'liberates' the researcher from becoming trapped in an analysis which either focuses on the extent to which young people of immigrant-origin are becoming 'integrated' *or* to what extent they can be seen as simply 'reproducing' family or community 'models' of behaviour.

In this transition from the prescriptive to the analytical, a synthesis of Touraine's theories of the subjectivity and François Dubet's ideas about the sociology of *experience* can prove particularly helpful.

3,5 The Sociology of Experience

As mentioned above, the notion of 'modern' society as a coherent system of values and beliefs into which the actor is integrated has become increasingly challenged over the last few decades for a number of reasons. Dubet argues that the classical sociological portrayal of 'society' was hinged on four assumptions. The first assumption was that society was opposed to the idea of community and was therefore an inherently modern concept. The second assumption was that society was necessarily a nation-state. The third assumption was that society was synonymous with system or "un ensemble

fonctionnel".[38] Finally, the fourth assumption of the era of classical Sociology was that society was synonymous with the notion of regulated industrial conflict, i.e. relations between the workers and the capitalists were the main feature of modern industrial society. However, in a similar manner to Wieviorka, Dubet shows how this classic understanding of society has disintegrated over the last thirty to forty years. Primarily, the evolutionary and *progressiste* vision of society as essentially 'modern' has been challenged by the acknowledgement that the twentieth century saw the proliferation of despotic and authoritarian regimes which claimed to be modern. Second, the identification of society as a nation-state has also been undermined in an era of increased globalisation and the spread of ethno-nationalist movements which have challenged nation-state borders. Thirdly, the notion that society is a functional and integrated organism or system has also been seriously challenged for the reasons evoked in the first section of this chapter (see 3.1). Finally, the decline of industry and the transition to a post-industrial society has called into question the idea that society is synonymous with regulated class conflict. The decline of the integrated industrial society has concomitantly involved the decline of the notion of 'values' performing a certain function or being endowed with a social utility. All these challenges lead Dubet to discard the term 'society' because it has become inaccurate.

If the unity of the social system is now contested in that it is no longer sociologically possible to refer to 'society', then the corollary of this development is that it is no longer possible to discuss social action in unitary terms. Indeed, Dubet argues that whereas 'modern society' was once characterised by the unity of the actor and the system, the increasing separation of the actor and the system necessitates a new framework of analysis: the sociology of (social) experience:

> Dans la mesure où le système social ne repose sur aucun principe unique, dans la mesure où il n'est plus identifiable à "la société", il ne peut pas engendrer une logique de l'action unique. L'acteur ne s'engage pas dans un "type pur" de l'action, mais il est tenu de gérer plusieurs logiques. Les types purs de l'action ne

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[38] François Dubet, *Sociologie de l'expérience* (Paris : Seuil, 1994), p. 46.

se hiérarchisent pas et ne se succèdent pas, ils sont co-présents dans l'expérience des individus.[39]

So whereas peoples' actions were once conceived of in terms of prescribed roles, it is now more accurate to discuss individual and collective actions as *experiences*. Dubet uses the example of school where teachers and pupils are nowadays much more keen to discuss their profession in terms of *experience* rather than *roles*:

> Par exemple, les enseignants parlent plus volontiers d'expérience sociale que de rôle enseignant dans la mesure où l'école n'est plus une institution commandée par des valeurs, mais où elle se présente comme la combinaison d'un marché des diplômes et des positions, comme une organisation plus ou moins bureaucratique et comme une "agence d'historicité" orientée vers la formation d'un type d'acteur et d'individu non totalement réductible à son utilité sociale.[40]

Dubet argues that the teacher is expected to manage all these factors on a day to day basis and that the 'routinisation' of their action should not be put down to institutionalisation since no specific course of action in terms of a certain role to be carried out, is clearly established in advance. Dubet points out that the same phenomenon can be said of other challenged 'social institutions' such as the family and new social movements, which can no longer be described as hierarchical and organised "personage(s) collectif(s)", unlike the workers' movement in its former 'heyday'.[41]

In the absence of prescribed roles and overarching values, it is the capacity of the actor to construct meaning out of actual social experience, which becomes the *objet d'etude* of a sociology of experience and the subject:

> La notion d'expérience sociale s'est imposée à moi comme étant la moins maladroite pour désigner la nature de l'objet rencontré dans quelques études empiriques où les conduites sociales n'apparaissent pas réductibles à de pures applications de codes intériorisées ou à des enchaînements de choix stratégiques [...] Pour autant, ces conduites [...] sont organisées par des principes stables mais hétérogènes. C'est cette hétérogénéité elle-même qui invite à parler d'expérience,

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[39] Francois Dubet in Dubet and Wieviorka, eds (1995), p. 111.
[40] Ibid., p. 111.
[41] Ibid., pp. 111-112.

l'expérience sociale étant définie par la combinaison de plusieurs logiques d'action.[42]

Dubet refers to the *travail de l'acteur* as being made up of three elements: "…une logique d'intégration, une logique stratégique dans un espace de concurrence et une logique de subjectivation issue de la tension entre une conception de la créativité et de la justice d'une part et des rapports de domination de l'autre."[43] These three "logiques d'action" correspond to the post-classical representation of 'society', which Dubet describes as being divided into three elements: a 'community' (this corresponds to *la logique d'intégration*); a marketplace' (this corresponds to *la logique statégique*) and '*historicité*' (a term borrowed from Alain Touraine which refers to the capacity of a society or a collective actor "…de se produire et de se transformer elle-même."[44]). It is this construction of one's own social and cultural experience which constitutes the subject's activity and like Touraine's definition of the Subject, Dubet defines social experience as "une capacité critique et une distance à eux-mêmes", where this capacity is considered as *social* as opposed to *personal*.[45] (In contrast, Touraine's reflection on the Subject has focused increasingly on the *Sujet personnel*). A sociology of the subject should not be considered as celebrating the individual's capacity to entirely shape their own experiences as though they were completely a-social. Indeed, Dubet argues that to a certain extent, the process of *subjectivation* is socially defined by the dialectic which develops between a given culture and a context of domination.[46] In this way then, a sociology of the subject not only manages to combine a social *and* cultural conceptualisation of action and experience. The indication that subjectivity becomes more visible in a context of domination ("…le travail du sujet ne devient à son tour action que dans la mesure où il se heurte à des obstacles sociaux et à des rapports de domination." See above) means that it can also be applied to the experiences of young

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[42] Dubet (1994), p. 91.
[43] Dubet (1994), p. 253.
[44] Touraine (1997), p. 27.
[45] Dubet, (1994), p. 92.
[46] Dubet in Dubet and Wieviorka, eds, (1995), p. 116.

people of North African origin, who can be regarded as being concerned by a context of social and cultural domination.[47]

So what are the methodological implications of adopting an approach based on a sociology of the subject or a sociology of experience? Dubet argues that : "...le signe positif du sujet est la possibilité d'une certaine connaissance de soi..."[48] This means that if we want to 'study' young people of North African origin, then we must take into account to what extent they are *aware* of the many processes and registers they cope with as they construct meaning out of their day to day social and cultural experiences. Michel Wieviorka has developed Touraine's theories on the Subject and subjectivity, which can be applied to people of 'minority ethnic' origin and therefore in the next part I will focus on the notions of subjectivity and ethnicity.

PART II
3.6 Identity, Ethnicity and Subjectivity
Over the last three to four decades in particular, much has been written around the theme of 'identity' in many academic disciplines. This widespread interest should be seen as reflecting the 'decomposition' of 'modernity', or at least the decline of the representation of modernity as being solely characterised by the triumphant advance of 'reason' and the eclipse of 'community' identity. In Francophone research much debate has therefore taken place over '*la poussée des identités*' and in 'Anglo-Saxon' literature, the discussions have focused very much on the concept of *ethnicity*. The main objective with regard to the empirical aspect of the present thesis is to analyse the processes involved in young North-African-origin individuals' construction of identity. Theories of subjectivity and experience (in the sense that Dubet attaches to this term) will be used to consider the construction of identity, where identity can be understood in the widest possible sense. In other words, whilst ethnicity can be a useful tool of analysis, the analysis of *ethnicity* in itself will not form the main element of the discussion of the empirical findings. This is the reason why the approach to the field research findings will not focus on the notion of

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[47] Ibid., p. 118.
[48] Ibid., p. 119.

the 'ethnic group', as discussed in the work of Frederik Barth for example, since, although his notion of ethnic boundaries incorporates the idea that the 'content' of cultures may change over time, he nevertheless argues that the boundaries separating different ethnic groups are maintained over long periods of time. Surely, such a static approach to ethnicity results in the perpetuation of 'ethnicisation' and whilst it allows for the transformation of cultural content, it does not allow for much development in terms of the relations between one 'group' and another, or between one 'group' and mainstream society, if the external group boundaries are said to remain intact.[49]

Thomas Hylland Eriksen is another important contributor to the literature on ethnicity and his 'interactionist' approach, whereby it is argued that it is impossible to refer to an 'ethnic group' in isolation from other 'groups', is useful. However, this focus on group dynamics is problematic in that the 'group' unit itself is taken for granted, even though Eriksen concedes that "People may be a bit of this and a bit of that."[50]

Whilst Barth's and Eriksen's work on ethnicity is useful, their restriction to the 'ethnicity' register and the focus on the notion of the established 'group' does not correspond to a more fluid approach to 'minority' identity. Indeed, these two approaches do not provide the conceptual tools needed to analyse the construction of identity in the broadest manner. In other words, whilst ethnicity is an important element in the construction of identity amongst young people of North African origin, it should not be seen as the *only* criteria to be assessed and it should not be conceived of in static terms. In order to approach the construction of identity as a more fluid process, three alternative conceptual frameworks can be adopted: Michel Wieviorka's *triangle de l'ethnicité*, Didier Lapeyronnie's notion of *construction de soi* and Roger Bastide's *sociologie du bricolage*.

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[49] See Introduction in Frederik Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1969).
[50] Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 1993), p. 158.

3.7 The Triangle of Identity

Michel Wieviorka subscribes to Touraine's theory of subjectivity by adapting it to what is called *le triangle de l'ethnicité*.[51] The *triangle de l'ethnicité* is useful, since as touched on briefly at the end of Chapter 2, it enables us to introduce a third element to the otherwise two-dimensional model which, reflecting the wider debates about universalism versus *communautarisme*, only subsequently allows us to view the experiences of young people of North African origin in terms of culture and whether they assimilate as individuals or whether they 'remain' within their 'traditional community'. Although this model was initially known as *le triangle de l'ethnicité*, as we shall see below, and especially in Chapter 5, it can be adapted to apply to the construction of identity in a wider sense, that is, we are not necessarily restricted to the 'register' of ethnicity. It is for this reason that it shall be referred to as the triangle of identity from now on.

Although the term 'ethnicity' may not have come into wide use in the humanities and social sciences until the 1950s, Michel Wieviorka points out that the origins of the term 'ethnic' date back to Ancient Greece. Indeed, in Ancient Greece, the word *ethnos* was used to describe a group of people who shared the same origins and condition. (Eriksen also shows that *ethnos* originally meant heathen or pagan.[52]) The word *ethnie* was introduced into the French language in the nineteenth century by writers such as Vacher de Lapouage and Gobineau and the term took on a racialised and pejorative sense. Wieviorka shows that from this point onwards, the term became inextricably linked with colonialism and the 'classification' of different 'races' and societies, most notably in Africa.[53] It is further revealed how many authors have given varying definitions to the term ethnicity. Anthony D. Smith, for example, defined ethnicity in terms of designated shared characteristics of certain ethnic 'groups'. The shared characteristics could be language, culture, religion, mythology etc. Clifford Geertz' definition is shown by Wieviorka to be based on blood ties, language and customs

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[51] See Michel Wieviorka, *La Démocratie à l'épreuve : nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris: La Découverte, 1993). See in particular pp. 124-136.

[52] Eriksen (1993), p. 4.

[53] Wieviorka (1993), p. 99.

(religious customs for example) which are handed down to each individual who is born into a certain 'group'.[54]

These definitions concentrate more on *l'ethnie* as assigned to an objectified group rather than *l'ethnicité* as a mode of autonomous and subjective action. Wieviorka argues that the term ethnicity in Western societies is often used to describe two factors, 1: the notion of a 'traditional' (as opposed to 'modern') culture and 2: the notion of a democratic deficit. The association of *culture* and *nature* means that the language of ethnicity often signifies "...une double logique, d'infériorisation et de différenciation."[55] The coupling of culture and nature is shown to be a common phenomenon when 'race riots', for example, are discussed by the media: "...parler par exemple, à la télévision ou dans la presse écrite, d'émeutes 'ethniques', c'est plus ou moins implicitement désigner une population par sa couleur ou son origine, et suggérer que les conduites ont quelque chose à voir avec la race."[56] As regards the second implied characteristic of ethnicity when used in western 'developed' societies, that is, the notion of a democratic deficit, many authors oppose explicitly or implicitly the nation and ethnicity (as has been demonstrated in Chapters 1 and 2). The nation and the State, it is argued, represent a "projet politique" whereas ethnicity is defined as being characterised by an absence of a "capacité politique."[57]

Wieviorka outlines two "perspectives" of ethnicity. The first of these is an *assigned ethnicity*, or in other words, an ethnicity which is *imposed* on the individual by the gaze of the other more dominant and sometimes racist, party. The second perspective concerns *ethnic identity*, which is self-assigned, that is, an ethnicity that the individual chooses to engage with him/herself. We can therefore analyse this type of ethnic identity in terms of subjectivity, since it is the actor who has constructed meaning (their *ethnic identity*) out of his or her own experiences. Wieviorka argues that it is helpful to take into

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[54] Ibid., p. 102.
[55] Ibid.,, p. 103.
[56] Ibid., pp.103-104.
[57] Ibid., p. 104. Wieviorka shows how ethnicity is often seen as the opposite model of the nation-state in that it lacks the capacity to produce a political project.

account *both* types of ethnic identity, (assigned ethnicity and subjective or self-assigned ethnicity) if we are to develop our knowledge of the 'concrete' experiences of ethnicity.[58]

3. 7 (i) Processes of 'Ethnicisation'

Before moving on to discuss how subjective ethnicity can be achieved and analysed, it is worth briefly considering further *how* certain groups become *ethnicised*. Wieviorka distinguishes between *three* "modes of ethnicisation". The first mode of ethnicisation can be described as being primarily cultural and as developing from the 1960s onwards in the wake of the demise of the idea of the nation-state. This type of ethnicisation which is primarily cultural, was also known as the *ethnic revival* movement and involved groups who had hitherto assimilated into the nation-state and who now wanted to reaffirm their difference. This first wave included amongst others, previously assimilated Jews and regional and linguistic minorities. The second mode of ethnicisation is more recent and is linked to the social exclusion and assigned ethnicity of certain groups, (notably immigrants from former colonies), as the industrial period drew to a close. The third mode of ethnicisation is that which is born out of the co-existence of a dominant 'mainstream' society and 'minority' groups which are becoming increasingly visible. This type of ethnicisation concerns separatist nationalist groups for example. These three modes of ethnicisation reveal how different individuals and 'groups' either self-assign their ethnicity or are assigned it, depending on their status within a given 'society'.[59]

In terms of analysis of ethnicity or modes of ethnicisation, it is possible to analyse the "traitement politique" of ethnic groups. Wieviorka refers to this as an analysis of the *system*. However, it is also useful to analyse ethnicity in terms of *action*, i.e. "l'agir ethnique", which whilst entailing a risk of 'enfermement culturel' should also be envisaged as "...une ressource, un point d'appui pour formuler des demandes de participation politique, économique et sociale..."[60] It is this necessity to view ethnicity as a *resource* which facilitates action, as opposed to a mere prop for *enfermement culturel*, which allows the observer to get away from describing the choice facing those of

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[58] Ibid., p. 107.
[59] Ibid., see pp. 109-116.
[60] Ibid., pp. 120-121.

immigrant or minority origin as either the subscription to complete individualistic assimilation *or* cultural retreat into their 'origins'. The desire to stop conceptualising ethnicity in terms of modernity versus tradition is expressed in the *triangle de l'ethnicité*, which offers an alternative framework of analysis.

The triangle of ethnicity is a theoretical model and its three points correspond to different aspects of an individual's identity. Wieviorka identifies the three *pôles* of the triangle as follows: individual identity and universal values; community identity (e.g. religious identity, *communautarisme*) and subjective identity (*la subjectivité*). Ethnicity, according to Wieviorka, necessarily includes all three points of the triangle: "Individualisme, communautarisme, subjectivité: l'ethnicité n'est aucun de ces trois éléments pris isolément [...] Elle est l'effort, difficile, fragile, instable, pour les combiner ou les articuler, avec toujours le risque de voir cet effort échouer, et l'acteur basculer pour s'installer sur un seul d'entre eux."[61] So this sociological definition conceptualises ethnicity as a virtual *space* within which the actor circulates with varying degrees of difficulty between all three poles. It is only when the actor is able to circulate between all three within a given period of time, that they partially become *subjects*, since they are able to manage and make sense out of the varying and contradictory elements of their experience.[62]

3.7 (ii) The Three Poles

Le Pôle de l'Individualisme

This pole has two main aspects. The first dimension is political or civic and is linked to the actor's demands for equality, democracy and inclusion within the political process and Welfare State. It concerns individual liberties. The second aspect of the individualism pole is more social whereby the actor rejects social exclusion, unequal conditions in the workplace and poverty. It is argued that it is undesirable for the actor to situate him/herself on this pole alone: "Ses conséquences peuvent en être tragiques, dès lors que

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[61] Wieviorka (1993), p.124.

[62] Just as Dubet, Wieviorka and Touraine all argue that the *subject* is not a 'perfect being' and that subjectivity is never a completed process, it should be noted that 'circulation' around the triangle is never 'perfect', but rather more sporadic and erratic. It is this *effort* or attempt to circulate around all three poles, which should be regarded as subjective ethnicity.

l'assimilation n'est pas totale aux yeux de ceux qui la vivent, ou à ceux du reste de la société."[63]

Le Pôle Communautaire

This point in the triangle can be seen as one which locks the individual into a close relationship with their country or region of origin and may lead them to maintain a certain family structure, live in a certain area or engage with their religion in a particular manner. The community of origin is seen as a life source and a network of economic and social solidarity. Here the individual is subordinated to the will of the group, the will of the community. If the individual only situates him or herself in relation to their community of origin, then in extreme cases this could lead to cultural and social 'ghettoisation' and fundamentalism.

Le Pôle de la Subjectivité des Acteurs

This point in the triangle allows us to escape from the binary opposition of modernity versus tradition. For example, Gaspard and Khosrokhavar have shown that if a Muslim woman decides to wear a headscarf, this cannot be simply interpreted as blindly obeying the 'rules' of one's community. Rather it may signify a political or social stance and a distancing from one's own parents' practice for example.[64] Indeed, Nikola Tietze writes about young Muslim men in France and Germany and how their subjective religiosity allows them to "utiliser des éléments de la religion pour transformer les expériences sociales en un vécu individuel."[65] Nacira Guénif Souilamas' research on young women of North African origin in France also shows how they can engage with their origins without being dominated or restricted by them: "...en les explorant [les origines], elles les réinventent et les transforment, transposant ainsi une vision du monde singulière dans la

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[63] Wieviorka (1993), p. 126.
[64] See Francoise Gaspard and Farhard Khosrokhavar, *Le Foulard et la République* (Paris : La Découverte, 1995).
[65] Nikola Tietze, 'Des formes de religiosité musulmane en France et en Allemagne: "une subjectivité sur des frontières"' in *La Différence culturelle : une reformulation des débats,* ed. by Michel Wieviorka and Jocelyne Ohana (Paris : Balland, 2001) pp. 206-216 (p. 208).

pratique."[66] Like the other two poles, if the actor situates him or herself solely in terms of his/her subjective identity, Wieviorka claims that this entails a risk of matters slipping out of control and sliding towards "un hédonisme individualiste s'éloignant de toute référence à une identité collective au profit d'une consommation marchande de produits culturels sans cesse renouvelés et diversifiés."[67] This reveals how fragile and ephemeral the notion of subjective identity is.

Although, it is undesirable to remain within one dimension (on one pole) of one's identity, Wieviorka points out that ethnicity should not be seen as a simple *synthesis* of all three poles, or of all three aspects of one's identity. Rather, it is a continual *tension* between all three facets and an ability to engage with all three that constitutes subjective ethnicity which is defined in the following manner:

> ...la subjectivité [...] exige une individuation dans l'expérience vécue, une capacité, rendue possible par la "fragmentation culturelle" dont parle Didier Lapeyronnie pour les sociétés française et britannique, de se comporter de façon plus ou moins originale par rapport aux normes de ces sociétés; mais elle se dissout si cette individuation a pour prix l'abandon d'une identité collective.[68]

Ethnicity as Continual Circulation

So ethnicity should not be seen as something static, or as something which is identifiable in physical or racialised terms. Rather it is fluid and operates within a space which can be viewed in terms of a triangle. Ethnicity is not the "gestion harmonieuse" of the three dimensions of identity but rather the "circulation erratique, largement imprévisible" of actors in a space defined by universal, individual values and particularist, community values. The actors can only circulate from one pole to the other by engaging with a subjectivity which mainstream 'society's stigmatising gaze, often tries to negate.[69]

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[66] Nacira Guénif Souilamas, 'Ni héroïnes, ni victimes : la subjectivité des descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains en France', in *La Différence culturelle : une reformulation des débats*, ed. by Michel Wieviorka and Jocelyne Ohana, (Paris : Balland, 2001), pp. 176-184 (p.182).
[67] Wieviorka (1993), p. 131.
[68] Ibid., pp.132-133.
[69] Ibid., p. 136.

3.8 Subjectivity as *Construction de Soi* and *Bricolage Identitaire*

The historical significance of the notion of integration as a sociological concept (theorised and developed by the founding fathers of Sociology, including Émile Durkheim as well as the sociologists of the Chicago school, albeit from a rather different angle) cannot be ignored. Similarly, it would be counter-productive to choose to ignore the fact that integration has continued to be present in political discourse and government policy (See Chapter 1). However, as this chapter has shown, the term integration is not wholly appropriate to the situation of young people of North African origin in France, nor for that matter to all individuals, since the notion of the integrated 'society' (based on the Parsonian pyramid structure of values, norms and roles) has been severely challenged. As regards young people of North African origin, the following statement can be made: in the absence of fixed societal norms, and in the face of social exclusion or the anticipation of social exclusion (induced by racial discrimination), cultural origins become a source of resistance (however, as we shall see, not the only source of resistance). This resistance process, referred to by Didier Lapeyronnie leads us to consider an alternative, more appropriate analytical concept for young people of North African origin in a *banlieue stigmatisée* context: *la construction de soi*.[70] This term does not focus on the 'duties' of individuals of immigrant origin to behave in a certain way and so it enables us to regard the individuals concerned, as actors capable of creating their own subjective identity.

The notion of *la construction de soi* also allows us to consider the relationship between the cultural (in the sense of parental, 'North African' heritage) and social (the *banlieue* for example) elements of *l'espace identitaire*. The notion of *espace identitaire* enables us to consider identity as something which is in a permanent state of flux and which is not static. If identity is considered as a fluid phenomenon then this leads to an analysis of experience in terms of an individual's navigation between the three points of the triangle of ethnicity or identity. For example, Nikola Tietze's research on young Muslim men in France and Germany focuses on a *construction de soi/subjectivity* approach and demonstrates how '*religiosité*' can be seen as both a cultural *and* social

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[70] Didier Lapeyronnie, 'Les Deux figures de l'immigré', in *Une société fragmentée ? Le Multiculturalisme en débat*, ed. by Michel Wieviorka (Paris : La Découverte, 1997), pp. 251-266.

phenomenon: "L'ambivalence entre 'être le même' et 'être l'autre' est transformée grâce à une religiosité extrêmement maniable et désormais rationalisée, en une ressource de l'action sociale."[71]

Roger Bastide's *sociologie du bricolage* could also be a useful conceptual tool. Bastide uses Marcel Mauss' ideas about the Black inhabitants of Bahia in Brazil and Lévi-Strauss' study of Blacks in the United States as a starting point. Both these authors wrote about the phenomenon of transplantation from Africa to the 'new' societies and the attempts made by the descendants of the first slaves to 'reconstruct' former customs and shattered cultural heritage. This reconstruction process is said to transform the 'old' culture into something new: "les rites antérieurs [...] dégagés des anciens systèmes pour être liés dans un nouvel ensemble, changent naturellement de signification, pour prendre celle que lui imposent leurs nouvelles connexions..."[72] This reconstruction process is referred to as *le bricolage* and is said to take place in the absence of a "mémoire collective" : "Le bricolage alors n'est point invention, ou logique de l'imaginaire. Il est réparation d'un objet existant, comme d'une chaise dont il manque un barreau. [...] il s'agit bien toujours de créer des structures à partir d'événements, plus exactement de souvenirs, mais détachés de toute chronologie..."[73] Bastide's notion of *une sociologie du bricolage* could be applied to some young people of North African origin in France, who, whilst not engaged in reconstructing a 'lost' cultural heritage in a post-slavery context, are, as we shall see, engaged in a process of reconstruction ('revalorisation' for some) and *bricolage identitaire* in a post-colonial context.

So by using a framework of a sociology of subjectivity, which concentrates on experience, the triangle of identity, the notions of *construction de soi* and *bricolage* as analytical tools, allow us to understand more fully the lives of young people of North African origin. If we envisage subjective identity as the precariously successful circulation around all three poles of the triangle, it is henceforth possible to view the

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[71] Tietze in Wieviorka and Ohana, eds, (2001), p. 207.
[72] Roger Bastide, 'Mémoire collective et sociologie du bricolage', *L'Année sociologique*, 21.3 (1970), 65-108, p. 97. *Bricolage* literally means D.I.Y. or do-it-yourself.
[73] Ibid., p. 100 and p. 108.

experiences of these individuals in a way which takes into account the diversity of their lives.[74] In other words, we can try and make more 'sense' of the seemingly contradictory stances and attitudes of the sample of young men and women who were interviewed over a period of twelve months in 2000-2001. It is these experiences that are the focus of the next four chapters.

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[74] I am aware that many of the authors who are cited throughout this thesis are part of an intellectual 'family', who are associated with the CADIS – *Le Centre d'analyse et d'intervention sociologiques*, based at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris). I am grateful for the welcome I received at the CADIS and the opportunity this provided me with to further develop my ideas and approach to the present thesis. The CADIS was set set up in 1981 by Alain Touraine. It first of all concentrated on the decline of industrial society and the worker movement, the entry into a new era and the emergence of 'new social movements'. The CADIS has subsequently focused increasingly on the notion of the *subjectivity* of social actors. The methodological approach underpinning much of the research carried out by the members of the CADIS is based on the *intervention sociologique*, a method of empirical investigation developed by Alain Touraine.

CHAPTER 4

Elements of Individual Identity Amongst Young People of North African Origin

Introduction and Data Collection Method

In this chapter I will discuss in part, the findings of the empirical study I carried out over a twelve-month period in Aubervilliers, a *banlieue* of Paris. From September 2000 to September 2001, sixty-four young people aged between sixteen and thirty-one were interviewed (the majority were aged between sixteen and twenty-five. Only three interviewees were aged twenty-seven and over).[1] However, I have concentrated more closely on the findings of forty-four individuals, twenty-two young men and twenty-two young women. All interviews were semi-structured, that is, a general 'interview guide' formed the basis of the vast majority of interviews.[2] Many interviews were collective, i.e. with two or three respondents and this was the case for many of the interviews conducted with high-school pupils and the *BTS* (*Brevet de technicien supérieur*) and nursing students. However, the 'group' interview situations never involved more than three interviewees (with only one exception – the first interview which was conducted with five *lycée* pupils). The group interview method was especially useful because it gave an insight into the 'group' dynamics between friends and peers and became of particular interest in the analysis of collective or community identity. However, the combined method of group *and* individual interviews meant that the risk of regarding the interviewees in a group context only, was avoided. The vast majority of the observations and analysis that follows is based on the semi-structured interviews.[3] However, frequent visits to Aubervilliers meant that as I became more familiar with the town and the interviewees, I was able to combine the interviews with a certain amount of participant

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[1] This figure does not include the association employees and *animateurs*, *éducateurs*, teachers, policemen and municipally elected *députés* who were also interviewed as part of the field research.

[2] See Appendix 3

[3] The younger, *lycée*-age pupils tended to be more willing to take part in an interview if they could participate with a peer or a friend. Often, individual interviews with *lycée* pupils were less fruitful and respondents were less forthcoming with their answers. It is for this reason that the group interview method was adopted in many cases.

observation, for example, when invited to an interviewee's home or during visits to the *maison de jeunes* and other associations. The option of questionnaires was rejected in the planning stages, given that the fieldwork aims were to ascertain how/if individuals subjectively 'constructed' their experiences in a variety of situations and contexts. A questionnaire would have been too 'rigid' and 'imposing' a method for an empirical research project which was rather more exploratory in nature. Furthermore, a questionnaire would have been unable to foresee the various situations and contexts which subsequently revealed how interviewees do actually construct their own sense of identity and experience. With regards to access, the high school pupils were contacted through two lycées in Aubervilliers, the '*Lycée Pablo Picasso*' (*lycée d'enseignement général*) and the '*Lycée Vincent Van Gogh*' (*lycée d'enseignement professionnel*) as well as through a local youth association.[4] The further and higher education students were contacted either through their educational institution or through a local association. Some interviewees were contacted as a result of a 'snowball' effect. Interviews were generally conducted either within the *lycées*, further education colleges, the local *maison de jeunes*, the workplace and or at an association's headquarters (*local*). It should be pointed out that, whilst numerically, a sample of forty-four youths is of course, not representative of an entire sociological 'category', the interviewees can nevertheless be seen as qualitatively representing the 'mainstream', as far as young people of North African origin living in a Parisian *banlieue* are concerned. That is, there are no '*cas extrêmes*' amongst the sample, with 'Nasser' and some of the *lycée professionnel* pupils being possible exceptions. Some of the young men may have been involved in some sort of 'illicit' activities recently or in the past but none can be described as *exclus* in the '*laissés-pour-compte*' sense. In the same way, none can be described as being involved in 'fundamentalist' Islamic organisations, nor of identifying with Islamist outlooks.

Chapter 3 focused on how a sociology of the subject or subjectivity and a sociology of experience could serve as guiding theoretical frameworks for the analysis of the fieldwork findings. The main analytical tool, that is, the *triangle de l'ethnicité* or identity was also outlined as well as the concepts of *construction de soi* and *une*

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[4] In order to protect the identities of those interviewed, these high school names are pseudonyms.

sociologie du bricolage.[5] This virtual triangle has been used as a means of trying to understand the differing ways in which the interviewees construct their social and cultural experiences. I have used the three 'poles' of the triangle (the individualism pole, the community pole and the pole of subjectivity) in order to 'organise' the mass of data which arose out of the fieldwork interviews, into three spheres and three corresponding chapters. Therefore this chapter and Chapters 5 and 6 will respectively deal with aspects of individual experience or identity; aspects of community/collective experience or identity (cultural *and* socio-economic notions of 'community') and aspects of subjective experience or identity.[6]

As outlined in Chapter 3, an individualised sense of identity (*"le pôle de l'individualisme"*) can be understood in the following terms: active individual participation in a given 'society' by aspiring to gain access to material wealth, employment, health, the political process. The individualism 'pole' can also be understood as representing universalism or Republican norms. The first dimension is political and is linked to the actor's demands for equality, democracy, liberty, inclusion within the political process and the Welfare State (citizenship). The second dimension is more social, whereby the actor rejects social exclusion, unequal conditions in the workplace and poverty. However, it appears insufficient to understand the individual facet of a person's identity solely in political/civic or social terms. Indeed, it would also seem necessary to understand the individual pole in *cultural* terms as well.[7] As we shall see in this chapter, some young people of North African origin clearly strive to distance themselves from their cultural heritage and try to present their life experience in terms of an 'assimilated' '*français de souche*' citizen of the Republic. In other words, we can also

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[5] Michel Wieviorka introduces the *triangle de l'ethnicité* in Michel Wieviorka, *La Démocratie à l'épreuve : nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris : La Découverte, 1993). From here on, I shall refer to this as the triangle of identity. Didier Lapeyronnie uses the term *construction de soi* in 'Les Deux figures de l'immigré', in *Une société fragmentée ? Le multiculturalisme en débat*, ed. by Michel Wieviorka (Paris : La Découverte, 1997) and Roger Bastide uses the term *une sociologie du bricolage* in 'Mémoire collective et sociologie du bricolage', *L'Année sociologique*, 21.3, (1970), 65-108.

[6] For more detailed definitions of the three 'poles' of the triangle of identity, see Chapter 3, Part II. The terms *experience* and *identity* can be seen as closely linked since it would seem that the manner in which an individual presents or constructs their experiences is constitutive of their self-identity. In addition, by linking experience and identity, this enables us to conceive of identity as fluid, rather than static.

[7] '*Le pôle de l'individualisme*' will be referred to in translation as 'the individual pole', 'the individualism pole' or 'the pole of individualism' and no distinction in meaning is intended between these three terms.

understand individual identity as a person's desire to distance him/herself from his/her social and/or cultural community. This definition of individual identity should not be confused with subjective identity, which will be discussed in more empirical detail in Chapter 6, since a subject can be described as someone who chooses to 'construct' him or herself by *electing* in a more or less positive manner, what they would like to constitute their history, their present and their future, a process which can also be referred to as the 'take or leave' model because the subject aspires to 'take or leave' what he/she pleases from his/her community or communities of origin. On the other hand, individuals who choose to distance themselves from their 'cultural' community because they are ashamed of certain aspects of it or because they want to present themselves as successfully assimilated into the dominant mainstream society, are *not* acting as subjects because of their incapacity to recognise the fact that those people (their parents, their siblings, their peers of the same background) who 'remain' in the community of origin may have actively *chosen* to continue to define themselves according to certain community norms. Instead the ashamed party will continue to believe that those that they have 'left behind' are simply the passive and unquestioning 'victims' of tradition.

The present chapter will focus on the ways in which certain interviewees construct themselves as Republican individuals. There are several recurring themes, that is, there are several areas of their lives which are governed either by a desire to participate as individuals in French society or by their desire to 'escape' their community/ies of origin. The image of escape is used here to convey the negatively driven desire for assimilation. Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 consider elements of collective and subjective identity respectively. By organising the analysis of the fieldwork interviews in this way, I will show how the interviewees try to deal with the tensions inherent within the notion or 'space' of identity (*l'espace identitaire*). I will also show how some interviewees are able to 'circulate' more successfully than others around the three poles of the triangle of identity and why.

PART I: INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY AND THE SOCIAL

4.1 Political and Social Demands and Expectations

One of the standard questions in the interview guide used during the period of field-research, related to *revendications* or demands. Interviewees were asked if they had any social or political claims and if they did, whether they would make these claims merely as young people (as *"jeunes tout court"*), as young people of North African origin or as both. For many of the interviewees, and especially for the younger men and women, these demands remained within the realm of the hypothetical since they were not politically active in any sense of the term. As a result, my understanding of the term *revendication* became much broader and incorporates the notion of how interviewees present and project their personal aspirations.[8] Only a minority of interviewees answered that in terms of their political and social demands, they saw themselves in universalist, 'colour-blind' terms. Five out of forty-four responded in this way, four of whom were young men.

'Touran' is a twenty-one-year-old student of Algerian origin.[9] He is in his first year of a *D.E.U.G.* course in Sports Science at *Université Paris XIII*.[10] He was born in Algeria and came to France with his mother, to join his father at the age of eight. He lives in Aubervilliers. In terms of nationality, Touran is Algerian but is awaiting the outcome of his request for naturalisation. When asked about his *revendications*, and on what basis he would make them, he reacted quite strongly and claimed:

> *Moi en tant tout simplement que jeune parce que des jeunes ici, il y a des Français dans mon quartier qui triment autant que moi [...] c'est clair donc non en tant que jeune, ni d'origine maghrébine, ni de musulman [...] en tant que jeune, en tant que jeune voilà, ... je demande des moyens pour les jeunes, plus*

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[8] The verb *se revendiquer* thus becomes more important than the objective notion of possessing *une revendication*. *Se revendiquer* literally means to 'declare oneself' as something, e.g. as Arab, for instance.

[9] In order to protect the identities of interviewees, all names that appear in this thesis have been changed and are thus pseudonyms. The first time that an interviewee's name is mentioned, it will be placed in single quotation marks but thereafter will carry no further quotation marks.

[10] D.E.U.G. – *Diplôme d'études universitaires générales* – university diploma obtained after the first two years of University.

d'éducateurs, plus de suivi, en tant que jeune, tout simplement. Après ça, d'où je viens, qui suis-je, quel Dieu je prie, c'est propre à chacun [...] c'est la même chose pour tout le monde, que ce soit pour Paul, Touran ou Mohamed [...] non c'est d'abord l'individu en tant que membre de la société, ça son vécu de lui, ça c'est perso. [11]

Thus Touran would seem to adopt a very Republican approach. His stance reflects what Michel Wieviorka refers to as the social dimension of the 'pole of individualism' in that he is an actor who refuses social exclusion and unequal resources. However, although Touran recognises that the standard of living in Aubervilliers is not the same as in the bourgeois sixteenth *arrondissement* (which he takes as his main Parisian reference), he does not want to openly recognise that although the main *clivage* which exists between these two places is socio-economic, it is also 'ethnic' in the sense that there exists a tacit understanding amongst interviewees that when they refer to Paris, especially the more bourgeois *arrondissements*, they are referring to *'les Français'* and when they talk about the *banlieue*, they are generally referring to *'les immigrés'*. It is his unwillingness to openly accept this divide which leads him to reject the notion of making social demands on behalf of young people of North African or sub-Saharan African origin. By claiming that "... *c'est d'abord l'individu en tant que membre de la société*", it would appear that Touran is subscribing to a straightforward universalist or Republican outlook whereby the private and public spheres of identity are kept separate.

'Ahmed' and 'Abdel Majid' are of a similar opinion to Touran with regards to their *revendications*. Ahmed is a twenty-two-year-old *BTS* accountancy student studying at the *Lycée [Cité scolaire] Pablo Picasso*. [12] He was born in France and his parents are Tunisian. When Ahmed was four, he moved back to Tunisia with his family, returning to La Courneuve when he was fifteen. Ahmed holds Tunisian nationality only. Abdel Majid, who is twenty years old and Ahmed's classmate, was also born in France, his parents are Algerian and he holds dual French-Algerian nationality. Although the two young men have rather different life trajectories, in that one has grown up entirely in the Seine-Saint-

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[11] Interview with 'Touran', 22/03/01. As far as is possible, interviewee 'profiles' will be introduced within the body of the text. If not, then please refer to Appendix 1 (for summarised biographies of the interviewees).
[12] The *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso* includes the *Collège Pablo Picasso* and *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. Post-baccalaureate *BTS* courses are also offered at the *cité scolaire*.

Denis *département* (Bobigny) and one has spent most of his adolescent years in Tunisia, both express rather similar views with regard to social and political demands.[13] Like Touran, they both argue that it is preferable to make social and political claims *"en tant que jeune tout simplement [...] une place pour les jeunes simplement, c'est tout..."* (Ahmed). Abdel Majid echoes this by claiming that his main demand is as follows: *"Ben laisser la place aux jeunes, le travail...."*[14] Their *revendications* are of a social nature, in that they apply to a certain socio-economic category of the population and because they are concerned with gaining access to employment above all. However, like Touran, they do not openly recognise that there may be a *clivage* between those youths of North African origin and those who are not, despite both young men's repeated references to their experience of racial discrimination. It would thus seem that these two interviewees have interiorised certain Republican and universalist norms, namely that political or social demands should be made by the 'culturally unattached' citizen, rather than by a citizen who draws attention to his/her difference.

'Mansour' is a twenty-two-year-old young man who was born in Aubervilliers and he has lived there all his life. He holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. He is employed by the Aubervilliers municipality as a *médiateur* on an *emploi jeune* basis.[15] He was also one of the leading members of a local association called *Les Potes de Vandrezanne*. Mansour, like Touran reacts rather defensively to the question of whether he would make social or political demands as a young person of North African origin or rather as a young person with no particular community or ethnic affiliation. Thus, for Mansour, desiring to be a universal individual becomes a self-protective mechanism:

> *Non, non. Moi, si j'ai quelque chose à revendiquer, c'est en tant qu'être humain. Moi je suis un être humain comme tout le monde. [...] Je demande rien à personne. J'essaie de m'en sortir tout seul comme ça. Plus tard quand je m'en suis sorti, je me dirai, je m'en suis sorti tout seul. Je dois rien à personne. [...]*

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[13] Not all interviewees actually live in Aubervilliers. Rather, some study or work there. However, all of them are from *Seine-Saint-Denis* and all of them have a close connection with the town, either because they live, study or work there.

[14] Interview with 'Abdel Majid', 'Ahmed' and 'Maliha', 22/05/01.

[15] An *emploi jeune* contract is a five-year contract which is subsidised by the State in order to encourage employers to recruit more young people. The *emploi jeune* scheme was initiated under the recent Jospin-led government.

Faut pas devenir un assisté, parce que les gens c'est trop des assistés dans la vie. Moi, je vais pas devenir un assisté.[16]

'Idaya' is a seventeen-year-old pupil in *première ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*.[17] She was born in Aubervilliers and has lived there all her life. Both her parents are Moroccan and she has French nationality. Idaya is the only female interviewee to state that she would make political and social claims as a *"jeune tout court"* which would indicate that in terms of *revendications*, she wants to participate as a universal citizen.[18]

So, in terms of social and political demands, only a minority of the interviewees construct themselves as universal individuals. Two remarks can be made about how social and political claims are made by the interviewees. Firstly, they transform the notion of demands for individual universal rights because they use the universal approach to rights in order to demand the recognition of a specific community. However, this should not be mistaken as a sign of their subjectivity because they are only demanding certain things for a specific community in *implicit*, unacknowledged terms and they are unable to articulate demands for social and cultural recognition. Secondly, it should be noted that a significant number of interviewees seemed rather confused by this question – that is, they did not seem to have any social or political demands and a fairly common response was: *"...je sais pas, j'ai jamais revendiqué quelque chose, je sais pas, j'ai jamais pensé à la question..."*[19] or *"Non, personnellement, j'ai pas de revendication à faire [...] je sais pas. J'ai jamais demandé."*[20]

So it would seem then that the young people in question are unfamiliar with the notion of making formal social or political demands. Indeed, two of the older interviewees corroborate this observation. 'Sara', a twenty-six year old *animatrice* of Moroccan origin who works with a significant proportion of the younger interviewees at a local *maison de jeunes* comments that: *" ...Non, il y a pas trop, il y a pas de grande*

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[16] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.The association name *Les Potes de Vandrezanne* is a pseudonym.
[17] *Première* is equivalent to Year 12 in the English and Welsh school system. *ES* refers to the Economics and social sciences baccalaureate stream.
[18] Interview with 'Idaya' and 'Fatou', 19/05/01.
[19] Interview with 'Idaya' and 'Fatou', 19/05/01.
[20] Interview with 'Mohamed', 30/04/01.

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revendication..."[21] Likewise, 'Djamel', a thirty-one-year-old *conseiller principal d'éducation* of Algerian origin, reflects on the differences between his generation and the current 16-25 age bracket: "... *ces jeunes sont devenus individualistes et je crois [que] ce qu'ils revendiquent c'est de pouvoir être individualiste avec un confort matériel, voilà.*"[22] This is certainly the case of a number of young male interviewees who have dropped out or are threatening to drop out of school education because they feel that earning money should be their main goal in life, rather than obtaining academic and/or vocational qualifications. Let us consider for example, Nasser's comments about money. Nasser (an eighteen-year-old young man of Algerian origin; born in Algeria; brought to France at the age of one; lives in Hemet, Aubervilliers) talks about his reasons for leaving his *lycée professionnel* where he had been studying to obtain a professional baccalaureate to become an electrician: "*..je dois travailler maintenant. Je dois faire de l'argent.*" When asked what sort of job he would like he replies: "*tout ce qu'il y a de l'argent.*" When asked about his friendships he replies in a similar manner: " *Non, j'ai pas besoin de copains moi. Ils donnent pas d'argent. [...] Sans argent t'es rien.*"[23] 'Mahmoud' and 'Fayçal' also talk about their desire to 'make' money which they see as more important than finishing their studies: "*...je préfère avoir de l'argent [...] je pense plutôt à tout de suite...*"(Mahmoud). Fayçal then adds: "*... voilà je préfère me lever tous les matins pour aller se faire de l'argent que venir ici perdre mon temps.*"[24] Mansour reflects on how young men are under pressure to earn money: "*... ici, quand t'as seize ans, c'est comme si tu avais vingt-deux ans [...] c'est à dire que les gens pensent déjà à gagner de l'argent [...] quand t'as de l'argent, t'es respecté...*"[25]

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[21] Interview with 'Sara', 06/03/01. Sara was born in Algeria and came, with her parents, to France at the age of six. She has lived in Aubervilliers and La Courneuve ever since. Both her parents are Moroccan and she holds Moroccan nationality only.

[22] Interview with 'Djamel', 15/05/01. Djamel was born in France (le Blanc-Mesnil), where he grew up. He holds French nationality but both his parents are Algerian. He has been involved in a sports association in Aubervilliers for some years.

[23] Interview with 'Nasser', 06/03/01.

[24] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01. These three respondents are all pupils at the *Lycée professionnel Van Gogh* and are due to sit their professional baccalaureate specialising in automobile mechanics at the end of the academic year.

[25] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.

The reactions of the interviewees and the comments of Djamel and Sara suggest that the notion of the formal *revendication citoyenne* is rather alien to the young men and women who were interviewed. However, this is only partially true as we shall see later on in Chapter 6, since the vast majority do actually make social or political claims but in rather more diffuse terms. That is, they are voiced as general frustrations with the education system in the suburbs or as disillusionment due to racial discrimination. When these frustrations are articulated, they are not simply the reflection of a generation's individualist obsession with accumulating private wealth and a desire to consume, but rather, they reflect a desire to see things change for their community, whether the community is seen in terms of young people living in the Seine-Saint-Denis *département* or in terms of young people of North African origin. In other words, when it comes to making social or political demands, these tend to be expressed *outside* of the mainstream political process and they also tend to be articulated in cultural and/or social terms.

4.2 Participation in Electoral Politics

Closely linked to the notion of *la revendication* is the question of political participation. As mentioned above, the first dimension of the individual pole of the triangle of identity is political or civic.[26] It is linked to the actor's civic demands for equality, democracy and inclusion. A way of 'measuring' the interviewee's involvement in this dimension is to ask about political participation. Political participation can be understood in two ways. Firstly, it can be defined in classic terms where the actor regularly votes in party political elections or may even be a member of a political party or movement. It can also be understood in more broad terms to include various *actions citoyennes* on behalf of the actor – such as participation in a demonstration, attending political meetings, being involved in an association. Interviewees were asked if they were registered to vote and if they voted in elections. Many of the forty-four interviewees were ineligible to vote, either because of their age or because they did not hold French nationality. In all, thirty-four interviewees were asked about their involvement in electoral politics, whether they were registered to vote and how often they voted, if they voted at all. Out of this sample of

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[26] See Wieviorka (1993), p.126.

thirty-four, fourteen were eligible to vote, seven women and seven men. Only six of the fourteen eligible interviewees (three men and three women) actually vote in elections.

Although, it would seem that gender does not influence whether the interviewees vote or not, it does seem to have a bearing on the ways in which they *perceive* their own participation in electoral politics. In other words, whereas the young men seem to be fairly self-confident about their involvement, the young women tend to present their action as more random in character. In addition, they seem to be more likely than their male counter-parts to claim that they are more or less 'politically illiterate'. Consider for example, the contrast between 'Larbi's' and 'Malika's' respective account of their own electoral participation. Larbi is a twenty-two-year-old *BTS* Accountancy student. He was born in Algiers and arrived in France when he was four. He has always lived in the *Ile-de-France* region, has lived in Aubervilliers for fifteen years and holds dual nationality. Malika is a twenty-five-year-old nursing student from Rennes. She was born in France and holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. She is studying to become a nurse in Aubervilliers, where she was living until recently. She now lives in nearby Fontenay-sous-Bois. Larbi claims : "...*le vote c'est important [...] si ça peut changer quelque chose, créer* (underlined by myself) *quelque chose.*"[27] Compare his response to Malika's: " *...je vote surtout pour le président là, c'est clair, [...] franchement des fois (rires) moi je suis pour le parti des ouvriers mais franchement c'est ma sœur qui m'aide, moi je suis pas trop politique, mais j'ai du mal...*"[28] Whereas Larbi thinks that he is capable of 'creating' something through his voting, Malika simply focuses on her scant knowledge of the French political landscape.

This contrast is also evident if we compare the different ways in which Djamel, 'Samira' and 'Salima' present their political participation. Djamel contrasts his own past to those individuals of high-school age today and talks in almost hyperbolic terms compared to Samira and Salima: "...*Moi je sais pas trop ce que revendiquent les jeunes aujourd'hui. Moi je savais ce que je revendiquais à mon époque...parce que j'étais*

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[27] Interview with 'Ibrahim', 'Larbi' and 'Tayeb', 23/05/01.
[28] Interview with 'Malika' and 'Nacira', 21/11/00.

engagé politiquement, j'avais des idées, enfin j'avais quelque chose."[29] Samira and Salima play down their involvement. Samira is twenty-four years old. She has a *Licence* in History from the *Université de Paris XIII*.[30] She also works part time as a school supervisor (*surveillante*) in the *Collège Pablo Picasso* in Aubervilliers. She was born and brought up in Saint-Denis, her parents are Algerian (Kabyle) and she holds dual nationality. Samira, like Malika refers to how her sister helps her decide who to vote for:

> *...je suis inscrite sur les listes électorales, je vote pour les élections présidentielles mais franchement, je suis pas trop politique. Je déteste la politique et... ben sur ce plan là, j'ai pas de parti, je suis ni pour l'un ni pour l'autre, j'observe* (underlined by myself) *et puis après c'est tout quoi [...] je vote parce que voilà il faut voter mais [...] généralement pour les grandes élections j'y vais même si j'ai pas d'idée, il y a ma sœur, je suis ma sœur.*[31]

Salima is a twenty-six year old *aide-éducatrice* (assistant youth worker) of Algerian origin. She is employed on an *emploi jeune* basis at the *Collège Pablo Picasso*. She was born in France, has always lived in Seine-Saint-Denis (currently in Drancy) and has dual nationality. She also presents herself as a somewhat confused voter: "*...comment je peux dire ça ? Je préfère voter euh... pour pas que l'autre il a la voix quoi (rires). C'est à dire je vote pour lui qui me semble le plus juste quoi... c'est tellement compliqué [...] je sais pas, je sais même pas leur nom...*" Abdel Majid explains that he tries to vote as often as possible but he does not, unlike the young women, present himself as an unknowing and fairly passive voter (or 'observer') of political life.

Not all interviewees are able or willing to vote in elections. However, this does not mean that they cannot be described as political actors. Indeed, the following two interviewees indicate that they possess a certain degree of 'social capital'. Both Mahmoud and 'Yasser' are pupils at the *Lycée professionnel Van Gogh* in Aubervilliers. Mahmoud is nineteen years old. He was born in Paris and lives in neighbouring St. Ouen. His parents are of Algerian origin (that is, both his parents were themselves born in France) and he holds Algerian-French nationality. Yasser is eighteen. He emigrated from

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[29] Interview with 'Djamel', 15/05/01.
[30] In the French university system, the *licence* is obtained after three years of study.
[31] Interview with 'Abdel' and 'Samira', 16/11/00.

Algeria with his mother, brothers and sisters, at the age of ten. He lives in Pré-St.-Gervais and plans to request French nationality. Neither Mahmoud nor Yasser vote. Mahmoud, because he does not see the point of it ("... c'est des gros menteurs") and Yasser, because he does not hold French nationality. However, they can still be described as participating individuals who demand more social inclusion. Indeed, they both live on socially deprived housing estates and complain of the lack of facilities for young people. Both interviewees speak about their efforts to negotiate with their respective mayors for more facilities. Mahmoud's 'ras le bol' was transformed into action: "...nous, on voudrait des trucs pour nous. Ils veulent pas... ça fait des années qu'on leur demande un terrain de foot..., des années qu'on demande [...] on a demandé un petit local pour qu'on puisse se réunir... ils ont jamais voulu."[32] In a similar manner, Yasser was able to transform his frustrations about the lack of facilities for young people into a 'conflictualised' or negotiating situation: "Ouais, on a pris rendez-vous avec le maire et tout ça ...je lui, moi et un copain à moi, on a été, on leur a dit 'ouais, ça y est, on en a marre'...." However, it would seem that this initial and potentially positive conflictualisation of the relationship between Yasser and the local municipality was not maintained since his frustrations descended into violence: "...on a commencé à casser tout. On a cassé le commissariat. Après, ben le maire il en a eu marre...."[33]

4.3 Future Career Plans and the World of Work

One way of examining the ways in which young people present themselves as individuals is to consider how they project themselves in terms of future career plans. Do they have a desire to succeed? What are the interviewees' understandings of personal, educational or professional success? Perhaps educational achievements and certain professions are not considered by interviewees to represent socio-economic 'success'. Indeed, for some of the young men in particular, success would appear to be measured purely in terms of an individual's material gain, regardless of *how* this money is earned. In fact, gender would

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[32] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.

[33] Both of Yasser's remarks are drawn from the interview with 'Aziz', 'Ibtisam', 'Majdi' and 'Yasser', 17/09/01. Here, a conflictualisation of social relationships should be understood in positive terms, that is, it is a process by which, the formerly oppressed or dominated confront their social oppressors in a demand for more equality, rather than passively accepting the status quo. See for example, Michel Wieviorka, *Violence en France* (Paris: Seuil, 1999a), pp. 241-242.

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seem to have a tangible effect on the way interviewees construct their projects. Of the forty-four young people interviewed, twenty-one can be said to have clearly-defined career plans and a belief in their own (future) professional success. (They were generally asked what they would like to do once they had finished their studies.) The sample was made up of eight young men and thirteen young women. Three main themes arise out of the data collected during the interviews.

(i) 'Il faut s'en sortir'

This phrase is very widely used amongst male interviewees who participated in the field-research. If someone claims "*Je vais m'en sortir*" or "*J'espère que je vais m'en sortir*" we can presume that they perceive themselves to be in an unsatisfactory situation, from which they wish to extricate themselves. It is curious that this phrase is never used amongst the young women respondents. Its widespread use amongst the young men, however, suggests an interiorisation of the possible threat of professional or financial 'failure', a threat which would seem to be less significant for their female counter-parts. Judging by the young men's responses, there are two possible routes out of this situation. An individual can attempt to '*s'en sortir*' by means of educational success, as Abdel Majid puts it: "*... quand on travaille, on comprend, faut s'en sortir, faut avoir des diplômes, c'est pour ça qu'on travaille actuellement.*"[34] Alternatively, one can '*s'en sortir*' without qualifications thanks to financial gain. This perspective emerges in a number of the young men's comments, especially amongst those who are experiencing or have experienced difficulties in obtaining their baccalaureate or who have generally had a rather 'chaotic' educational career. For example, 'Mansour' reflects on his own trajectory: "*Je faisais de la sécurité* [whilst at the *Lycée Van Gogh*] *donc moi j'ai primé sur l'argent pour pouvoir avoir un petit capital pour s'en sortir ; j'avais seize ans, j'étais à l'école et il faut avoir un petit peu d'argent pour penser à plus tard [...] j'ai déjà un petit capital [...] donc là personnellement je trouve que moi, je m'en suis bien sorti...*"[35] Mansour did not finish school nor did he obtain his baccalaureate and he admits that he regrets this. He claims that his childhood aspirations of becoming a lawyer are now

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[34] Interview with 'Abdel Majid', 'Ahmed' and 'Maliha', 22/05/01.
[35] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.

unrealistic. However, in financial terms, Mansour is fairly satisfied. (Mansour is a *médiateur culturel*, employed by Aubervilliers municipality).

(ii) Gender Differences

The second theme which emerges from the data is the differences between the young men and women with regards to their ability to sketch out a future career path. Out of the sample of eight young men, six of them have well-defined career plans. Djamel and Touran want to pursue careers within the *Éducation Nationale* (Djamel as a *conseiller principal d'éducation*, i.e. a CPE and Touran as a physical education teacher). Amir is a twenty-two-year-old student who is training to become a nursing auxiliary at a further education college in Aubervilliers. He was born in Saint Denis, was brought up in Pierrefitte and now lives in le Blanc-Mesnil. He holds French-Algerian nationality. Amir decided to train to become a nursing auxiliary in case his professional judo career does not go according to plan. 'Mouloud', a seventeen-year-old high-school pupil, who was born in Algeria but has lived in Aubervilliers since the age of three, is seduced by an American TV-series about a law firm and would like to become a lawyer. 'Fouad', an unemployed association volunteer of Algerian origin, has fairly concrete plans to set up his own record company in Algeria and 'Hicham' (mother French, father Algerian) would like to obtain a *BTS* so as to become a professional photographer. In contrast, although both Mansour and Abdel Majid recognise the need to '*s'en sortir*', neither are exactly sure how to achieve this.

The young women who participated in the study seem to have a much clearer idea than their male counter-parts about their chosen career. Thirteen young women as opposed to six young men had already chosen a career-path or were already undergoing professional training.

(iii) Similarities in Chosen Professions

The third theme which emerges is the similarity in the types of chosen profession. All, bar four interviewees' chosen career falls into one of the following four categories: careers within the *Éducation Nationale* (as either teachers or *conseillers principaux*

d'éducation), health-related and caring professions (as nurses or nursing auxiliaries), legal careers (lawyers) or careers in business and commerce.

4.4 Detachment from the *banlieue/quartier*

This chapter has demonstrated how some interviewees aim to present their experiences as individuals, and that part of this process involves an attempt to escape family and peer expectations. This sometimes means that they become the 'odd one out' either within their family or within their group of friends because they strive to distance or detach themselves from their 'origins' or their 'community'. The notion of collective or community belonging can be understood in socio-economic terms as well as in cultural terms. As we shall see in Chapter 5, the idea of the *banlieue* as an imagined community (to borrow Benedict Anderson' term) is a very prevalent one.[36] The majority of interviewees demonstrate a strong sense of attachment to the *banlieue*, and/or to their *cité* and use this register of their experience as an antagonistic mode of self-'valorisation' in relation to Paris and everything that Paris represents, such as comparative wealth and '*les Français*' who are perceived to be more or less hostile towards the young people of North African origin living in the suburbs. However, a minority of interviewees make a point of trying to distance themselves from their suburban surroundings. There seem to be two dominant models which reflect this process of disengagement from one's social environment. Respondents were generally asked where they lived or where they had grown up. This often led the interviewee to develop their response further. If they did not expand their answer, they were encouraged to discuss whether they liked living in their *quartier* ("*Est-ce que ça se passe bien dans ton quartier?*").

(i) 'Upward Mobility'

The first model concerns the notion of 'upward mobility' whereby the interviewees concerned try to distance themselves from the socio-economic community which surrounds them in order to 'get ahead' professionally and/or financially. Eight interviewees fall into this category. (Five young men and three young women.) 'Tayeb' is

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[36] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

studying for a *BTS* in Accountancy at the *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso* in Aubervilliers. He is twenty-two years old, was born in Algeria and has lived in France (Aubervilliers) since the age of nine. He does not hold French nationality. Throughout the group interview Tayeb was keen to distance himself from the *banlieue* and it becomes clear that he has a very negative image of the young people who live in the socially deprived suburbs of Paris, despite the fact that he too lives in this environment (Tayeb was interviewed with two other *BTS* students from the same class – Larbi and 'Ibrahim'). We talk about the *Lycée professionnel Van Gogh* and I ask him if he attended this lycée. He replies : "*Ils prennent que les jeunes des quartiers.*" The term "*jeunes des quartiers*" seems to be a coded way of designating those young people who live on notorious housing estates, who have 'dropped out' of school and who are perceived of as petty criminals or delinquents. A *quartier*, literally meaning a district or area can of course refer to a bourgeois area as well, but Tayeb's use of the term changes its meaning rather drastically, so that it becomes just another way of stigmatising youths in the suburbs. For instance, *les jeunes des quartiers* is a term which is frequently used by the French media in the endless reports about rising levels of street crime and juvenile delinquency in urban and suburban areas. When asked about his friendships and social life Tayeb once more reveals his desire to distance himself from the *banlieue* and all that it represents for him: " *...Nous, on sort pas beaucoup en banlieue. On va connaître que les jeunes de banlieue tout ça, mais par contre quand on part en vacances, ça nous permet de connaître des gens d'un peu partout...*"[37] In addition, Tayeb states that he would like to live in Paris when he finishes his studies but is uncertain whether he will be able to afford it.

Larbi is Tayeb's classmate and took part in the same group interview. Like Tayeb, Larbi seems to be very sensitive about projecting himself as different and a 'cut above' his surroundings. When I ask him which *quartier* he lives in, he responds in a defensive manner: "*... c'est pas un quartier. Ouais, chacun habite son bâtiment et tranquille...*"[38]

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[37] Interview with 'Ibrahim', 'Larbi' and 'Tayeb', 23/05/01.

[38] Interview with 'Ibrahim','Larbi' and 'Tayeb', 23/05/01. It should be pointed out that given the 'power dynamics' of the interview situation, that Larbi and Tayeb may have been trying to project a certain image to the 'outside' researcher and that they may not actually feel that negatively about their surroundings. See Appendix 2 for further discussion of the relationship between the interviewees and myself.

Djamel was also keen to show how he was eager to 'escape' from the *banlieue* since for him this process was closely linked to upward mobility. Djamel grew up in nearby le Blanc-Mesnil, a town in Seine-Saint-Denis with a similar socio-economic profile to Aubervilliers. Without being asked directly to talk about his environment, when discussing his past, Djamel mentions that he was desperate to attend a university outside of Seine-Saint-Denis:

> *...je voulais pas rester en banlieue, je voulais m'échapper à la banlieue un peu parce que je trouvais qu'on passait à côté de quelque chose à Paris.... Moi, la Sorbonne, ç'a toujours été quelque chose pour moi de mythique [...] enfin j'ai toujours aimé ce défi entre guillemets, de voir si un petit jeune de banlieue pouvait réussir à Paris, dans une fac parisienne [...] moi je voulais voir ce que c'était Paris. Ce que c'était fréquenter des Parisiens [...] il y avait des familles aisées ou des gens d'autres origine sociales...*[39]

Like Djamel, Amir also presents education as a means of escaping one's surroundings or at least escaping the "quartier cacotope" image as Farhard Khosrokhavar calls it.[40] Amir talks about his childhood and adolescence on a relatively deprived housing estate in Pierrefitte, and how he managed to avoid any serious problems because as he puts it, he was very involved in his studies and judo: "*Ça a été dur mais comme j'étais concentré dans mon sport, dans mes études, j'avais pas trop le temps de voir ce qui se passait à côté donc...*" It is significant that Amir seems to refer to two supposedly opposed 'categories' of person living in his immediate surroundings: " *...le banlieusard et la personne qui va à l'école, qui s'instruit, qui sait parler...*"[41]

'Arwa' and 'Hala' are the only female interviewees who distance themselves from their suburban surroundings in an attempt to achieve greater upward mobility for themselves. Arwa is eighteen years old. She was born in France and will soon hold French as well as Moroccan nationality. She is one of the few interviewees who is in effect a member of the 'third generation' since it was her grandfather who emigrated

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[39] Interview with 'Djamel', 10/05/01. Most interviewees simply see it as a matter of course that if they continue into higher education that they will either attend the *Université Paris VIII* in Saint-Denis or *Université Paris XIII* in Villetaneuse and Bobigny. Both these universities are situated in the Seine-Saint-Denis *département*.

[40] Farhad Khosrokhavar, 'La Violence et ses avatars dans les quartiers sensibles', *Déviance et société*, 24.4 (2000), 425-440. Here 'cacotope' – deriving from 'cacophonie' referrs to the disorder in these *quartiers*.

[41] Interview with 'Amir', 21/12/00.

from Morocco to find work in France. She lives in Aubervilliers but attends a *lycée professionnel* in nearby Drancy, where she is studying for a *BEP* in Accountancy.[42] As we shall see, the other young women who try to distance themselves from the *banlieue* and its various negative social representations, do so, not for themselves but for their future children, as they put it. However, Arwa is a very focused young woman and when asked her about her friendships and her free time it becomes clear that she has chosen to become a 'loner':

> ... *vaut mieux être seule que dans la compagnie, c'est ça [...] j'essaye de prendre mon chemin, d'être à part [...] Moi j'ai envie d'avoir un avenir [...] Avant on était tous ensemble. Maintenant, non. Maintenant j'essaie d'être plus dans l'avenir [...] j'ai pas envie d'être une fille de la rue.*[43]

Hala is an eighteen-year-old pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born and brought up in Aubervilliers and both her parents are Tunisian. (She holds dual French-Tunisian nationality.) She is academically a high achiever and plans to go on to the preparatory classes for the entrance competition to the *École Normale Supérieure*. She wants to become an interpreter for an international organisation such as UNESCO. Hala's case is slightly different to Arwa's in that she presents herself as *already* being upwardly mobile and in many ways, she is. This is demonstrated by Hala's reference to the fact that the local municipal youth association (*l'OMJA*) is "*plus un lieu de rencontre entre banlieusards qu'autre chose...*" Hala is strictly speaking a '*banlieusarde*' herself since she too lives in Aubervilliers but she chooses not to present herself in this way and her comment constructs '*les banlieusards*' in the same negative manner as Tayeb's reference to "les *jeunes des quartiers*". In addition, like Larbi, Hala wants to distance herself from the general socio-economic profile of Aubervilliers' inhabitants: "*J'habite très loin des cités dans un petit bâtiment.*"[44]

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[42] BEP – *Brevet d'études professionnelles* or a school certificate of technical education. A *BEP* is completed prior to the *baccalauréat professionnel* or can in itself constitute a school-leaving certificate.
[43] Interview with 'Arwa', 23/03/01.
[44] The OMJA – *Office municipal de la jeunesse d'Aubervilliers* is a municipally funded youth project which provides leisure, cultural and educational activities for the young people of Aubervilliers. It is organised into different *secteurs* with different *maison de jeunes* and youth workers for each of the *quartiers* of Aubervilliers. Both citations from interview with 'Hala' and 'Mona', 18/05/01. *Terminale* is the equivalent to Year 13.

The two remaining interviewees who attempt to distance themselves from their social origins in a bid for upward mobility focus more on their future families and express their desire to move away from Aubervilliers in terms of wanting the best for their future children. Mansour reveals a very negative view of his surroundings: *"C'est pas bien d'habiter une cité...il faut éviter, faut éviter pour ses enfants, faut éviter..."*[45] 'Leila' also expresses a similar point of view when she claims that she would like her children to attend a private school in Paris:

> *Ben en fait, on va dire que si on n'a pas de personnalité, on peut tomber dans le panneau et donc je voudrais pas. D'un côté je préfère que mes enfants sont entourés de Français (rire). On va dire avec la mentalité qui est ici, [...] je pense que plus tard je mettrais mes enfants dans le privé.*[46]

Only one interviewee claims that she would like to move away from Seine-Saint-Denis for non-professional motives. Idaya claims that she would either live in Paris or the south of France because she feels there is a better atmosphere there: *"Ici je trouve que c'est un peu triste, j'aime pas du tout moi."*[47] Most other interviewees argue that in Aubervilliers and Seine-Saint-Denis in general, there is more community spirit than in Paris and that they would like to continue living in a similar environment. These views may be expressed as a result of peer pressure to a certain extent, especially amongst the interviewees of high-school age.[48] However, Idaya seems able to resist the dominant discourse of her peers.

(ii) 'Je m'arrête pas au quartier'

The second dominant model which emerges when interviewees distance themselves from the collective social 'community' is less closely linked with a desire to 'escape' the *banlieue*. Indeed, these interviewees claim to be living happily in their respective suburbs

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[45] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.
[46] Interview with 'Leila', 15/05/01. Leila is a seventeen-year-old *première littéraire* pupil at *Lycée P. Picasso*. She was born in Aubervilliers and has lived there all her life. Her parents are Algerian and she holds French-Algerian nationality.
[47] Interview with 'Idaya' and 'Fatou', 19/05/01.
[48] For further discussion of attitudes towards Aubervilliers and the *banlieue* in general, see Chapter 5.

and are pursuing their own projects with reasonable levels of satisfaction.[49] Yasser and 'Waleed' both reveal that they feel no particular sense of belonging to the *cité* where they live. For example, Yasser claims: "*J'habite là et voilà ...j'ai ma vie à moi...*"[50] The other three interviewees to distance themselves from their *quartier* all point out that they may live in a certain *quartier* but that this has nothing to do with how they construct their own sense of self. When asked about neighbouring Saint-Denis, where she lives, Samira replies: "*Je me sens pas appartenir au quartier quoi. Pour moi, j'habite dans ce logement et puis point final. Je m'arrête pas au quartier.*"[51] Indeed, this is a very similar response to 'Khadija's' : "*Moi, j'habite La Maladrerie* (a rather notorious *quartier* in Aubervilliers), *mais c'est tout quoi, enfin, voilà...*"[52] 'Nacira' is another interviewee who makes a point of demonstrating that the notion of feeling a sense of belonging to the *banlieue* as a whole or to one's *quartier* as a micro-cosmic version of the *banlieue* means little to her: "*Je m'implique pas du tout.*"[53]

There seem to be two factors which have an impact on an individual's relationship to their environment: gender and age. That is, it would seem more acceptable for the young men to distance themselves from the *banlieue/quartier* if they are seen to be searching to 'better their lot' or that of their children's in socio-economic/professional terms. Only two male interviewees out of twenty-two distance themselves from their respective *cités* for non-professional motives (Yasser and Waleed). The young women seem to be slightly more at liberty to 'break away' from their *quartier/the banlieue* for non-professional reasons. With regards to age, apart from those interviewees with professional and/or financial motives, only one interviewee (Khadija) of high-school age constructs herself as an individual as opposed to collectively (N.B. The other two women

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[49] As mentioned above, not all interviewees actually *live* in Aubervilliers – some may just work or attend school/college there. However, all of them live in Seine-Saint-Denis.

[50] Interview with 'Aziz', 'Majdi', 'Yasser' and 'Ibtisam', 17/09/01. Waleed is a nineteen-year-old Geography *D.E.U.G.* student at the Sorbonne. He was born in France and is of Moroccan origin. He has always lived in Aubervilliers and holds French nationality.

[51] Interview with 'Abdel' and 'Samira', 16/11/01.

[52] Interview with 'Nadia' and 'Khadija', 13/03/01. Khadija is a seventeen-year-old *terminale ES* pupil at the *Lycée P. Picasso.* She was born in Morocco and came to France at the age of three. She has always lived in Aubervilliers and will imminently acquire French nationality.

[53] Interview with 'Malika' and 'Nacira', 21/11/00. Nacira is a twenty-six-year-old student nurse. She was born in Algeria and came to France at the age of one. She grew up in Nanterre but is studying to become a nurse in Aubervilliers and now lives in neighbouring Bobigny. She has dual French-Algerian nationality.

to distance themselves from the *quartier* in this manner, Nacira and Samira are twenty-six and twenty-four years old respectively.)

PART II: INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY AND CULTURE

In the introduction to the present chapter individual identity was defined as a person's political or social demands for equal access to employment, rights etc. I also argued that another dimension could be added to this definition, namely, a cultural dimension. If individual identity can also be understood in relation to questions of a cultural nature, there are a number of phenomena which can be analysed in terms of the individual pole of the triangle of identity. The next section of this chapter will therefore consider interviewee self-perception, attitudes towards their parents' language, marriage and Islam.

4. 5 How Interviewees See and Present Themselves

Some interviewees situate themselves on the 'individualism pole' of the triangle of identity. Three young men and one young woman see themselves in universal or individual terms. More specifically, only these interviewees openly acknowledge any French element in their self-identity.[54]

(i) The 'Instrumental' Model

Waleed and 'Mohamed' are two young men whose self-definition is universal rather than related to their 'origins'. Their rejection of the notion of *'l'origine'* is articulated in a rather defensive manner. Waleed is nineteen and is in his first year studying Geography at the Sorbonne. His parents are Moroccan, he was born in France and has always lived in Aubervilliers. He is of French nationality. When asked about how he sees himself, he becomes rather annoyed and responds as follows: *"...je vois pas pourquoi on veut comprendre l'origine. Je vois pas. Je vois pas pourquoi l'origine, l'origine. [...] Je vois pas un Français qui est d'origine française...j'en vois pas. Je vois pas pourquoi parler*

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[54] Anthony Giddens writes extensively about the psychology of the self and self identity in *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

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des origines..."[55] Likewise his younger brother, 'Mohamed' (sixteen years old, *première ES* pupil, *Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in France; dual French-Moroccan nationality) who was interviewed separately, responds to the same question in a similar manner:

> *Déjà je me vois comme un être humain déjà parce que c'est tout. Il y a pas de distinction entre les hommes. Je vois pas pourquoi on dit 'moi je suis un Français, moi je suis un Africain ou un Asiatique', c'est tout. On est des êtres humains.*[56]

So both brothers' articulation of self-identity in universal terms can be seen as a strategy which is employed to demand equal access to equal political and social rights.

In contrast to many of the other interviewees, Abdel Majid claims to speak only French at home, whereas most other interviewees claim to speak a mixture of Arabic/Berber and French when in the parental home. Abdel Majid spends two months in Algeria every summer and visits his extended family there. He has little or no extended family in France; most of them live in Algeria. However, despite Abdel Majid's rather close and more frequent contact with Algeria, he still makes a point of distancing himself from his origins: "*Non, je me vois pas en algérien tout court. Je suis le descendant d'un Algérien.*"[57] It is also rather significant that Abdel Majid introduces himself in the following way: "*Moi, je suis né en France. Mes parents sont étrangers.*" Most interviewees introduce themselves as "*d'origine algérienne*" or "*marocain/e*" or as "*kabyle*". Rarely do they make a distinction between themselves and their parents in the way Abdel Majid does. However, Abdel Majid's insistence on his 'Frenchness' should be seen in the context of his demands for equal access to employment. This is made clear when, after having pointed out that he is *not* Algerian, but the descendant of Algerians, he hastily adds "*...mais j'ai la double nationalité pour le travail...*"[58] So, Abdel Majid's self-definition allows him to demand certain civic rights – such as the right to enjoy equal access to employment and his hasty remark about his dual nationality as being "pour le travail" seems to 'de-culpabilise' his initial (and taboo?) identification with France.

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[55] Interview with 'Waleed', 06/02/01, 19/02/01, 23/02/01.
[56] Interview with 'Mohamed', 30/04/01.
[57] Interview with 'Abdel Majid', Ahmed' and 'Maliha', 25/05/01.
[58] Ibid.

(ii) The 'Emotional' Model

Only one young woman (no young men) in the sample openly articulates her sense of self-identity in terms of being French. 'Amira' is a sixteen-year-old *bac littéraire* pupil at the *Lycée P. Picasso*. She was born in France, has French nationality and has always lived in the Aubervilliers until her family's recent move to neighbouring La Courneuve. Her parents are Tunisian, she goes to Tunisia every other summer with her family and she is one of the few interviewees who can speak Arabic *and* read and write it as well. Yet, despite her close links with Tunisia, she describes herself in the following way: "...*française. J'ai vécu en France donc...*"[59]

So as far as self-definition is concerned, there seem to be two different patterns that arise out of the interviewees' responses. First of all, there is the 'instrumental' model, which corresponds more to Abdel Majid, Waleed and Mohamed. Secondly, there is the more 'emotional' model, which reflects the experience of Amira.

4. 6 Language

One area where some interviewees can be seen to present their relationship to their origins in distant, more individualist, terms is language. Respondents were asked if they could speak/read/write Arabic or Berber and if so they were asked to self-assess their level of competence and to indicate when/with whom they spoke it. Whilst most interviewees are keen to show that they can manage with minimal problems in their parents' language (whether this is Arabic or Berber), those interviewees who are actually enrolled in extra-curricular language classes in their parents' language, deny that they attend these classes for nostalgic or sentimental reasons. Indeed, they reject the notion of 'going back to one's roots'. For example, three out of the forty-four interviewees ('Nadia', Khadija and Waleed) said that they attended these sorts of classes. Nadia, Khadija and Waleed have all attended Berber lessons in the same association in a

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[59] Interview with 'Amira', 09/11/00. Another interviewee, 'Myriam' also explicitly expresses an attachment to France in emotional terms. However, her case will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 6.

banlieue neighbouring Aubervilliers and all claim to have followed this course purely in order to be able to gain more points in their baccalaureate.[60]

Nadia and Khadija attend the classes together and although the association in question organises Berber cultural activities, neither interviewee shows any interest in this aspect of the association. Nadia, (Waleed and Mohamed's sister) is eighteen and a *terminale ES* pupil at the *Lycée P. Picasso*. She was born and brought up in Aubervilliers and holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. With regard to the wider cultural activities organised by the Berber association, Nadia states: "... *Non on participe même pas ... ouais ils organisent des fêtes culturelles, la poésie, des danses, des spectacles de danse, ils organisent beaucoup, beaucoup de choses.*" She then later emphasises her own motivations for attending the association's Berber course : "... *franchement, je vous dis la vérité, moi, [...] personnellement, c'est un cours comme un autre, c'est, je sais pas, c'est normal [...] c'est comme si j'apprenais une autre langue mais sauf que celle-là je la comprends mais euh sinon, c'est pareil.*"[61] Khadija reveals that she shares the same motivations as Nadia:

> *Mais franchement, c'est, si j'avais eu le choix, j'aurais pris arabe, j'aurais pas pris là quoi, parce que je veux apprendre plusieurs langues en fait, [...] j'ai pris shleh parce qu'en arabe ils demandaient de savoir lire, et écrire et parler, OK je sais pas donc j'ai pris berbère.*[62]

Nadia's younger brother, Mohamed intends to enrol in a Berber class and he echoes this rather instrumental relationship with his parents' language: "*Non personnellement c'est pour avoir des points plus pour le bac puisque je me débrouille pas mal en berbère et c'est pour gagner plus de points.*"[63] Waleed is keen to show that he has used his knowledge of Berber to enhance his educational achievements. When asked about his level of competence in Berber, he replies: "*Très bien, très bien, d'ailleurs, je suis passé*

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[60] As we shall see below, another interviewee, 'Hala' also follows language (Arabic) classes in a Tunisian cultural association. However, her stance is much less instrumental and so will be discussed later on.
[61] Interview with 'Nadia' and 'Khadija', 13/03/01.
[62] Interview with 'Nadia' and 'Khadija', 13/03/01.The term *shleh* is used by the interviewees of Berber Moroccan origin to refer to their Berber origins and the Moroccan Berber language, in the same way as Algerian Berbers call themselves and their language, *kabyle*.
[63] Interview with 'Mohamed', 30/04/01.

au baccalauréat sur le berbère, j'ai eu une très bonne note alors que [...] j'avais même pas révisé quoi [...] sans apprendre les textes, en les lisant une seule fois, j'ai eu quinze quoi..."[64] The relationship of these four respondents to their parents' language is thus rather instrumental. They use an aspect of their cultural 'heritage' in order to achieve academic success and they do not see their motivations as regards the Berber course in terms of an 'ethnic revival' of any sort.[65] So concerning this issue, it can be argued that the interviewees situate themselves on the pole of individualism.

4.7 Future Marriage Partners

For a variety of reasons, not all interviewees were questioned about marriage. The main reason was that in some cases, the interview situation did not lend itself to this type of personal question. This was made very clear either because of the young age of the interviewee and the presence of peers who presented an obstacle to this type of question or because the older age of the interviewee meant that the 'power relationship' was inverted, which at times, made it difficult to ask about their personal life. As a result, only twenty-six out of the forty-four interviewees being discussed were asked about future marriage partners, whether they themselves had any particular criteria for choosing their future partner and whether their parents had any specific criteria. Three (two young men one young woman) out the twenty-six can be seen as subscribing to a universal/individualist approach with regards to marriage.

Two models reflect the ideas of these three interviewees: firstly, what could be called the 'personal happiness model' and secondly what could be referred to as the 'extreme personal choice model'. Two young male interviewees fall into the first category and one young woman falls into the second category.

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[64] Interview with 'Waleed', 6/02/01, 19/02/01, 23/2/01.
[65] Wieviorka (1993), p.110 discusses the 'ethnic revival' movement which took place principally in the United States and Western Europe from the 1960s onwards amongst previously 'assimilated' cultural, religious, regional and linguistic minorities.

(i) 'Personal Happinness'

Mansour, who subscribes to a universalist outlook in many areas of his life, expresses his thoughts about future marriage partners: " ... *mes parents, je sais qu'ils seraient contents si je ramène une marocaine chez moi qui vient de Casablanca. Ça c'est sûr, [...] mais est-ce que je serais content moi?*"[66] Majdi is a nineteen-year-old *BEP (Carrosserie)* pupil at the *Lycée professionnel Van Gogh*. He was born in Algeria, arrived in France at the age of six and lives in La Courneuve. He holds dual French-Algerian nationality. Majdi's anger when a fellow female interviewee of Tunisian origin comments that her parents expect her to marry a Muslim and if possible, a Tunisian, reveals a similar view to Mansour: *"Les gens comme ça, je les comprends pas parce que c'est pas ses parents qui se marient!"*[67]

(ii) 'Extreme Personal Choice'

Aicha is a twenty-eight-year-old care auxiliary trainee. She was born in Algeria (Kabylia) and has lived in France since the age of two. She holds Algerian nationality only. Her ideas about relationships and marriage are more 'extreme' than the interviewees mentioned above because her preferences are exterior to a whole array of conventional responses. Aicha declares that she does not agree with the institution of marriage and she vows that she will herself never get married, preferring instead to cohabit with a partner:

> *Je suis contre le mariage. [...] Il est hors de question que je revive ce que mes parents ont vécu [...] parce que le mariage chez... c'est 'tu vas écouter ton mari, tu vas' ... et moi, il est hors de question qu'on me dise ce que je dois faire [...] alors que le concubinage, ben t'es pas content, ben au revoir, c'est tout quoi...* [68]

Aicha's statement reveals a firm rejection of what she perceives to be her parents' experience of and attitude towards marriage. Through the articulation of her preferred type of relationship, there *is* an element of self-construction and therefore *subjectivity*. However, the fact that Aicha equates all marriages *"chez [les Maghrébins?]"* with the

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[66] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.

[67] Interview with 'Aziz', 'Majdi', 'Yasser' and 'Ibtisam', 17/09/01. A *BEP* in *Carrosserie* is a qualification in automobile body-repair work.

[68] Interview with 'Aicha', 12/12/00, 14/12/00.

unequal relationship her parents have, means that her predicament corresponds more to a negative process of 'escaping' what she perceives to be the *'maghrébin'* marriage.

4.8 Attitudes Towards Religion and Religious Practice

Religion is often portrayed in social science literature as being the clearest expression of 'tradition' or traditional values and hence it is often conceptualised as the antithesis of modernity and universalist 'reason'. Whilst avoiding the modernity versus tradition trap which would claim that those interviewees who strive to present themselves as individuals are the ones who simply declare that they do not believe in God or in the teachings of the Koran, some interviewees can nevertheless be described as subscribing to an individualist stance on religion because they express their unconventional ideas in the presence of their peers who think otherwise. As we shall see in Chapter 5, peers play a very prominent role in maintaining the notion of a socio-economic and/or cultural 'community'. Interviewees were asked if they were *'croyant'* and/or *'pratiquant'* and they generally developed their ideas further as a result of this introductory question. 'Mona', 'Karine' and Hicham can be described as young people who are keen to assert their own individual stance *despite* pressure exerted by their peers to conform.

Mona is a seventeen-year-old pupil in *seconde ES (Lycée P. Picasso)*. Like her Kabyle-origin mother, Mona was born in France. Her Kabyle father emigrated from Algeria at the age of seventeen. She holds dual French-Algerian nationality and has always lived in Aubervilliers. Mona took part in an interview with her friend and peer Hala, a high-school pupil in the year above. Hala is a very committed Muslim and although Mona seems at first to be reluctant to air the doubts she has about Islam and her faith, she then goes on to say:

> ... honnêtement, je sais pas si je m'intéresse [...] avant je sais que je croyais vraiment en Dieu [...] je suis un peu perdue. Je suis dans une période où il faut que je réfléchisse, disons [...] le fait que je croie pas en Dieu, du fait que c'est un peu contradictoire... [69]

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[69] Interview with 'Hala' and 'Mona', 18/05/01. *Seconde* is equivalent to Year 11 in the English and Welsh school system.

Karine and Hicham are similar in that they are both from 'mixed' backgrounds. Karine is a pupil in *première ES* (*Lycée P. Picasso*) as is Hicham, although he is in *terminale*. Karine's father is Algerian and her mother is South American. She was born in Paris and was brought up by her mother in both Paris and Antony (Hauts-de-Seine *département*). At the time of interview, Karine was a newcomer to Aubervilliers and it was her first term at the *lycée*. Karine was interviewed in the largest group interview that was conducted (five young women took part). Despite or perhaps *because* of being a recent newcomer to the *lycée*, Karine shows that she has no qualms about expressing her doubts with regard to certain received wisdoms. When the group was asked about their religious faith and practice, Karine disagrees with one of the dominant figures of the group, 'Nabila', who automatically presumes that all respondents must obviously be practising Muslims. Nabila's assumptions lead her to answer on everyone's behalf:

> Nadia Kiwan: "*Et par rapport à la religion...*
> Nabila interjects : *Si on pratique la religion de nos parents, c'est ça? Ben ouais!*"

However, Karine promptly replies: "*Personne peut dire qu'il est musulman, en tout cas, parmi les jeunes, c'est pas possible de dire ça.*"[70] Karine's point of view runs contrary to the vast majority of young people of North African origin who, even if they are not particularly devout, tend to use certain code language to convey this, the general 'acceptable' response being: "*Je suis pas pratiquant à fond. Je fais le minimum pour respecter...*" Karine's outspokenness reveals that she is not concerned about distancing herself from her community; the community, in this case being represented by her school mates.

Hicham is eighteen years old and was born in France to a French mother and Algerian (Kabyle) father. His religious practice does not differ greatly from the majority of other young men of North African origin. However, what does differ is the way in which he presents his practice or rather non-practice of Islam:

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[70] Interview with 'Bintou', 'Karine', 'Nabila', 'Nour' and 'Salikha', 19/10/00.

Je fais pas la prière, je fais le Ramadan, je mange pas de porc mais je me considère pas vraiment comme musulman parce qu'un musulman, normalement un musulman ça doit faire la prière, il doit respecter tout le Coran, moi je peux pas dire que je suis vraiment musulman parce que je respecte pas tout, je fais pas la prière, je fais pas ci, je fais pas ça...je peux pas me considérer comme vraiment musulman.[71]

Let us compare Hicham's response with his fellow interviewee's, Mouloud. Mouloud's answer is representative of the standard unwillingness of interviewees to portray themselves as having 'strayed' too far from the accepted religious 'minimum requirements.' Indeed, Mouloud, like Hicham, fasts but does not pray, yet he does not want to go as far as Hicham in his self-definition:

Je sais pas, moi. Disons, je suis un apprenti musulman. Je suis un peu comme Hicham. Je fais pas la prière mais je respecte certaines règles. En fait je me sens pas encore assez mûr pour respecter toutes ces règles donc j'attends. Je fais ce que je peux pour l'instant et j'attends pour être prêt pour pratiquer...[72]

Hicham's response reflects a more extensive degree of self-acknowledgement and thus a more individualised approach than Mouloud's, who presents himself as passively waiting for the day to arrive when he will be mature enough to pray.[73]

Fouad and 'Yacine' can perhaps be seen as the most exceptional of interviewees because of their rejection of Islam. Their ideas are very different to the majority of their friends and family. Fouad violently rejects all form of religion and through this rejection, it would seem that he aims to provoke his peers. When I ask Fouad about his religious beliefs (*"Par rapport à la religion, qu'est-ce que ça représente pour vous?"*) he responds at some length:

...la question en fait, 'il existe ou il existe pas?' [...] pour moi, [...] c'est vraiment clair et net [...] La Bible est une belle pièce de théâtre, le Coran est une belle pièce de théâtre [...] moi personnellement, je mange du porc, l'alcool et

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[71] Interview with 'Mouloud' and 'Hicham', 16/11/00.

[72] Ibid.

[73] The notion of passively waiting as if for some sort of exterior intervention which will galvanise one into committed religious faith and practice is very common amongst the younger interviewees.

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compagnie, j'ai fait toutes les conneries du monde [...] je suis plus à mon goût, [...] c'est très très simple donc la religion, non, je ne rentre pas dans ça du tout. [....] moi je vis au jour le jour donc personnellement, la mort, ce qui se passe après la mort, il y a rien après la mort, il y a rien du tout. Tu vas aller en enfer. Ah bon ? On est déjà en enfer, on est déjà, à se battre, c'est ici l'enfer, c'est pas ailleurs ...

During the interview, it becomes apparent that by declaring his atheism, Fouad wishes to criticise his peers, especially those of North African origin, (or those whose parents are Muslims) for what he perceives to be their conformism:

...les trois quarts ici, c'est une question plus d'identité que de religion. Ils ne mangent pas de porc parce qu'ils sont arabes et ça fait pas bien de manger du porc, ça n'a rien à voir avec la religion, les trois quarts, c'est une question d'éducation [...] ici c'est le suivi, l'endoctrinement [...] oui, suivre le troupeau.

Fouad prides himself on being 'different' to his peers and ensuring that they are aware of this. He therefore sets out to 'provoke' and shock them, especially during the fasting month of Ramadan:

[Pendant le ramadan] j'ai marché dans la cité avec un grand jambon–beurre devant tout le monde. Je le fais tous les ans. Tous les ans je me balade avec un jambon-beurre devant tout le monde et dès qu'on me pose la question, je dis 'goûte, mange.' [74]

At the age of thirty, Fouad is eleven years Yacine's senior (Yacine is a nineteen year-old *animateur* who works in the *association de quartier* where Fouad is a volunteer) and it would seem that Fouad's strong views have had an impact on Yacine who had previously been a reasonably committed Muslim (he formerly observed Ramadan, regularly attended the local mosque and observed the main dietary restrictions re. pork and alcohol). Thus during the interview, Yacine refers to himself and Fouad as 'nous': "*...nous deux, je crois qu'on est à part entière puisqu'on mange du porc...*" Yacine has difficulty explaining the transformation in his beliefs: " *...du jour au lendemain j'ai claqué la porte. Je suis plus dans cet état d'esprit*". It would seem that he now models

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[74] Interview with 'Fouad' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01.

himself on the secular Christian approach to religion and the Church: *"Si je vois une belle mosquée, je rentrerais pour la visiter mais je rentrerais pas pour faire la prière."*[75]

Fouad's ideas about religion are not evidence of his subjectivity since, in his denunciation of Islam and religion in general, he refuses to recognise that those who practice Islam or Christianity, are in some, or many cases, *subjects* who to a certain extent have *chosen* to observe a minimum of religious 'rituals' (e.g. fasting during Ramadan or abstaining from eating pork.) In other words, Fouad's continual 'provocation' as he calls it and the fact that he claims that most of the *cité*'s inhabitants are merely following 'the flock' means that it is not possible to describe his distancing from Islam and religion in general as a positive process of self-construction.[76] Likewise, Yacine's inability to explain the change in his beliefs (*"du jour au lendemain j'ai claqué la porte"*) and the fact that he seems to be influenced by Fouad and his French (*'de souche'*) partner more than anything else, also suggests that subjectivity is somewhat absent from this process.

4.9 Concluding Remarks

In all, thirty-five out of the forty-four interviewees can be seen to present certain aspects of themselves or their experience as individuals who subscribe to universalist values. As I have shown above, some young people in the sample articulate certain elements of their lives according to the 'individual pole' of the triangle of identity in a bid for more political/civic, social and economic rights. Others try to present themselves as culturally 'assimilated' individuals and as part of the 'mainstream' of French society, in relation to certain issues and within this process, they seem to pour a certain amount of scorn on the element of their community values from which they claim to have 'escaped'.

In the light of the data which has been discussed in this chapter, three main concluding remarks can be made. First, the analysis of the findings shows that Michel

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[75] Interview with 'Foaud' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01. Yacine was born in France and lives in Aubervilliers. He is of Algerian origin (both parents are Algerian).
[76] One of the main features of *subjectivation*, as described by Alain Touraine is the ability to recognise others as subjects. See Alain Touraine, *Critique de la modernité* (Paris : Fayard, 1992), p. 259.

Wieviorka's triangle of ethnicity can be even further developed in two ways. First of all, it can be used as an analytical tool for most individuals and not solely for those people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Secondly, the pole of individualism and universal values can also be extended in order to include a *third* dimension, namely a cultural dimension (in addition to the first two dimensions: the political/civic and the social). This third cultural dimension allows us to include in our analyses, people's desires to distance themselves from their community (whether this community is defined in social or cultural terms). As explained above, this self-distancing should not be interpreted as subjectivity if the person involved is unable to recognise in others (or the 'Other') their capacity to become subjects despite remaining attached to their community 'values' to a significant extent.

The third concluding remark that can be made is that although the interviewees discussed in this chapter reveal their desire to present themselves as individuals regarding certain themes, we should remember that these attempts, in most cases, only represent *one* facet of their lived experience. Indeed, most interviewees 'hop' from pole to pole of the triangle of identity in a rather erratic manner. This 'hopping around' reflects the inherent tensions that lie within the notion of identity and reveal to what extent it is a fluid process. Therefore, in the next two chapters, I shall look more closely at how the young people who have been discussed in this chapter can also be seen in some situations to be very much tied to their cultural or social community (Chapter 5) and in other situations to be more capable of constructing themselves as *subjects* by simultaneously drawing on elements of their community identity and elements of individual identity (Chapter 6).

CHAPTER 5

Elements of Collective Identity Amongst Young People of North African Origin

Introduction

The last chapter examined some of the areas of the interviewees' lives which can be described as being governed by universal values or the 'pole of individualism' of the 'triangle of ethnicity', as developed by Michel Wieviorka.[1] The triangle of ethnicity or identity as I shall continue to refer to it, is an analytical tool which can be used to conceptualise identity construction. Chapter 4 looked at how certain interviewees expressed their desires to participate as individuals in the workplace, as consumers, and as citizens in the political process. Also included in the analysis were those interviewees who could be described as showing signs of wanting to 'escape' their communities of origin, whether the term, 'community' is defined in cultural or in socio-economic terms.

Still using the triangle of identity as our analytical tool, this chapter will look more closely at how the same interviewees can also live their experiences in more collective terms. In other words, the analysis which follows will correspond to the second pole of the triangle of ethnicity, "*le pôle communautaire*". Wieviorka defines the pole of community[2] as follows:

> Le pôle communautaire [...] peut enfermer l'acteur dans ses liens avec le pays ou la région d'origine, dans le maintien d'un type particulier de structure familiale, prendre un tour avant tout religieux. Il peut être associé à des formes de la ségrégation résidentielle, voulue ou non imposée. La communauté apporte à ses membres des réseaux de solidarité, économique, mais aussi morale. Toujours, elle

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[1] See Michel Wieviorka, *La Démocratie à l'épreuve : nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris : La Découverte, 1993).

[2] I shall use the term 'community' or community-based in order to translate *communautarisme* which should be considered as different in meaning to *communitarianism* which is the opposing 'camp' in the liberals versus communitarians debate which took place principally in North America between political philosophers such as John Rawls and Charles Taylor. See Chapter 2 for further details.

implique une subordination de l'individu au groupe, celui-ci pouvant tendre, à la limite, vers la contre-société, [...] Le communautarisme peut tendre au fondamentalisme, au sectarisme, à la fermeture de la communauté, impliquant alors non seulement la soumission à ses règles de chacun de ses membres, mais aussi des conduites exemplaires. La communauté se prend alors en charge tous les détails de sa vie quotidienne, sans rien attendre de l'ensemble sociétal plus large où elle est située, et passe éventuellement à une violence défensive, et à la limite autodestructrice, dans la mesure où elle se sent menacée...[3]

The notion of a sociology of *experience* as developed by François Dubet (see Chapter 3), like Wieviorka's triangle of identity, also conceptualises individual's actions as relating to three different but interlinked registers: a system of integration or community, a system of strategy or competition and subjectivation. Dubet's system of integration can be seen as an equivalent to Wieviorka's *pôle communautaire* since it is defined by Dubet in the following manner: "...dans la logique de l'intégration, l'acteur se définit par ses appartenances, vise à les maintenir ou à les renforcer au sein d'une société considérée comme un système d'intégration."[4] Dubet's defines "communauté" as being national, local or ethnic in character and within this "logique d'action" :

L'identité n'est que la manière dont l'acteur a intériorisé les valeurs institutionnalisées à travers des rôles. L'individu se définit et se "présente" aux autres par son appartenance, par sa position, par ce qu'il vit lui-même comme un "être" , souvent comme un héritage. [...] De ce point de vue, l'identité est vécue comme une *ascription*...[5]

However, where Dubet's model departs from Wieviorka's is that it is explicitly argued that the register of integration can apply to everyone, whereas the triangle of ethnicity focuses more exclusively on those actors who are defined in terms of ethnicity. Indeed, Dubet claims that: " Aucun de nous, aussi 'moderne', soit-il, n'échappe à cette forme d'identification à travers une filiation, un nom, le fantasme d'une tradition familiale, l'attachement à quelques valeurs si profondément enfouies qu'elles sont une 'seconde nature'."[6] If we combine Wieviorka's and Dubet's models of *communautarisme* and *logique d'intégration*, then this allows us to apply the notion of "une subordination de

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[3] Wieviorka (1993), pp.126-127.
[4] François Dubet, *Sociologie de l'expérience* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), p.111.
[5] Ibid., pp. 112-113.
[6] Ibid., p. 113.

l'individu au groupe" (Wieviorka 1993) to socio-economic factors as well as more cultural factors. Indeed, as we shall see in this chapter, the notion of belonging to a community can be articulated in terms of belonging to a particular neighbourhood or, to borrow Benedict Anderson's term once more, belonging to the 'imagined community' of the suburbs or *la banlieue*.[7] Here, a sense of belonging to a cultural or more socio-economic community can be understood in terms of "l'attachement à quelques valeurs", which is how Dubet conceptualises it. Feeling that one belongs to a community can also be about solidarity and thus Wieviorka writes about the community as a network of solidarity in both economic and moral terms.[8] Wieviorka writes about the subordination of the individual to the group. However, it is also possible and perhaps desirable to discuss the everyday lives and trajectories of young people of North African origin in Aubervilliers in terms of collective social and cultural experiences which do *not* involve pressure exerted by the group or the community on the individual (however diffuse this pressure may be). Therefore, this chapter will deal with *two* separate but closely linked dimensions of the interviewees' lives: the aspects of their experiences which can be described as being governed by the "*pôle communautaire*"/*communautariste* (including within this dimension, Dubet's notion of the interiorisation of roles) and the aspects of their experiences which can be described as being merely collective rather than *communautariste* in character. Without wishing to resort to reductionism, it could be argued that we can conceptualise *communautariste* experience as the more coercive aspect of community cohesion and collective experience as the more positive and 'free' element of community cohesion.[9]

A number of themes will be discussed in this chapter including how interviewees see and present themselves; their relationship to the country 'of origin'; language; attitudes to Islam and religiosity; attitudes towards marriage and future marriage partners. The first part of this chapter will therefore focus on a more cultural definition of

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[7] Benedict Anderson defines the nation as an "imagined political community" in *Imagined Communities: Refelctions on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), p.15.

[8] Wieviorka (1993), pp.126-127.

[9] In the article 'Culture and Identity: Contesting Constructivism', Veit Bader also questions the assumption that "...the construction of collective identities [...] refers to culture or community at all and, if so, to ethnic culture...", p. 261. See *Ethnicities*, 1.2 (2001), 251-273.

community. Part II will focus on the more socio-economic and spatial aspects of community and will therefore consider the relationships of interviewees to the banlieue, their *quartiers* and experiences of discrimination.

PART I: THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY

5.1 How Interviewees See and Present Themselves

Ten out of the forty-four interviewees (five young men and five young women) can be described as seeing or presenting themselves in terms of their cultural origins. Of course, all the interviewees acknowledge to varying degrees their 'heritage' or their ancestry. However, the ten interviewees have been 'singled out' here because they tend to refer to themselves in a rather essentialised and at times ethnicised manner.

For example Aicha (twenty-eight; care auxiliary trainee, born in Algeria; came to France at age of two; Algerian nationality only) sees herself as *"une Kabyle"*. Most of her close friends are *kabyle* and she admits that she has difficulty establishing close friendships with young people of Algerian Arab origin:

> *J'ai plus d'amis, je veux dire, j'ai plus d'amis kabyles qu'arabes... [...], et ben on est amené à fréquenter des gens qui nous ressemblent parce que bon, on a les mêmes idées, on a les mêmes points de vue et c'est vrai que les arabes... mais non, j'ai une copine en bas, c'est euh une oranaise, je la trouve adorable, [...] vraiment... mais c'est vrai que [...], elle aussi, elle, au début, elle avait, 'ah toi t'es une kabyle !'Ouais, elle avait des propos, j'ai fait 'ça suffit, moi je te respecte, tu me respectes, on a chacune nos idées...*[10]

The notion that one has to have the same 'ideas' as another individual in order to form a real friendship reveals how Aicha believes herself to be part of a community of *kabyles*. This *kabyle* identity is presented as being in opposition to Arab identity and values. This becomes apparent when Aicha talks about religious practice:

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[10] Interview with 'Aicha', 12/12/00, 14/12/00. The term *oranaise* refers to a woman who originates from the Algerian city Oran.

...on les voit maintenant partout avec leurs tenues, leurs foulards et puis leurs robes pour les hommes, aller prier, [....] plutôt des Arabes, quand je parle des Arabes, des Maghrébins en général, parce que les Berbères généralement, quand ils sont pratiquants ou croyants, ils se le gardent pour eux, c'est à la maison. C'est ce qu'il y a de différent [...] j'ai remarqué ça. Chez nous, on en fait une affaire personnelle, c'est pour soi, on va pas obliger son voisin ou son cousin à prier, ou à faire le Ramadan... [11]

Here, Aicha further distances herself from *"les Maghrébins en général"*.

Aicha also refers to her desire to learn more about her ancestry when she was at high school. With this aim in mind, she joined the *ACB – Association de culture berbère*. It would seem that at the time it was important for Aicha to feel part of a wider Berber community and culture: *"...j'étais confuse quoi...je n'arrivais pas à trouver des repères par rapport à moi,... par rapport à mes ancêtres, par rapport à mes origines."* However, her attempts to discover her 'origins' would seem to have resulted in her learning about rather idealised (and historical) notions of Berber cultural 'forms': *"... j'ai fait appel à cette association qui donnait des cours d'histoire, la musique, des peintures, des sculptures..."*[12] and it is not clear that this corresponded with her initial aims.

As regards marriage, Aicha's sense of being Algerian and of having certain values as a result is also very prevalent:

> *Depuis toute jeune, vraiment depuis toute jeune, dès que bon, on a commencé avec les garçons et tout, je me suis jamais intéressée aux personnes qui étaient différentes de mes origines. C'est toujours algérien avec qui j'arrive à...j'arrive à tomber amoureuse, [...] un Français, non, franchement, j'ai toujours refusé les, non, je peux pas, [...] j'ai déjà essayé avec un Marocain, ça marche pas ! [rire...]c'est les mentalités, c'est la mentalité, c'est euh...on a l'impression que c'est pas possible...* [13]

Aicha's insistence that the difference in mentalities constitute an absolute barrier to a successful 'mixed' relationship reveals to what extent she believes that being Kabyle or Algerian means that one is more likely to have certain values. However, as mentioned in

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

Chapter 4, Aicha also claims that she is 'anti-marriage' and that she intends to co-habit with her future partner so as to avoid experiencing a marriage similar in nature to her parents. So here, Aicha's self-definition corresponds more to a collective sense of heritage, values and identity where she wants to maintain certain links with her country and more particularly, her region 'of origin' (Kabylia). It does not wholly translate into a more sombre *communautarisme* since her rejection of marriage as an institution, reveals that she defines herself in rather individual terms as well.

Another interviewee who defines herself in ethnicised terms is Samira (twenty-four years old; *surveillante* at *Collège Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Algerian dual nationality). Once again, this mode of self-presentation comes to the fore when we discuss future marriage partners (see Section 5.5). For Samira, as for Aicha, being part of a certain "*ethnie*" suggests that one automatically has certain values. Samira also claims that she is very attached to her "*culture*" and like Aicha, she conceptualises this culture in terms of music and cuisine: "*Moi, en fait, je suis très attachée à mes origines et notamment les traditions que mes parents m'ont données quoi ou apportées et franchement, je suis très intéressée par la musique maghrébine aussi...*"[14] However, as we saw in Chapter 4, Samira also defines herself in a rather individual manner with regards to her *quartier*. Malika (twenty-five; student nurse; born in France; French-Moroccan dual nationality) also seems to conceive of "*la culture maghrébine*" in terms of culinary arts and music. Malika talks about what she would do if she were to set up her own association:

> *...j'aurais fait par rapport à la culture quand même. Enfin moi, je tiens, j'attache beaucoup d'importance à la culture maghrébine [...] transmettre la culture qu'on a apprise quoi même par rapport aux jeunes [...] la culture, qu'on a, par exemple, la cuisine, moi, personnellement, moi, j'ai pas appris grand chose au niveau de la cuisine (rire) [...] la danse orientale, j'adore ça, il y a pas mal de choses, on peut faire pas mal de choses avec les jeunes...*[15]

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[14] Interview with 'Abdel' and 'Samira', 16/11/00.
[15] Interview with 'Malika' and 'Nacira' 21/11/00.

Other interviewees who tend to present themselves in a rather ethnicised mode are Khadija, Nadia, Waleed and Mouloud. These interviewees are all of Berber origin. Khadija (seventeen; pupil in *terminale* ES, *Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in Morocco; brought to France at age of three, about to obtain French nationality) and Nadia (eighteen; pupil in *terminale ES, Lycée Pablo Picasso;* born in France; dual French-Algerian nationality) are in the same class and are close friends. When interviewed together, they are both keen to present themselves as Moroccan Berbers. Khadija who seems, at least in the first half of the interview to be the dominant personality, presents hers and Nadia's identity in a sort of 'united front' manner: "... *nous, on est des Shlehs...* "[16] Waleed (nineteen; Geography *D.E.U.G.* student, *Université Paris IV - Sorbonne*; born in France; French-Moroccan dual nationality) is Nadia's older brother and on our first meeting at his *quartier*'s *maison de jeunes*, there are a number of other young men present, notably a young man of Algerian Kabyle origin. Waleed makes a point of differentiating himself, as a Moroccan Berber, from Algerian Berbers: "*Je suis shleh, faut pas confondre!*"[17] Although this comment was made in a context of banter between the young men at the *maison de jeunes*, it shows to what extent one's 'origins' become not only a source of competition and pride but a manner of putting down others; that is, those who do not 'belong' to the same community of '*shlehs*'. It is interesting to contrast Khadija, Nadia and Waleed's self-perception here with their relationship to language where they adopt a very individualist approach (see Chapter 4. 6). In addition, Waleed's insistence that one should not forget that he is *shleh* as opposed to *kabyle*, contrasts with his criticism of the notion of cultural origins in Chapter 4 (see 4.5.i.). Mouloud (seventeen; pupil in *terminale ES, Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in Algeria; arrived in France at age of three) is also of Berber origin, but in his case he is originally from the Kabylia region of Algeria. The manner in which Mouloud introduces himself is interesting because he at first seems to present himself using the discourse of the dominant group: "*D'accord alors moi, je m'appelle Mouloud. J'ai dix-sept ans et je suis d'origine maghrébine...*" Mouloud then seems to realise that he has reproduced the

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[16] Interview with 'Khadija' and 'Nadia', 13/03/01. '*Shleh*' is the expression used to describe Moroccan people of Berber origin, as opposed to Moroccan Arabs and as opposed to Algerian Berbers who are generally referred to as *kabyles* since they originate from the Kabylia region of Algeria.

[17] This comment was made by 'Waleed' during our first meeting in February 2001.

dominant terms (i.e. "*d'origine maghrébine*") and immediately 'corrects' himself: "*en fait je suis kabyle...*"[18] So it would seem that for Mouloud, the generic term, "*d'origine maghrébine*" is of little personal significance and he prefers to present himself in a more regional and ethnicised manner.

Although the interviewees discussed above tend to present themselves as though they belonged to a rather essentialised 'imagined community' which governs one's 'mentality' and approach to life, there does seem to be an element of choice in their desire to present themselves as members of such a community. However, some other interviewees, notably the young men, would seem to be assigned their sense of identity in a more passive and negative manner. For example, Mahmoud (nineteen; *terminale bac pro mécanique-auto, Lycée professionnel Van Gogh*; born in Paris; French-Algerian dual nationality) claims:

> *Je me vois par rapport à comment on me juge, comme un Arabe. On me jugerait comme un Français, je me verrais comme un Français. Je me vois par rapport à comment on me juge, je sais que je suis un Arabe. Les gens me voient comme un Arabe, je suis arabe, je suis fier de l'être.*[19]

Mahmoud's sense of identity is passive and imposed by what he perceives to be the gaze of the dominant group. He tries to save face in front of his peers and fellow interviewees by turning his stigmatised sense of identity into a more positive experience by claiming hastily that in any case, he is proud to be Arab.[20] Nevertheless, it is clear that Mahmoud's sense of self is dictated to a significant extent by his experience of rejection. His predicament is one of alienation, which Dubet defines as follows: "... privation de sens, comme une dépossession de l'autonomie par l'effet de la domination réduisant les acteurs

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[18] Interview with 'Hicham' and 'Mouloud', 16/11/00.

[19] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.

[20] Erving Goffman writes about the desire of the stigmatised individual to reverse their 'misfortune' by way of a number of possible strategies, one of which, is the refusal to remain discrete in a society which rejects and excludes them: "Instead of cowering, the stigmatized individual may attempt to approach mixed contacts with hostile bravado, ..." See Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 29. Mahmoud's assertion that he is proud to be an Arab anyway illustrates Goffman's notion of "hostile bravado". Here the expression "mixed contacts" refers to the interaction between 'normals' (non-stigmatised individuals) as Goffman calls them, and stigmatised individuals.

à n'être que [...] les agents d'intérêts limités imposés [...] par les dominants ou par le 'système'." He also defines alienation as "...la privation de la capacité d'être sujet."[21]

Whereas Mahmoud highlights his socially-imposed sense of identity, Mohamed (sixteen; pupil in *première ES Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Moroccan; dual nationality; Berber origin; brother of Waleed and Nadia) highlights an inherited sense of identity and thus talks about the insignificance of being born and growing up in France: "...*je suis plutôt marocain... oui parce que mes parents, eux, ils sont nés au Maroc, tout ça, il y a que moi qui est né ici mais je suis marocain...*"[22] In fact all of Mohamed's siblings (he is the third of five children) were born in France, yet what he suggests when he points out that he was the only one born in France, is that his own experience is insignificant in relation to family heritage and the notion of ancestry. And yet, as we saw in Chapter 4, Mohamed adopts an individual, rather than a community approach to learning Berber, in the same manner as Nadia, Khadija and Waleed (4.6).

Not only can an individual's sense of identity be imposed on them by the dominant group that is, mainstream French society, it can also be imposed on them by their own community in an attempt to maintain group unity. This becomes apparent in some of the group interview situations. For example, Aziz (nineteen; not attending school; born in France; French-Algerian dual nationality) seems to feel more 'French' than Algerian. However, Aziz's true feelings would appear to be stifled somewhat by his peers. Aziz took part in a group interview and there were three other interviewees of North African origin who participated. Two of his fellow interviewees were also his friends and it is clear that Aziz came under a certain amount of pressure from his peers to respond in a certain way. It is for instance, significant that when asked how they would describe themselves in terms of their origins, Aziz responds in the following way: "*Quoi*

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[21] François Dubet (1994), p.131 and p.133. Danièle Joly also refers to the paradoxical stances of young people of Caribbean origin in Birmingham and the issue of self-definition: "L'interaction entre catégorisation, imposée par autrui, et auto-définition donne lieu à des mécanismes que l'on peut départager en deux processus principaux : d'une part l'aliénation, d'autre part la résistance." See Danièle Joly, 'Ethnicité et violence chez les jeunes antillais: une intervention sociologique à Birmingham', *Cahiers internationaux de Sociologie*, 105 (1998), 383-413, (p. 399).
[22] Interview with 'Mohamed', 30/04/01.

qu'il arrive, algérien, algérien ... parce que si je dis je suis français les deux vont me tomber dessus!"[23]

How interviewees define themselves is of course linked to the relationship they have with their parents' country of origin. The next section will therefore consider this theme.

5.2 Relationship of Interviewees to their Parents' Country of Origin[24]

Four 'models' emerge as regards the relationship of interviewees to their or their parents' country of origin. Nine interviewees out of the sample of forty-four young people can be described as constructing their relationship to their parents' country of origin in accordance with the community model as represented by the *"pôle communautaire"* of the triangle of identity. Gender seems to have a tangible effect on the relationships interviewees construct with their parents' country of origin in that the young men in the sample present themselves as more closely tied to their parent's countries than the young women. Out of the nine interviewees, only two young women can be described as having a particularly strong or community-defined relationship with their parents' countries.

(i) Holidays

Leila (seventeen; *première littéraire, Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Algerian dual nationality) would appear to have a very strong bond to Algeria although she was born and brought up in Aubervilliers and would prefer her children to be surrounded by *"des Français"* rather than *'des banlieusards'*, thus revealing a lack of confidence in immigrant-origin populations (see 4.4.i). The strength of her attachment governs her views on her future marriage partner since she claims that she would prefer to marry a French man of Algerian origin rather than a Tunisian or a Moroccan for fear of loosening her link with Algeria:

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[23] Interview with 'Aziz', 'Ibtisam', 'Majdi' and 'Yasser', 17/09/01.
[24] As regards this area of enquiry, a direct question about the interviewee's relationship to their parents' country of origin was not posed. Rather, this question was normally addressed by asking about the frequency, duration and purpose of visits to the Maghreb.

...un Tunisien, c'est un musulman na na na mais arrivé les vacances, ils descendent où? En Tunisie? En Algérie? Et la maison, on la fabrique où ? En Algérie ? En Tunisie ? Voilà, et c'est un problème, c'est vrai [...] si pendant les vacances, on pourrait jamais m'enlever d'Algérie [...] c'est mon pays, j'adore ça, les vacances, faut que je les passe en Algérie, donc si je me marie avec un Tunisien, faut que j'aille en Tunisie et pas en Algérie, faut que je fabrique ma maison en Tunisie et pas en Algérie et ça, non, je pense que je supporterai pas donc...[25]

Not only does Leila claim that Algeria is her country, she also plans to reproduce the same residential pattern as her parents. Most immigrants who emigrated to France from North Africa build a house back in the 'bled' where they spend holidays and their prospective retirement.[26] Many immigrants never actually return permanently to the country of origin, perpetuating an *'aller-retour'* relationship instead. Despite the fact that Leila was born and grew up in France, she seems to see it as simply a matter of course, that she too will build her own house in the 'bled', just as her *primo-arrivants* parents have done.[27]

Nabila (seventeen; *première ES, Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Moroccan dual nationality) is another interviewee who sees her relationship with her parents' country as a stable given. She does not go as far as Leila in her plans to reproduce the *primo arrivant* residential pattern, yet when asked about her visits to Morocco her reply: *"Ouais! Ben on va au bled quoi!"*[28] would seem to indicate that for Nabila, the annual family visits to Morocco are an unquestionable and obvious aspect of the descendant of immigrants' lives.

· Both Leila and Nabila's comments reveal a strong degree of attachment towards Algeria and Morocco yet they remain within the holidays paradigm, that is, the country of origin is viewed in terms of the place one visits during the holidays.

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[25] Interview with 'Leila', 15/05/01.

[26] The term *'bled'* comes from the Arabic 'belad', literally meaning country. It is used by immigrants of North African origin and their descendants to refer to their countries or regions of origin. It has also become commonly used in informal or spoken French (by non *arabophones*) to refer to small towns and villages in non-Arab countries, such as France.

[27] The term *primo-arrivant* refers to the first 'generation' of immigrants, i.e. those who emigrate as adults to France.

[28] Interview with 'Bintou', 'Karine', 'Nabila', Nour', 'Salikha', 19/10/00.

(ii) The Geographical Model

The second way in which interviewees present their relationship to their parents' country is by claiming that they are 'from' a certain country, region or town, regardless of whether they have lived there or not. For example, Nasser (nineteen; recently dropped out of a *baccalauréat professionnel* programme; born in Algiers; brought to France at age of one; Algerian; has requested French nationality) refuses to re-appropriate the notion of *l'origine*, since, when I ask him about this, he simply replies: "*Je suis d'Algérie, d'Alger, la capitale...*"[29] Although it could be claimed that Nasser responded in this way because indeed, he *is* officially an Algerian citizen, the fact that he focuses on his origins in a geographical sense, naming the city of his birth-place, highlights a strong degree of attachment to Algeria. In addition, unlike, Nasser, most other interviewees, even those who were not born in France, generally tend to claim that they are somehow of essence Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian but that they are *from* France.

Like Nasser, Abdel (twenty-six; *maîtrise* student in Education at *Université de Paris VIII*; part-time *surveillant* at *Collège Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French of Algerian origin) presents himself as coming from Algeria, despite the fact that he was neither born there, nor has been back for the last four years: "*...je suis d'Alger. Moi, comme moi j'habite à Alger, je suis entre Alger et la Grande Kabylie...*"[30] He goes even further than Nasser by claiming that he actually *lives* in Algiers. This of course refers to his holidays in Algeria yet these rather infrequent visits of a duration of two months seem to be elevated to permanent residence.

(iii) Reproduction of Dominant Discourse

Some interviewees claim that their parents' countries are also *their* countries, and generally make the following type of statement: "*c'est mon pays, je me sens chez moi là-bas.*" However, although the degree of attachment can thus be said to be substantial, it would appear that in many cases, this type of statement does stem from some element of

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[29] Interview with 'Nasser', 06/03/01.
[30] Interview with 'Abdel' and 'Samira', 16/11/00.

positive or subjective stance. This is not the case for all respondents in the sample. For instance, Mouloud claims that he has not been back to Algeria since being brought to France by his parents at the age of three. He adds that he does not want to return: *"Je trouve pas que c'est une bonne idée parce que je connais personne là-bas et...je sais pas...ça m'intéresse pas de retourner là-bas."*[31] Despite his rejection of Algeria, he still refers to it as 'his country': *"..je suis jamais reparti dans mon pays."*[32] It is possible that Mouloud refers to Algeria as "mon pays" because of the interview situation and his knowledge that I am carrying out a qualitative study of young people of North African origin. In one sense, then, it is arguable that the interview situation and the dynamics of the interviewing process, which involves, in this case, an older interviewer and a teenage interviewee, seem to reproduce, albeit on a more micro level, dominant, mainstream French society discourse regarding the target group. Young people of North African origin can be encouraged to continue to see themselves as immigrants or as *'jeunes immigrés'* or *'jeunes étrangers'* (due to media discourse, experiences of discrimination etc.). As a result, some tend to reproduce within themselves, the relationship their *primo arrivant* parents have with Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia by claiming that they are *from* these countries, despite the fact that their lives are in France. In this sense, it is possible to understand Mouloud's reflex statement as an example of alienation, (albeit it, in a rather moderate form) because he seems to be partially deprived of his capacity to become a subject and thus define himself in a more autonomous manner.

(iv) Migration

The fourth 'model' which reflects the attitudes of some of the interviewees, can be described as being more extreme since it suggests a greater reproduction of the parents' *trajectories*. Thus the four interviewees concerned who were all born and brought up in Seine-Saint-Denis all claim that they would like to go back and live or retire to their parents' countries. Mahmoud is effectively part of the 'third generation'. He nevertheless presents himself as a *primo arrivant* immigrant. He evokes his plans to build a house in Algeria so that he can live there later in life: *"... c'est le rêve des immigrés ça... de*

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[31] Interview with 'Hicham' and 'Mouloud', 16/11/00.
[32] Ibid.

repartir, faire construire une maison, une fois qu'ils vieillissent, ils veulent retourner dans leurs pays, c'est ce que tout le monde fait, c'est ce que nous ferons aussi... "[33]

As mentioned above, Mohamed and Waleed are brothers. They were interviewed on different dates. Both interviewees however, expressed their desire to 'return' to Morocco. Mohamed simply wants to retire to Morocco: "...*je préfère passer ma retraite là-bas, je sais pas ce que je ferais ici. Je sais pas, je préfère retourner voir ma famille là-bas...*"[34] Waleed goes a step further when he talks about his plans to set up a business in Agadir:

> *... le futur, moi, d'ailleurs, je pense faire ça plus tard...dans la même région, chez moi [...] quand j'aurais assez d'argent, quand j'aurais plus besoin, parce que là-bas, dès que j'ai assez d'argent quoi, je serai tranquille quoi. Mes parents, ils comptent après, dès que mon père il est à la retraite, il va lui aussi... En fait moi, je vois mon avenir là-bas ; nous, la majorité des Shlehs, les Berbères, ils voient leur avenir là-bas, [....] j'espère plutôt, monter une affaire là-bas ou un truc comme ça qui sera rentable quoi... c'est une belle ville, Agadir... ; je me sens mieux là-bas ; j'aime bien, comment dire, il y a toute ma famille, il y a tout là-bas, j'aime bien l'ambiance, il fait toujours beau... ça serait bien quoi.*[35]

In a similar fashion to Waleed, Fouad (thirty-one; unemployed volunteer in local association; born in France; French-Algerian nationality) would like to establish his own business in Algeria. He dreams of leaving France and setting up a music production company:

> *Je vois vraiment pas mon avenir ici. Je vois plus mon avenir là-bas [...] je me vois pas faire de très grandes choses en France...je me vois plus là-bas, et vivre là-bas [...] j'ai connu personnellement l'Algérie en quatre-vingt treize, pour des enterrements et personnellement, je suis tombé complètement amoureux de ce pays, j'ai découvert ma famille que je connaissais pas parce qu'ils sont jamais venus en France et j'ai été sous le choc, j'ai raté beaucoup de choses, je me suis en voulu à mort et j'en ai voulu surtout à mes frères et sœurs qui me disaient à chaque fois, 'on a galéré, c'est dégueulasse et tout' [...] et depuis j'ai qu'une*

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[33] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.
[34] Interview with 'Mohamed', 30/04/01.
[35] Interview with 'Waleed', 06/02/01, 19/02/01, 23/02/01.

seule chose en tête, c'est de retourner vraiment voyager dans tout le pays [...]
Moi, personnellement, l'identité elle est vraiment ancrée [là-bas].[36]

Fouad's 'falling in love' with Algeria is an attempt to turn his stigmatised identity and experience of discrimination into something which allows him to value himself. This creativity could be a glimmer of subjectivation. However, it can be argued that instead, Fouad's relationship with Algeria corresponds to the *"pôle communautaire"* of the triangle of identity because it leads him to reject everything which is French (*"personnellement, j'en ai rien à foutre de tout ce qui est d'ordre français"*[37]) and in this sense, his attitude can be seen as an *'enfermement'* or a closing in on himself. Yet, we saw in Chapter 4, how Fouad adopts a very individual approach to Islam (4.8).

5.3 Language

Language, that is, the mother tongues spoken by the interviewees' parents seems to be the site of collective cultural experience for nine of the young people in the sample (seven women and two men). Once again, the comments or attitudes of these interviewees can be described according to more than one 'model'. With regard to language, there are two types of attitude which dominate. First what can be called the group unity model and secondly, what we can call the heritage model.

(i) Group Unity

Salima (twenty-six; *aide-éducatrice, Collège Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Algerian dual nationality) and 'Lamia' (twenty-five, *aide-éducatrice, Collège Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Moroccan dual nationality) are colleagues and friends. Although the Arabic spoken in Algeria and Morocco differs slightly in terms of accent and various words, Salima and Lamia speak to each other in Arabic at work. Communicating to each other in Arabic seems to acquire an amusing, almost mischievous quality and it plays a significant role in the proximity of the women's relationship with each other, to such an extent that it is sometimes used to exclude other colleagues such as 'Kévin', a *surveillant* of French origin. Salima and Lamia were

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[36] Interview with 'Fouad' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01.
[37] Ibid.

interviewed together and when asked if they speak Arabic to their parents, Salima responds as follows: *"Déjà nous toutes les deux."* Lamia explains: *"C'est parce qu'on a envie... des fois c'est pour cacher, d'autres fois c'est pour rire, c'est tout! (rires)."* The two women's use of Arabic also becomes a tool in their relationship with Kévin. Salima and Lamia claim that they are currently teaching Kévin some Arabic words. Kévin was present during the interview since it was carried out in the *surveillant's* and *aide-éducateur's* office and his presence seemed to bother Lamia in particular who exclaims: *"Pourquoi il veut participer? Il est dégoûté parce qu'il est français."*[38] So their use of Arabic seems to be a way in which they can include Kévin by teaching him a few words as well as a manner by which they can exclude him and thereby maintain group unity because as they point out, they sometimes speak Arabic so that others, such as Kévin, will not understand.

Abdel is Salima's and Lamia's colleague. He often garnishes his speech with Arabic or Berber words (the Arabic words often being expressions of a religious nature). This becomes particularly noticeable when the colleagues eat lunch together in the *collège* canteen. Abdel's constant use of words and phrases in Arabic and Berber establishes group unity amongst the colleagues and excludes those who are unfamiliar with such expressions.

For some interviewees, language is not only a source of shared experience; it is also a source of hilarity. Fawzia (seventeen; *première ES*, *Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Algerian dual nationality) talks about her use of Berber: *"... on rigole bien entre mes cousines. Des fois on parle entre nous quoi, comme ça, avec notre accent..."*[39] Her amusement and the sense of commonality with her cousins through speaking Berber outside of the habitual context of the family gatherings in the *'bled'*, enables Fawzia to feel part of a linguistic group, in a similar manner to Salima and Lamia.

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[38] All remarks from interview with 'Lamia' and 'Salima', 14/11/00.
[39] Interview with 'Fawzia', 18/04/01.

The remaining interviewees in the 'group unity' model are Nabila, Malika and Nacira (for discussion of Nabila, see Chapter 6). Whereas Salima's, Lamia's, Abdel's and Fawzia's use of Arabic and Berber allows them to feel part of an imagined or real community, throughout the interview with Malika and Nacira (twenty-six; student nurse; born in Algeria; brought to France at age of one; French-Algerian dual nationality), there seems to be an element of competition between the two women. This competitiveness becomes evident when I ask the women whether they are able to speak Arabic; to give a indication of their levels of fluency and how/if they use the language. Malika responds first, claiming that she can get by and that since her mother speaks French there has always been tendency to use French exclusively at home. Nacira responds by explaining at some length that she mostly spoke *algérois* when she was young but that as her younger siblings grew up the family began to increasingly mix Arabic and French.[40] She discusses the classical Arabic lessons she took at an association in her *cité* in Nanterre from the age of ten until she sat her baccalaureate in Arabic. This seems to galvanise Malika into adding to her initial, rather standardised answer, despite my attempts to proceed with other matters:

> *Moi aussi, [....] j'en ai pris des cours aussi enfin, juste à côté de chez moi, il y a un centre islamique, une mosquée où on prenait des cours de Coran mais très jeune quoi. On a eu plusieurs profs qui venaient du Maroc qui apprenaient le Coran à partir du collège...*[41]

(ii) Heritage

The second model of behaviour can be called the heritage model because firstly it refers to the interviewees' strong emotional links with their parents' (extended) family and secondly, because their use of the language seems to inform their sense of identity and belonging to a particular country. Hala (eighteen; *terminale ES, Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in France; dual French-Tunisian nationality) talks about her motivations to enrol in Arabic lessons in a Tunisian association:

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[40] The term *algérois* refers to the Arabic which is spoken in Algeria.
[41] Interview with 'Malika' and 'Nacira', 21/11/00.

Parce qu'à l'origine, j'aime beaucoup parler les langues. J'aime beaucoup, que ce soit l'anglais, l'allemand. [...] là j'ai commencé espagnol, pendant un an, j'ai fait du japonais mais c'était dur et franchement je me suis dit, pourquoi je prendrais des langues et parler pas la mienne quoi ? Donc j'ai commencé à prendre celle-là et c'est aussi pour pouvoir parler parce que j'y vais tous les ans en Tunisie. Quand j'arrive là-bas, je sais pas leur parler. C'est un peu la honte quoi.[42]

Hala decided to learn Arabic formally so as to be able to establish closer links with her extended family in Tunisia and save face for her parents since she feels that her inability to communicate effectively with her parents' family in Tunisia is a source of 'shame'.

Fouad is one of the few interviewees who consciously articulates the link between his use of his parents' language and his sense of identity. For him, his use of Arabic at home has played a large part in this process:

Un truc qui a joué beaucoup dans mon identité en disant que je suis algérien à cent pour cent, c'est-à-dire, à l'extérieur je parle français maintenant mais chez moi, une fois j'ai mis la clé dans la porte, le français est interdit. Il est pas interdit mais mes parents ne sachant pas parler le français [...] je parle avec un sale accent mais couramment. Ça joue beaucoup dans mon identité. À la maison, c'est vraiment algérois, algérois. Aucun problème pour les voyages au bled...[43]

With the young women outweighing the men, gender would seem to have a tangible effect on the ways in which interviewees construct their relationships with their parents' language. The young women were generally more likely to want to develop their answers in greater detail than the young men. In comparison to Islam, language seems to be a slightly less salient feature of collective experience and discourse amongst young people of North African origin. Not only is Islam a significant element in many of the individual's own construction of identity on a personal level, it is also of significance on a group or community level and is part of many of the interactions between the young men and women.

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[42] Interview with 'Hala' and 'Mona', 18/05/01.
[43] Interview with 'Fouad' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01.

5.4 Islam as a Cultural Community

Durkheim defined religion as a "set of beliefs and practices, relating to the sacred, which create social bonds between individuals."[44] In his *Essays on Religion*, Georg Simmel discusses the Latin root of the word religion, from *religare*, which literally means to tie back together that which has been "torn asunder."[45] This section will look more closely at the relationships of interviewees to Islam. Since this chapter is concerned with the *'communautaire'* pole of the triangle of identity, I will focus on the relationship between Islam, community and group unity. It is for this reason that the analysis and discussion will also concentrate on the notion of the subordination of the individual to the group and the instances when this occurs. As regards Islam, the following question was generally formulated: *"Par rapport à la religion/à l'islam, est-ce que vous êtes croyant(e)/pratiquant(e) et qu'est-ce que ça veut dire pour toi/vous, pratiquer?"* I also asked about religious practice and degree of observance within the wider family – i.e. parents and siblings. In the same manner as for language, two models dominate in the interviewees' responses: group unity and obligation. Several interviewees' responses and reactions to questions about Islam and their own religious practice expressed ideas which would indicate that they themselves are subordinated as individuals to the group (where the group is represented by their religious peers) because as François Dubet points out, they have simply interiorised certain roles and codes of conduct with regards to religion.[46] Equally, some respondents reacted in a way which indicated that they themselves try to ensure group unity or a uniformity of ideas and of practice. In other words, some interviewees are the 'subordinated' whilst others are the 'subordinators'. In all, the group unity and obligation models concern thirteen respondents.

(i) Group Unity

Salima can de described as being a subordinator or insurer of group unity in terms of how she and Lamia define themselves religiously. I broach the topic as follows: *"Est-ce qu'on*

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[44] Bryan Turner, *Religion and Social Theory* (London: Sage, 1983) cites Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Collier Books, 1961) in *Social and Cultural Forms of Modernity*, ed. by Robert Bocock and Kenneth Thompson, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), p.322.
[45] Georg Simmel, *Essays on Religion* edited and translated by Horst Jürgen Helle in collaboration with Ludwig Nieder, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. xii.
[46] See Dubet (1994), p. 112 re. the interiorisation of values and roles.

peut parler un petit peu de la religion, si vous êtes pratiquantes ?" Lamia is the first to respond : *"Croyante, oui. Pratiquantes euh..."* Salima interjects: *"On suit quand même !"* At this point Lamia seems to realise her 'mistake' and tries to rectify it by providing the sort of response required by Salima: *"Oui, si quand même!"* Salima then takes the liberty of describing how she and Lamia practice, which rites they observe and don't observe: *"... nous, on fait le Ramadan... bon, on mange pas de porc... ouais voilà, en gros, on suit quand même..."*, to which Lamia hastily adds: *"Si si on suit mais moi je parlais de la prière quoi."*[47]

Abdel is also an insurer of group 'protocol' with regards to Christmas. One lunchtime, when the group of colleagues (*surveillants, aides-éducateurs*) are eating together in the *collège* canteen, the subject of birthdays and Christmas is broached. Abdel comments that Muslims do not celebrate birthdays; that birthday celebrations are only appropriate for young children. Salima, who is the mother of a baby boy, becomes alarmed by Abdel's remark and insists that birthdays are governed by tradition rather than religion and that it is only natural to celebrate the birth of a child. She appears to be searching for reassurance from the group that she is not doing anything '*haram*' - support, which she receives from her ally, Lamia who then informs Abdel that he will think differently when he has his own children.[48] The discussion then proceeds to the subject of Christmas and the women (Lamia, Salima and Samira) become the guarantors of group unity, whilst Abdel becomes the individual to be 'disciplined'. The lunchtime discussion acquires a confessional quality with Abdel 'confessing' that his father had bought a Christmas tree for his younger brother. Salima and her supporters Lamia and Samira thus seize on the opportunity to gain the moral high-ground by claiming that whilst it may be acceptable to hang a few Christmas decorations around the house, since after all, Christmas has become just as commercialised and secularised as Halloween, actually putting up a Christmas tree is excessive. This allows Salima to regain face in front of the rest of the group for being told by Abdel that Muslims should not celebrate birthdays. This canteen discussion sheds light on the notion of a power dynamic between

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[47] All quotes from interview with 'Lamia' and 'Salima', 14/11/00.
[48] The Arabic word '*haram*' literally means, that which is forbidden or sinful in an Islamic context. For example, for a Muslim, consuming pork or alcohol is '*haram*'.

the individuals. This dynamic is continually shifting in a spirit of competition which is shown by the fact that initially Abdel seems to be the enforcer of religious protocol but then rapidly loses his position to Salima who is backed up by Lamia and Samira. Although the group seems to be divided because of this element of competition, the ultimate aim of these discussions is to maintain some sort of homogeneity of beliefs and practices, to reassure the individuals that they all belong to some sort of community. Indeed, Georg Simmel observed a link between group unity and religion:

> ... as far as the conscious mind is concerned, unity often develops not from within but through the practical needs of the group to assert itself, and largely through the idea – proved in practical deeds more powerfully than by any prevailing authority – that this complex of beings is a unified group.[49]

Yasser (who in Chapter 4 was shown to subscribe to the pole of individualism in terms of his participation in local issues – 4.2) also tries to assert himself as the *communautaire* guarantor of group unity, along with fellow interviewee, Majdi. They both apply pressure on their peer and fellow interviewee, Aziz, who claims that Muslims should not feel obliged to pray five times a day. Aziz does not intend to belittle one of the five pillars of Islam by this statement.[50] Rather, he is arguing that a decision to pray should result from a desire to do so on the individual's part so as to avoid a 'mechanical' approach to Islam. However, his peers, Majdi (nineteen, *terminale BEP carrosserie, Lycée Van Gogh*; born in Algeria; brought to France at age of six; dual nationality) and Yasser (eighteen; *terminale BEP carrosserie, Lycée Van Gogh*; born in Algeria; brought to France at age of ten; Algerian nationality only) become angered and pounce on Aziz's unorthodox response: "*Mais normalement, dès que t'es musulman...*" (Yasser); "*... un musulman est obligé de faire la prière....*"(Majdi). Majdi and Yasser thus attempt to restore some sort of homogeneity and bring Aziz 'back into line.' They refuse entirely to engage with Aziz's concern for religiosity rather than religion, wishing instead to impose

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[49] Simmel (1997), p.173.
[50] The five 'pillars' of Islam are: faith; prayer five times daily; fasting during holy month of Ramadan; almsgiving or *Zakat* and pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca (the *Hajj*). See *Understanding Islam and the Muslims* (Washington D.C.: The Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 1989).

their view that Islam is about duty and roles above all, hence Majdi's insistence on the centrality of obligation.[51]

The most extensive and heated discussion about Islam developed during a group interview with Mahmoud, Fayçal and Razak - three pupils at the local *lycée professionnel Van Gogh*. Mahmoud is of Algerian origin, Fayçal of Tunisian origin and Razak is of Mauritian origin. From the outset, it became clear that Mahmoud and Fayçal wanted to distance themselves from Razak and likewise, Razak tried to distance himself and his experience from the other two. Razak's views on religion are somewhat unconventional compared to Mahmoud and Fayçal's. This departure from the norm by Razak (twenty years old; *bac pro mécanique-auto*; born in Paris; French-Mauritian dual nationality) is tantamount to blasphemy for Mahmoud and Fayçal (nineteen; *bac pro mécanique-auto*; born in France; French-Tunisian dual nationality) who try to impose some sense of order and homogeneity on the interview group. The source of the argument is two-fold. First of all, Razak claims that he would not want a future non-Muslim marriage partner to convert to Islam simply because she was marrying him. He argues that her conversion should stem from her own personal conviction. Mahmoud becomes angered by this stance: "*Une Française, elle est pas née dans la religion musulmane. Pourquoi tu veux qu'elle devienne musulmane ? Elle a pas eu ça dans sa famille. Personne lui a appris... [...] c'est pas dans sa famille....*" Mahmoud's reaction reflects his belief that religion is something one simply inherits. Razak perturbs Mahmoud and Fayçal further by claiming that he has read the Bible, the Koran and the Torah and that he has come to the decision that the Koran is the most just of all three. This apparent subjectivity on Razak's behalf provokes Mahmoud and Fayçal. Mahmoud addresses Razak:

> *Toi, t'es musulman grâce à tes parents! Tes parents t'apprennent d'être musulman, tu seras musulman... Moi je suis issu des musulmans. J'accepte et j'ai pas envie de choisir [...] Un Français quand il est né, il est chrétien ou non? Il est né chrétien, t'es d'accord avec moi ? ... C'est une question culturelle.[52]*

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[51] Interview with 'Aziz', 'Ibtisam', 'Majdi' and 'Yasser', 17/09/01.
[52] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.

Fayçal also criticizes Razak's ideas : *"Qu'est-ce que t'en sais ce qui juste ou pas juste ?[...] Ouais ben tu joues avec la religion. Toi, tu crois c'est le loto. Nous, ça y est, moi, je suis musulman, j'ai pas envie de changer..."*[53] Mahmoud's and Fayçal's reactions place them firmly within the a more *communautariste* understanding of Islam, where religion as opposed to religiosity is favoured and thus where the homogeneity of the group and group practice is of paramount importance. Razak's ideas present a threat to their position and therefore must be challenged and preferably neutralised.

Thus far the interviewees being discussed have been the subordinators, or the group unity guarantors. Few admit to feeling obliged to behave in a certain way. However, Touran for example, (twenty-one; *D.E.U.G.* sports science student, *Université Paris XIII*, born in Algeria - Kabylia; brought to France at age of eight; Algerian nationality only; French nationality request being processed) who also featured in Chapter 4 because of his individually-conceived social and political demands (4.1) talks about the latent pressure young people of North African origin can become subject to with regard to fasting during Ramadan. Indeed, Ramadan is a rather public aspect of Islam and is thus more subject to group pressure. Touran remarks: *"Le regard de l'autre. S'il y en un qui fait pas, il va dire 'oh là là, qu'est-ce qu'ils vont penser de moi ?"*[54] Fayçal may try to be an enforcer where Razak is concerned but he is also one of the subordinated as regards attending the local mosque: *"C'est les vendredis dans ma cité. Il y a une mosquée en bas du bâtiment et c'est eux qui viennent à chaque fois nous chercher dans les halls... je vais pas de mon plein gré."*[55]

(ii) Obligation

The second 'model' which corresponds to the interviewees' various attitudes with regards to religion and religious practice can be referred to as the obligation model since the young people concerned by this pattern tend to view being a Muslim in terms of duty and heritage.[56] The belief that one is automatically Muslim because of one's heritage also

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Interview with 'Touran', 22/03/01.
[55] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.
[56] It would of course be possible to include Fayçal and Mahmoud in this category. See *(i) Group Unity*.

seems to engender passivity with regard to observing the five pillars of Islam. That is, those interviewees who do not observe *all* five pillars of Islam, (this is in fact the case for the vast majority, with only a minority of the sample regularly praying five times a day *as well as* fasting, for example) state that they hope that somehow a more dedicated approach to their faith will develop. For example, Abdel Majid (twenty; *BTS* accountancy student, *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*; born in France; French-Algerian dual nationality) who, as we saw in Chapter 4, subscribes to the pole of individualism as far as his social, political demands and self-perception are concerned (4.1; 4.5.i), reveals a rather *communautaire* attitude to Islam in the following statement:

> ... *moi, j'essaie aussi, faire la prière régulièrement [...] bon je suis pas dans le droit chemin. Peut-être je fais des petites erreurs mais j'espère que Dieu ne me punira pas tout ça. Maintenant je fais la prière et j'essaie de rester [....] par la suite, j'espère inch'allah comme on dit quand je connais très bien le Coran et tout, là rester droit...*[57]

The notion of hoping that somehow, as if by divine intervention, one shall be galvanised into practising more fully is also a feature of Ahmed's (twenty-two; *BTS* accountancy student, *Cité scolaire Pablo* Picasso; born in France; lived in Tunisia between ages of four and fifteen; Tunisian nationality) interpretation of religious practice, since he adds to the group discussion on the topic in a similar manner to his peer and fellow interviewee: "*Moi, croyant, oui, pratiquant, non, mais j'espère pratiquer bientôt.*"[58]

The notion of duty and obligation leads some interviewees to view Islam as a set of practices. They focus therefore less on the *state* of being a Muslim, but rather on the institution of formal religion.[59] Tayeb (twenty-two; *BTS* accountancy student, *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*; born in Algeria – Kabylia; brought to France age nine; Algerian nationality ; French nationality request being processed), who fasts during Ramadan but does not pray, reflects on prayer as one of the five pillars of Islam:

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[57] Interview with 'Abdel Majid', 'Ahmed' and 'Maliha', 22/05/01.
[58] Ibid. See also Mouloud's reaction as compared to Hicham's in Chapter 4 (4.8) regarding religious faith and practice. Mouloud's stance is similar to Ahmed's.
[59] Simmel, 1997, p.xiii distinguishes between religion and religiosity, which can be understood as personal faith.

Oui le ramadan, je le fais mais je fais pas la prière... Oui, voilà... il faudrait faire la prière en plus quoi, et la prière on peut pas la faire quand on sort en boîte, quand on est jeune, quand on essaie de profiter. C'est pour ça que je la fais pas, peut-être plus tard, j'espère d'ailleurs, enfin plus tard... de toute façon, dans la religion musulmane, la prière elle est obligatoire donc on est obligé de la faire pour être un musulman pratiquant.[60]

The notion of duty can be transmitted to the interviewees by their peers as well as by their parents, as Zina's (eighteen; *terminale* ES, *Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in France ; Algerian - Kabyle origin) comments reveal : "*... mais personnellement, je compte la faire quoi [la prière], mais ils [les parents] veulent vraiment que je respecte un minimum quoi, voilà quoi.*"[61] It is important to point out though, that in the vast majority of cases, interviewees do *not* claim that their religious practice is due to their parents exerting pressure on them. Rather, if they mention their parents at all, it seems to be in an effort to dispel the myth of the overbearing North African/Muslim family.

So it can be argued that some of the interviewees' experiences of Islam correspond to a more *communautaire* model. Their relationship to religion can, to a significant extent, be described in terms of the internalisation of roles and values which are perceived to be the bricks and mortar of a community which must be maintained as a unified whole. This is often contrasted with their more individual stances as regards self-perception and political or social demands. I have shown the interviewees' experiences of Islam to be closely related to a dynamic of group pressure, sometimes the young men and women are the enforcers, that is, they are amongst those who *apply* the pressure on others to be seen to be faithful, *practising* Muslims; sometimes they are the *pressurised* parties.

Ramadan

However, it would be erroneous to claim that pressure or the coercive dynamic is the only way in which to conceptualise the religious experience of these young people of North

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[60] Interview with 'Ibrahim', 'Larbi' and 'Tayeb', 23/05/01. N.B. Most young people in the sample tend to fast during Ramadan and may pray intermittently or not at all. The majority do not observe prayer at all but do observe Ramadan.
[61] Interview with 'Fatima' and 'Zina', 09/11/00.

African origin. On the contrary, some interviewees reflect on their sense of belonging to a community in a more 'positive' sense. Simmel wrote about the significance and effects of religious festivals on the sense of group unity: "... religious festivals [...] display in the clearest possible concrete form the unity of all those captured by the same religious excitement..."[62] This notion of excitement which Simmel wrote about is present in some repondents' discourse about fasting during the month of Ramadan. In total, seven interviewees out of forty-four referred to Ramadan as a period of building and deepening ties with their friends, classmates or neighbours. The young women seemed to be more likely than the young men to relate their experiences in terms of building community ties. (Five young women expressed these sorts of ideas as opposed to just two young men). The younger the interviewees, the more likely they were to talk about Ramadan as a community experience; only one young woman, 'Sara', who spoke about Ramadan in this way, was not at high-school. Fawzia focuses on the breaking of the fast, which takes place during school hours:

> ...j'aime bien, les jeunes, vraiment, c'est magnifique quoi parce que qu'on est plusieurs dans la classe et puis même les autres qui font pas, ils nous respectent, ils mangent pas devant nous, au contraire, ils se disent 'mais comment vous faites?' Il y en a plein que je connais, que ce soit des Noirs ou des Français qui ont déjà essayé de faire le jeûne [....] l'heure de manger, tout le monde sort à manger. Ils mangent pas – entre nous, c'est pas 't'as pas fait le jeûne, tu manges pas.' C'est tout le monde mange ensemble, on rigole tous ensemble...[63]

Fawzia 's comments are similar to Fatima's and fellow interviewee, Zina's who both claim simultaneously that Ramadan unites the pupils at their *lycée*. Idaya (seventeen; *première ES, Lycée Pablo Picasso*; born in Aubervilliers; French of Moroccan origin) who also featured in Chapter 4 due to her individualist desire to distance herself from the Aubervilliers community, here talks about the sense of sharing that developed during Ramadan when she was a pupil at *collège*: "... *au collège, ... on partageait des dattes... on partageait tout, c'était marrant. Moi, j'aimais bien cette période là avec les copines. On se sentait beaucoup plus proche.*"[64]

[62] Simmel (1997), p.178.
[63] Interview with 'Fawzia', 18/04/01.
[64] Interview with 'Fatou' and 'Idaya', 19/05/01. 'Fatima' is eighteen years old; a pupil in *terminale ES, Lycée Pablo Picasso*; was born in France; has lived in Aubervilliers all her life. She introduces herself as

Sara (twenty-six, *animatrice*; born in Algeria; came to Aubervilliers at age of six; Moroccan nationality) also alludes to the sense of community that develops amongst the young people who attend the *maison de jeunes*, where she works as a socio-cultural activities coordinator (*animatrice*) for the young people in the *Vandrezanne cité*:

> *Il y a un phénomène bizarre pendant le jeûne. Tout le monde jeûne, même les Français jeûnent. Ça veut dire que les Français, ils ont un petit problème en ce moment, enfin en ce moment ils s'identifient aux Arabes quoi [...] et ben ils identifient à la communauté maghrébine. Bon, des fois, ça vient du cœur, c'est des gens qui se reconvertissent complètement à l'islam mais d'autres fois, c'est voilà, faire comme mon pote et parce que c'est bien de dire quelques mots en arabe, de jurer sur le Coran et compagnie donc ici le ramadan, c'est vraiment spécial. C'est que tout le monde jeûne et l'heure de manger, du repas, on essaie de manger tous ensemble...* [65]

A number of remarks can be made about Sara's statement. First of all, she does talk about the notion of group unity and the coming together of young people from all sorts of backgrounds. However, she is not naïve about this. She claims instead that some young people simply want to project a certain image in a society where the figure of the '*Arabe*' or the '*jeune maghrébin*' is stigmatised by the media and dominant group discourse yet also emulated by young white people in a similar manner to young Afro-Caribbean men in Britain for example.[66] In this way then Sara recognises that in the stigmatised *banlieue* setting, Ramadan has acquired a social character in addition to its religious and cultural (in the sense of traditional) significance. Secondly, it is interesting to note that Sara uses the term "*la communauté maghrébine*". This term is rarely employed by interviewees and the choice of the term '*la communauté*' highlights the collective in a more positive light than '*les rebeux*' or '*les Maghrébins*' which are terms the interviewees tend to use when they adopt a more dominant group-type discourse. Thirdly, Sara claims that all the young people and the *animateurs* eat together at the *maison de jeunes*. If this is the case, for this

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"tunisienne". 'Zina' is seventeen; a pupil in *terminale ES, Lycée Pablo Picasso*; was born in Paris - 10ᵉ, describes herself as "d'origine algérienne, je suis kabyle." She has lived in Aubervilliers since 1992. Intrerview with 'Fatima' and 'Zina', 09/11/00.

[65] Interview with 'Sara', 06/03/01, 09/03/01.

[66] For further discussion of masculinities, especially amongst young boys and men of Caribbean origin, see Stephen Frosh, Ann Phoenix, Rob Pattman, *Young Masculinities* (London: Palgrave, 2002).

could be an exaggeration stemming from the general sense of excitement, which Simmel refers to, then this would suggest that the *maison de jeuenes/quartier* community has supplanted the family community in this respect. Ramadan is no longer a religious festival which takes place within the private sphere as may have been the case with the *primo arrivant* immigrants who remained "des figures ombrageuses" as Nacira Guénif Souilamas refers to them.[67] Rather, Ramadan emerges as a public festival and in the process becomes somewhat secularised since, as Sara and other interviewees claim, young people of non-Muslim origin also like to take part in a religious activity which has become synonymous with the *banlieusard* 'image' in general.

Experiencing Ramadan at the level of the *quartier* is also present in Touran's reflection: "*J'adore moi la période de Ramadan dans mon quartier. Je vous assure, c'est terrible, c'est, on passe le temps, entre nous...*"[68] Touran presents Ramadan as a period of bonding as well as a time when there is a positive atmosphere in his neighbourhood. This attitude contrasts sharply with his insistence in Chapter 4 that religion should be kept in the private sphere (4.1). Mahmoud also alludes to this sort of conviviality at the local mosque during Ramadan:

> *C'est une ambiance... pour les amis... on peut se poser des questions, je sais pas... si on a des problèmes, je sais pas... sur la religion, on croit qu'on a fait quelque chose qui est pas bien... on peut discuter... quand c'est le Ramadan, on peut manger avec eux, on discute, plein de sujets, pas que de religion, plein de choses, c'est important, c'est bien...*[69]

5.5 Future Marriage Partners

In much of the social sciences literature about migrant groups or minorities, marriage practices are often cited as one of most significant ways of measuring the extent to which migrant families and their children have become 'integrated' or even 'assimilated' into the mainstream society or to what extent they have maintained traditional (in the sense of family-oriented) values. However, as Nacira Guénif Souilamas points out in her study of

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[67] Guénif Souilamas (2000).
[68] Interview with 'Touran', 22/03/01.
[69] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.

young women of North African origin and their families, the very act of migration for the first generation of immigrants, constitutes in itself a break with the past and with 'traditional' practices in the country of origin.[70] So marriage should not simply be conceptualised as an area of the interviewees' lives which is *either* governed by 'traditional' family values *or* the individual's preferences, the individual, particularly the young women of North African origin, becoming 'heroines' because they have supposedly 'emancipated' themselves from their fathers' and brothers' clutches. (They can be 'heroic victims' as well). Indeed, most of the interviewees who were questioned about marriage were able to demonstrate a rather subjective stance towards their choice of future marriage partner where they took into account parental wishes and expectations as well as their own. However, many expressed conflicting ideas, at first claiming that they would marry the partner of their choice, regardless of their parents, and then retreating on this initial stance later on in the interview. In short, it is not possible to describe the following interviewees' attitudes towards future marriage partners as wholly corresponding to the *communautaire* pole of the triangle of identity, just as it is not possible to conceptualise their attitudes as wholly corresponding to a more individualist or subjective model. This section will discuss those aspects of respondents' discourse which reflect a more *communautaire* experience. This should not, however, be understood as the *only* way in which they construct their stance towards marriage.

Nine out of the sample of twenty-six can be described as articulating their ideas about marriage in terms of community and heritage. (N.B. In Chapter 4 it was pointed that only twenty-six interviewees were actually asked about marriage). Slightly more young women express their ideas about marriage in terms of community (five women as opposed to four young men – for Aicha's remarks on this subject see section 5.1). However, whilst they may come under considerably increased pressure than their male counterparts to satisfy their parents' and the wider community's expectations, generally they manage to negotiate their preferences to a significant extent, which is why Nacira Guenif Souliamas describes the young women of North African origin in her study as

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[70] Guénif Souilamas (2000) , pp.99-100.

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"des artisanes de libertés tempérées".[71] There seem to exist two dominant models with regards to marriage: the 'mentality' model and once again the group unity or peer pressure model.

(i) Mentality - "On a la même, entre guillemets, la mentalité, voilà quoi. Moi je préfère." (Myriam)[72]

Abdel Majid and Ahmed both agree that it would be preferable to marry a young woman who has grown up in the '*bled*', rather than a woman of North African descent who, like themselves has lived in France. Both stress the importance that they marry a woman who has been 'well brought-up' and they reject their female counter parts who have grown up in the *banlieue*. Abdel Majid sets out the criteria as follows:

> ...faut qu'elle a reçu une éducation bien aussi. Pas comme une fille de banlieue là qui, voilà. Qu'elle soit une fille bien, qui traîne pas, qui boit pas, qui [...] moi c'est comme Ahmed, une préférence pour une fille qui habite en Algérie [...] elles sont différentes mais c'est bien. Là-bas elles sont bien élevées, elles sont élevées durs et tout, voilà.[73]

Abdel Majid's *communautaire* stance with regards to marriage partners contrasts with his eagerness to distance himself from his origins in Chapter 4 ("*Non, je me vois pas en algérien tout court. Je suis le descendant d'un Algérien*"). His stance encourages Ahmed to complain about the "*filles des banlieues*": "*Je sais pas, c'est vrai qu'il y a des filles qui sont [...] elles ont pas gardé leur féminité, et puis, souvent c'est genre en basket, survêt', casquette puis, elles parlent plus mal que nous [...] qu'elle soit bien éduquée.*"[74] Ahmed goes further in his requirements than Abdel Majid because he feels that for his mother's sake, it is important to find someone who is Tunisian:

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[71] Guénif Souilamas (2000). The next section will not feature all of the young women's experiences. For example, 'Arwa', who does not feature in this section, but who can be seen as one of the five young women concerned by a community-oriented approach to marriage, discusses marriage in terms of the importance of abstaining from pre-marital sexual relations, that is, in terms of what 'is done' and what is 'not done'. (Interview with 'Arwa', 23/03/01).

[72] Interview with 'Myriam', 20/03/01. (24 years old, student nurse; born in Paris; French of Algerian - Kabyle origin; dual nationality).

[73] Interview with 'Abdel Majid', 'Ahmed' and 'Maliha', 25/05/01.

[74] Ibid.

Je sais qu'il y a plus de chance que je me marie avec une Tunisienne qu'une autre fille parce que moi [...] Je sais que pour ma mère, faut qu'elle ait une personne qui la comprenne, qui a la même mentalité et puis qu'ils arrivent à vivre ensemble.[75]

Samira is very aware of her parents preference that she marry a man of Kabyle origin. She expresses her understanding of their position more extensively than most other interviewees: "*... c'est par rapport aux traditions. C'est par rapport à ma famille, c'est par rapport à mes parents et notre tradition ancestrale parce qu'en fait ils viennent de la Kabylie et donc ils sont habitués à se marier entre eux...*" She then goes on to claim that she herself would like to marry someone of Kabyle origin as well. However, she argues that this is nothing to do with her parents and that her preference stems more or less from personal choice. What interests us here, is *not* whether she is obliging her parents or not, but rather the fact that she feels she is part of an ancestral tradition, her self-presentation as a Kabyle and as a member of an *ethnie*:

Franchement par rapport à ça, je pense que, tu vas peut-être me trouver un petit peu sectaire (rire) mais j'ai des amis, j'ai connu des amis qui étaient athées même, j'ai eu, j'ai eu des relations avec des personnes qui étaient de différentes ethnies de moi et euh... ça a toujours cassé au bout d'un moment parce qu'il y a quelque chose qui passait pas et les différences, ça pose problème à chaque fois, et ça n'a rien à voir vis-à-vis de mes parents, [....], c'est sur des points de vue, c'est l'éducation qui joue et puis il y avait des différences et puis il y a des compromis qui veulent pas être faits. Pour moi, généralement, c'est mieux d'être avec une personne qui plus ou moins a les mêmes idées que toi, qui a eu la même éducation que toi. C'est beaucoup plus facile de, faire passer des compromis que d'autres choses, quoi, voilà...[76]

Samira's claim that her preference has nothing to do with her parents seems somewhat defensive since she then goes on to argue that her preference for a Kabyle young man is a question of "*éducation*", or in other words, how one was brought up by one's parents and the values or "*idées*" that one has as a result. Perhaps Aicha, whose parents are also Kabyle, is more aware of the influence of her parents and family on her choice of partner because she claims that she cannot see herself with someone who is not of Kabyle origin

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[75] Ibid.
[76] Interview with 'Abdel' and 'Samira', 16/11/00.

because of family "conditioning' or "*le conditionnement*" as she refers to it (see 5.1 and Chapter 6).

Fawzia, like Aicha and Samira, sees herself as Kabyle and the importance of her sense of belonging to a Kabyle community is made clear when we discuss marriage preferences: "*Pour moi, j'aimerais que pour moi, mon rêve, ça serait d'épouser un Berbère, kabyle ...Moi, mon rêve, c'est algérien berbère...*"[77] She claims that by choosing to marry a Berber Algerian, she would be able to perpetuate certain 'traditions' and it transpires that these traditions are not just regional/ethnic (i.e. Berber-oriented) but that Fawzia's desire to marry an Algerian Berber is also of a religious nature. Indeed, she seems to confuse being Kabyle and being a practising Muslim within the same register:

> *...mais je veux pas perdre les traditions...je veux pas perdre les traditions tu vois, parce que je sais que si par exemple, je me marie par exemple avec un Portugais j'aurais plus les mêmes traditions, bon c'est vrai je ferais quand même le Ramadan, mais ça serait plus pareil quand on rentrera le soir, ça serait pas comme si j'étais mariée avec un musulman qui faisait le ramadan en même temps avec moi.*[78]

Through her desire to marry someone from the same background, she claims that in this way she won't 'forget' her 'origins':

> *Moi, avec un Kabyle, comme ça, au moins, tu oublies pas tes origines, non on est pas du genre parce qu'on est en France, qu'on est des Français [...] moi quand je dis français, c'est vraiment des purs Français, question leur père c'est un Français, leur mère, ils ont vraiment des origines françaises, sinon, Italiens, Espagnols, qui sont nés ici, moi, c'est pas des Français, c'est des étrangers...*[79]

Here, then the community of origin, which is viewed as something 'pure', makes its mark permanently on the individual who is always linked through his/her ties of blood to their parents and ancestors. It is interesting to note that the term *kabyle* is used by Fawzia as an internal mode of identification, that is, she assigns this identifier to herself. Yet

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[77] Interview with 'Fawzia', 18/04/01.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.

when she talks in a more generic sense about North African families, she refers to *"les rebeux"*: *"...l'enfant prend le nom de l'homme; c'est les rebeux, c'est comme ça, l'homme, tout l'homme. Si ton père est algérien, toi t'es algérienne. Si ton père est français, toi t'es française ...c'est comme ça chez les rebeux..."*[80] Here *"les rebeux"* would seem to be an external or imposed identifier, as though Fawzia is looking at its objects from the outside in. Her claim that all *'rebeux'* and North African families behave in a certain manner with regards to marriage suggests that she unquestioningly accepts that certain familial practices amount to a coherent and logical set of values and traditions which one resigns oneself to.[81]

(ii) Group Unity

The second model corresponds to the notion of the subordination of the individual to the group, where the group is not the respondent's family but rather, his or her peer group or friends. As we have seen above, Abdel Majid and Ahmed influence each other to a certain extent and it would appear that the two young men try to ensure that they give similar and cohesive answers. This dynamic is perhaps even more evident when Larbi, Tayeb and 'Ibrahim' are interviewed together. Larbi and Tayeb are fellow *BTS* students, they live in the same neighbourhood and they socialise together.[82] When I ask the group whether they would prefer to marry someone of the same origin as them, Tayeb's response is as follows: *"Non personnellement, ça me gêne pas, si je tombe avec quelqu'un que j'aime bien."* Larbi, on the other hand answers in a rather different manner: *"On est de culture musulmane. On se retrouverait, je sais pas, ça doit être bizarre, je sais pas, ça serait différent d'être avec quelqu'un, un chrétien ou quoi que ce soit, juste par rapport au principe de pas manger du porc..."* Larbi's answer seems to galvanise Tayeb into retreating on his initial reaction : *"Même par rapport aux enfants, si on a des enfants, moi, je sais pas, je me vois pas avec une fille qui est pas*

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[80] Ibid.
[81] See Guénif Souilamas, (2000), pp.33-41 for her insightful deconstruction of dominant discourse which refers to North African immigrants in France and their descendants as "les Maghrébins".
[82] Ibrahim is also in their *BTS* group yet he does not live in Aubervilliers and does not socialise with Larbi and Tayeb. It is most likely for this reason that Ibrahim does not come under the same pressure as Tayeb. Ibrahim is nineteen; he was born in Nanterre; his parents are Algerian.

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musulmane..."[83] This apparent U-turn allows Tayeb to save face with the rest of the group, especially with Larbi and he has thus been successfully 'brought back into line'. This group interview dynamic reflects Norbert Elias' and John L. Scotson's observations in their study of 'established' and 'outsider' members of the three geographical 'zones' in 'Winston Parva' village (situated in the Midlands, England). Here, they found that the group unity and pressure phenomenon was very evident: "It was quite clear that in a closely-knit community such as zone 2 people were eager to present a common front and to make the best possible impression on a stranger. [...] individuals exercised considerable pressure upon each other to conform to the common image of the community in speech and behaviour..."[84]

The Community as a Socio-Economic *and* Socio-Cultural Entity

In the introduction to this chapter, it was argued that the *communautaire* pole of Wieviorka's triangle of identity could also be applied to socio-economic identity as well as cultural identity. That is, individuals sometimes reveal a strong sense of belonging to a community, which is defined by its socio-economic status. Hence the community can be associated with a specific geographical area such as a neighbourhood or a town for example. The socio-economic community is, more often than not, equated with the 'class status' of its inhabitants.[85] However, as we shall see, it can also represent the interface between social and more cultural forms of identity. As with all forms of belonging, the socio-economic collectivity or community is the product of the perception of the individuals who are its members and it is therefore idealised and mythical in nature. This is why one of the main forms of socio-economic community amongst the young people of North African origin who participated in the field research was the *banlieue*. For many interviewees, the *banlieue* becomes synonymous with the *département*, Seine-Saint-

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[83] All quotes from interview with 'Ibrahim', 'Larbi' and 'Tayeb', 23/05/01.
[84] Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders: A Sociological Enquiry into Community Problems* (London: Frank Cass, 1965), pp.5-6.
[85] It is of course possible to argue that the notion of 'class' has undergone vast change and is no longer as pertinent as it once was. In the light of this observation, it is perhaps preferable to refer to 'income status' instead. For further discussion of the changing nature of the notion of class, see Henri Mendras and Alistair Cole, eds, *Social change in modern France: Towards a cultural anthropology of the Fifth Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1991), pp. 31-48.

Denis. For these respondents, the *banlieue* also exists in opposition to Paris because of the disparities in wealth and 'mentalities' that are deemed to exist between the inhabitants. For some interviewees, the opposition which exists between the two 'worlds' is mainly of a 'racial' nature – that is, Paris is associated with *'les Français'/'Céfrans'* and the suburbs are associated with *les immigrés, les rebeux* and *les renoix*.[86] Other interviewees deny that this is the main dividing line, yet the precise nature of the cleavage is not made explicit. In the following section, I shall look more closely at three aspects of collective socio-economic and socio-cultural experience. Some researchers claim that it is possible to conceptualise the experience of young people living in a stigmatised suburban setting in purely social terms and thus claim that there are no major differences between the experiences of young people of non-European origin and their *'français de souche'* or European-origin banlieusard counter-parts, apart from the experience of racism. I argue that it is nearly impossible to separate the socio-economic and more cultural registers of experience and that there *do* exist differences in these young people's experiences. Hence, the consideration of both the socio-economic and socio-cultural registers will take place simultaneously. The three aspects to be examined are as follows: the notion of belonging to a socio-economic/cultural community *(la banlieue* versus Paris); the notion of belonging to a *quartier* or *cité*; racial discrimination as a collective cultural and collective social experience.

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[86] The word *céfran* is the *verlanised* term of *Français* and refers to so-called *'Français de* souche' or *'les Gaulois'* as they are also inaccurately called. In the same way that 'beur' has become *'verlanisé'*, the word 'noir' has been 'verlanised' to give 'renoi' and therefore *'renoix'* in the plural. This term is used to refer to those individuals who are black. See Appendix 4 for glossary of slang and *verlan* terms.

PART II: THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

5. 6 The *Banlieue* as a Community

In order to try to understand the variety of experiences of the interviewees concerned by this question, it is necessary once again to use a number of analytical models. The notion of belonging to a community which is primarily defined in terms of an antagonistic relationship between Paris and *la banlieue* (both geographical entities existing as mythical or as 'imagined' communities) is a fairly prevalent phenomenon; in fact sixteen out of the sample of forty-four expressed a sense of belonging to the *banlieue* in terms of a community. The question was generally broached in a fairly indirect manner, either by asking interviewees how and where they spent their leisure time, whether they would like to continue living in Aubervilliers (or their respective neighbouring towns) after finishing their studies etc.[87]

(i) 'Solidarity'

One of the ways in which this sense of identity was articulated was to refer to the notion of solidarity. In fact the question of solidarity emerged in four separate group interviews and some six interviewees talked about the main distinctions between Paris and Aubervilliers (and other neighbouring suburbs in Seine-Saint-Denis) in these terms. For example, I ask Mona and Hala whether they would like to continue living in Aubervilliers once they start earning a living/have left the parental home and although Mona argues at first that she would not like her own children to grow up in Aubervilliers (see Chapter 4 on detachment from the *banlieue/quartier* phenomenon), she argues that she herself does *not* want necessarily to live in Paris, which she regards as a place were it is pleasant "*pour aller se balader parfois*". However, she remarks on what she perceives as the lack of solidarity in Paris and in doing so, she presents Aubervilliers in a more positive light than in her previous comments:

> *Ici on est plus solidaire que là-bas je trouve. [...] On est pas forcément solidaire parce qu'on est tous maghrébin, je sais pas pourquoi. [...]Du fait que quand même Aubervilliers, c'est petit, je veux dire, où j'habite c'est petit donc ça fait*

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[87] In some cases the following question was also asked: "*Est-ce que ça se passe bien dans ton quartier?*"

qu'on est plus proche les uns des autres, on est, donc, je sais moi, si j'ai un problème, j'appelle Hala ou qui que ce soit enfin, on est solidaire entre nous. Je suppose que si à Paris je dois appeler une amie, ça sera pas pareil, ça sera pas pareil. Je sais pas pourquoi mais je sais que ça sera pas la même chose.[88]

Fawzia also talks about Aubervilliers in terms of solidarity and close community ties but like Mona, she rejects the idea that people are more supportive of each other because they are from North African families:

Aubervilliers ...j'aime [...] je connais tout le monde, je suis depuis longtemps. [...] Paris, je pense que les gens ils sont différents quoi. Je sais pas, moi, je suis allée vite fait, déjà juste pour un soir quoi...je sais pas, je vois Paris comme un autre monde, on dirait c'est triste, c'est pas pareil comme ici, tu vois les gens ils se parlent entre eux, non on dirait c'est chacun pour soi, tu les vois, ils sont tous rapides, tu vas là-bas, Paris c'est ça, pour moi, c'est ça sauf dans le dix-huitième, c'est pas comme ça, [...] Paris dix-huitième, j'y habitais, moi c'est comme Aubervilliers. [...] Sinon Paris cinquième et tout, (rire), c'est pas...je sais pas, les gens ils sont, ils se socialisent moins, entre eux, c'est plus chacun chez soi [...] Aubervilliers, tout le monde se connaît, c'est des choses comme ça je pense pas que c'est les origines... maintenant tu peux aller à la campagne, tu trouves des étrangers comme des Français, que tu vas dans les banlieues, ils sont purs français, non ça veut rien dire sinon on aura la campagne que des Français...[89]

Here, Fawzia' comments which dismiss the notion of '*origines*' contrast with her earlier insistence on the importance of '*les origines*' with regards to a successful marriage (5.5).

The notion of belonging to a 'family', which is represented by Aubervilliers or the neighbouring suburb where the respondents otherwise live, is a very prevalent one. Interviewees often refer to how they have grown up with all their neighbours and talk of a family bond with the people in their immediate *quartier*. For example, Tayeb refers to Aubervilliers (a town which has a population of approximately 63,000) in terms of one huge family. This is rather paradoxical since he was very keen to distance himself from

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[88] Interview with 'Hala' and 'Mona', 18/05/01. (Mona: seventeen years old; *Lycée P. Picasso*; born in France; Algerian-Berber origin; Algerian-French nationality).

[89] Interview with 'Fawzia', 18/04/01. Fawzia picks out the eighteenth arrondissement as the Parisian exception. The eighteenth arrondissement in Paris is home to one of the highest proportions of non-European origin residents in Paris (*intra muros*) and this is probably why Fawzia sees it as the only place which is not included in the *chacun pour soi* condemnation which is ascribed to the rest of Paris. Yet she still denies the existence of a possible link between closer community ties and North African origin residents.

his immediate surroundings, for fear of being stereotyped as a *"jeune de banlieue"* (see Chapter 4 – 4.4). Fellow interviewee, Larbi talks about what he perceives to be the differences between Parisians and *Albertvillariens*:

> *Aubervilliers, ça va, on connaît, on a grandi là donc on s'est adapté. [...] sur Paris [...] ils ont pas eu la même mentalité que moi par rapport à d'où je viens, la banlieue, ils ont pas le même point de vue. Ils ont, je connais des gens qui habitent sur Paris et franchement ils ont vraiment pas la même mentalité quoi. Je sais pas, je trouve c'est à part,...*

This leads Tayeb (who had initially claimed that he would like to live in Paris) to retreat:

> *C'est vrai que nous, on est plus une famille quoi. Nous, quand on part en vacances avec nos amis, de temps en temps, on part en club... on voit comment ils sont les gens qui vivent sur Paris et nous, ben ça n'a rien à voir [...] ouais, nous, je pense qu'on est plus généreux par rapport à eux quoi, je sais pas, par rapport à des gens que j'ai rencontrés [...] là-bas c'est beaucoup la frime aussi...*[90]

Once again, Larbi brings Tayeb 'back into line', in the same way as regards future marriage partners (see 5.5).

Mahmoud and Fayçal also allude to a lack of solidarity which manifests itself in the different types of relationship between neighbours. This seems particularly to trouble Mahmoud: *"Paris, on peut rester par terre en train de mourir, personne nous aide [...] à Paris les gens ils ont des voisins, ils se connaissent même pas... nous, tout le monde se connaît chez nous..."*[91] Fayçal backs Mahmoud up when he adds: *"ils se calculent pas"*, that is they, the 'Parisians' do not even look at each other. Indeed, this so-called inability to communicate is evoked in many of the interviewees' statements, where Paris and its inhabitants are homogenised and stereotyped by the young men and women, who know

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[90] Both Larbi's and Tayeb's comments are cited from interview with 'Ibrahim', 'Larbi' and 'Tayeb', 23/05/01. The notion that one belongs to a family in Aubervilliers is of course likely to be one of the specificities of the town, where as pointed out at the end of Chapter 2, there is a fairly strong sense of shared history and identity. It should therefore be pointed out that this sentiment is not likely to be a universal feature of *la banlieue* since this is, in itself a heterogeneous category.

[91] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.

that they themselves can be subject to social and cultural stigma which have even more harmful effects.[92]

It is in effect this criticism of Parisians and the so-called 'Parisian mentality' which is one of the main reasons that interviewees give for their antagonistic stance towards Paris and their simultaneous exaltation of the *banlieue* or of Aubervilliers' inhabitants as though they represent a homogenous whole. Most of the individuals cited the differences in 'mentality' and 'atmosphere' as the main motivations for wanting to continue to reside in Aubervilliers for example, or on a more general level, rejecting Paris. The next few respondents' presentation of their experiences of Paris and of Aubervilliers can therefore be described as corresponding to the 'mentality' model.

(ii) 'Mentality'

Due to the lack of space it is not possible to discuss *all* the interviewees concerned by this question. This section will rather focus on a select number of responses. Like her fellow interviewee, Mona, Hala is also wary about Paris, but her critique is more extensive. When asked where she would like to live after she has left the parental home, she replies that she would either like to live in the south of France (Montpellier or Toulouse) or in Canada. Although, as was shown in Chapter 4, Hala tries to distance herself from the *banlieusard* image which in fact she herself perpetuates by referring to Aubervilliers' youth in this way, this does not mean that she aspires to a life in Paris. Rather she associates Paris with excessive liberalism:

> ....à la limite je préférais que mes enfants aillent à Pablo Picasso plutôt qu'ils aillent à Janson de Sailly ou à Henri IV parce qu'on peut dire tout ce qu'on veut, ici il y a des racailles mais là-bas c'est pas mieux quoi [...] ils sont tous faits dans le même moule et je sais pas, ils fument tous et la drogue par exemple [...] ça

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[92] For further discussion of the notion of stigma, see Erving Goffman (1963). Here, Goffman defines stigma in three ways: "First there are the abominations of the body – the various physical deformities. Next there are the blemishes of individual character [...] for example, mental disorder, imprisonment, addiction, alcoholism, homosexuality, unemployment, suicidal attempts and radical political behaviour. Finally there are the tribal stigma of race, nation, and religion, these being stigma that can be transmitted through lineages and equally contaminate all members of a family. In all these various instances of stigma [...] the same sociological features are found: an individual who might have been received easily in ordinary social intercourse [...] possesses a stigma, an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated." (pp. 14-15).

*peut aller plus loin parce qu'ils sont forcément plus riches [...] et il y a une
certaine mentalité [...] la mentalité parisienne c'est ça en fait, je sors, je fais la
fête, j'écoute la musique. J'ai des passions différentes, complètement
différentes...*[93]

In a similar manner to Hala, Leila's rejection of Paris is formulated in terms of
differences in outlook. However, although Leila's rejection is based on a critique of so-
called Parisian values, she wishes to remain resident in Seine-Saint-Denis, preferably in
nearby Saint-Denis, so as to be close to her 'roots' as she puts it:

*..je suis un petit peu une exception parce que j'habite sur Aubervilliers comme
j'aurais pu habiter sur Paris mais on aurait pu habiter sur Paris mais moi j'ai
pas voulu, [...], être dans une école privée mais moi, je voulais pas, c'est pas mon
milieu...parce que j'aime pas du tout [...] J'ai ma tante qui habite sur Paris,
quand je vais la voir le week-end, c'est pas mon milieu, c'est pas mon truc à moi.
Paris, c'est pas mon truc et encore moins, l'école privée [...]. Question visiter,
ceci, des balades et tout, oui, mais pas vivre là-bas [...] je risque d'être plutôt sur
Saint-Denis [...] je suis restée une fois une semaine chez ma cousine, j'aime pas,
l'ambiance, les voisins, oh là là, c'est vraiment et en plus on se sent, c'est pas
qu'on se sent exclu, on est pas exclu, c'est qu'on est entouré par que des
Français... Voilà... Non ça me dérange pas du tout d'être entouré par des
Français mais je veux sentir mes racines, je sais pas...mon petit passé, mes
origines, [...] je sais pas, on a visité Paris, c'est vraiment, ils sont sournois [...]
c'est de l'hypocrisie, ça se sent, ça se voit...*[94]

Her reaction to Paris is also linked with her experience of her Aunt's family who live in
Paris. Not only is Leila keen to maintain close links with her cultural community (*"mes
origines, mon petit passé"*), she also rejects Paris in an attempt to reverse the perceived
stigma of residing in a socially deprived suburb. Leila's story can thus be seen as a good
example of the interface between social and cultural experience:

*...j'ai ma tante qui habite sur Paris et puis [...] pendant l'Aïd on avait
survêtement Lacoste, c'était mon, c'est mon milieu et puis, ils me disent 'ah bon,
on est là, c'est super, on est pas obligé d'acheter ça à nos enfants parce que bon
ils regardent pas du tout ça' et puis 'vous pouvez pas comprendre parce que vous*

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[93] Interview with 'Hala' and 'Mona', 18/05/01.
[94] Interview with 'Leila', 15/05/01.

êtes des banlieusards'. Cette expression m'a toujours marquée jusqu'à présent [...] donc c'est par expérience que j'aimerais pas habiter sur Paris.[95]

Leila's attempts to create something positive, reversing the stigma of being labelled a *banlieusard* by her Aunt, is a glimmer of subjectivity which fades with her subsequent rejection of "*les Français*" – i.e. her claim that she would not like to live in a building with lots of 'French people'.

The rejection of Paris on the basis that the city does not have enough atmosphere (*ambiance*) or convivial spirit is present in other interviewees' responses. For example, Khadija and Nadia agree that they would not want to live in Paris, Khadija claiming that: "*c'est calme, ouais, c'est super-calme*" and Nadia adding that: "*... des régions comme Paris, il y a rien, enfin il y a la tour Eiffel mais c'est tout (rire)...*"[96] Abdel Majid also criticises Paris in the same manner: "*C'est pas la même ambiance. Moi, personnellement, je pourrais pas habiter sur Paris.*"[97]

Khadija, Nadia and Abdel Majid's dismissal of Paris and hence their implicit exaltation of Aubervilliers as representative of the *banlieue* seems to stem from their limited experience and knowledge of the city. Waleed however actually has some experience of Paris and its inhabitants. Waleed studies at the Sorbonne, yet he still feels a sense of alienation with regards to the Parisians he meets. Like Hala and Leila, he claims to have a different outlook and wants to retreat or remain in his immediate surroundings. Waleed refers to the difficulties he encountered in his first semester at the Sorbonne:

> *...j'étais le seul de la banlieue – ils étaient tous des Français – au début, j'avais du mal à m'adapter.... parce que je sais pas, c'était pas mon milieu je pense...je sais pas, différent, ici, je pense, la communauté maghrébine, quand on voit quelqu'un on se parle, en fait c'est convivial alors que là-bas, c'était froid, je sais pas [...] les gens tu leur dis bonjour un jour, le lendemain, tu les voyais passer devant toi et il te disaient pas bonjour quoi et c'était normal. J'ai demandé à une autre personne de là-bas, il a fait 'ouais, ici c'est normal' et moi je trouvais ça*

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[95] Ibid.
[96] Interview with 'Khadija' and 'Nadia', 13/03/01.
[97] Interview with 'Abdel Majid', 'Ahmed' and 'Maliha', 25/05/01.

pas normal, [...] aussi je trouve qu'ils sont réticents par rapport aux Maghrébins parce qu'ils ont des préjugés...[98]

The notion that the Parisians (or '*les Français*') do not 'know how' to communicate with one another is often juxtaposed to the perceived warmth of the "*communauté maghrébine*" as it is in Waleed's statement. Waleed's only friend at the Sorbonne is a girl whom he knew previously from Aubervilliers : "*Ouais je suis resté avec mes amis d'ici quoi...j'ai des amis de la fac mais vraiment, c'est des amis de la fac, de là-bas, voilà quoi [...] j'ai retrouvé une copine de moi, d'ici, là-bas, [...] et la plupart du temps, je reste avec elle...*"[99] Waleed's unsatisfactory social experience and sense of partial rejection at the Sorbonne, further illustrated when he was stopped by a campus security guard and was informed that he must be in the wrong place, is most likely one of the main reasons for his ultimate rejection of Paris : "*..je vois pas ce qu'il y a de beau dans Paris, j'aime pas trop ...*"[100]

(iii) Stigmatised Identities

Age seems to have a tangible effect on the interviewees' external definition. That is the older the interviewees, the less they feel that they are perceived by the dominant groups as '*jeunes de banlieue*' or '*jeunes des cités*'.[101] This label can be either a negative or positive experience. Some interviewees try to stand the stigma on its head by transforming what could be a negative (and assigned) categorisation into a more self-affirming one. Karine (seventeen; *première ES, Lycée Pablo* Picasso; born in France; father Algerian, mother South American) talks about her self-image as a '*fille de banlieue*' and seems to take pride in this seemingly self-assigned sense of identity. For her, being a *jeune/fille de banlieue* is a question of style or '*le look*'. One element of this stylised urban or suburban identity is the pit-bull terrier dog, popular amongst young men in particular. Karine talks about her own pit-bull terrier:

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[98] Interview with 'Waleed', 06/02/01, 19/02/01, 23/02/01.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] The term '*jeune*' is generally used to include those individuals under thirty years of age, so here, interviewees in their twenties will still see themselves as *jeunes* but are less likely to see themselves as *jeunes des banlieues/cités*.

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Tu vois, les jeunes, regarde, on avait quoi, les pit-bulls, [...] franchement, ça nous représentait les pits. T'as vu nos chiens, nos chiens à nous, on allait pas prendre des caniches [...] c'est une manière de nous casser, ils prennent nos chiens déjà [...] moi, mon chien, on l'a tué. On m'a dit qu'il était pas mort, mais c'était un ange... il y avait des flics [...] j'étais fière de mon chien... [rire...] comment dire, les pits, ça faisait partie de notre esprit tu vois.[102]

Nasser also proudly talks about how he comes from '*neuf-trois*', a street-style way of referring to Seine-Saint-Denis, since the administrative number of the *department* is 93. However, unlike Karine, Nasser seems to have internalised the negative and violent image which is often assigned to the socially deprived suburbs to the north of Paris. On the several occasions when I met Nasser, he often alluded to the violence and underground economy as if this was the main way in which he viewed his immediate surroundings. Farhad Khosrokhavar observed this sense of alienation and subordination amongst young men in particular, when he carried out a study of young people living in the Val d'Argent, Strasbourg and Dreux areas. He argues that the more excluded an individual is/feels, the more violent or chaotic his/her immediate surroundings appear: "...plus on est dans une situation de marginalité, d'exclusion et d'hétéronomie sociale et économique au sein des quartiers cacotopes, plus on risque de faire sienne l'image extérieure et dégradée que le monde extérieur donne de ces quartiers."[103] Indeed, as far as stigmatised identities are concerned, it would seem that the young men in Aubervilliers are more affected or more likely to express their concerns about this issue than the women (four young men as opposed to one young woman are concerned). Nasser seems alienated because he cannot detach himself from the image which is, to a significant extent, assigned to him. Tayeb is more *aware* than Nasser of the stigma he is subject to :

...ils nous ont ouvert beaucoup de choses, pour qu'on reste entre nous, pour pas voir les Parisiens, c'est pour les gens de Paris, ça associe les jeunes des cités, les jeunes des cités, c'est quoi, c'est des Maghrébins, et Paris, c'est quoi, c'est des Français. [...] Nous, quand on va sur Paris, on est mal vu...[104]

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[102] Interview with 'Bintou', 'Karine', 'Nabila', 'Nour', 'Salikha', 19/10/00.
[103] Farhad Khosrokhavar, 'La violence et ses avatars dans les quartiers sensibles', *Déviance et société*, 24.4 (2000), 425-440, (p.431). For further discussion of the process of alienation amongst young people of minority background see Danièle Joly (1998).
[104] Interview with 'Ibrahim', Larbi' and 'Tayeb', 23/05/01.

The above interviewees can thus be described as identifying the *banlieue* as a wider community, which for many, exists in opposition to Paris. They present the differences between Paris and Aubervilliers in a rather naturalised manner and sometimes emphasise a *Français* versus *Maghrébin clivage* and sometimes emphasise a less 'ethnic' *clivage*. On the whole they claim to want to maintain their close relationships with their socio-economic and/or socio-cultural communities of origin and thus for the most part reject the idea of living in Paris. The relationship they have with an imagined Paris is antagonistic but it is not necessarily conflictual in nature. In other words, the interviewees do not become social actors, acting on behalf of the *banlieue* and against the stigma many of its inhabitants suffer. Perhaps only two interviewees are able to take the antagonistic relationship one step further by conflictualising their stance with regards to Paris. Majdi attempts to reverse the stigma he suggests he is subject to as a resident in the notorious *Quatre Mille (Les 4000)* housing estate in the following way: "...*en tant que citoyen de banlieue, on est intelligent. C'est ça que je veux vous dire... on a tout, tout, comme un citoyen français.*"[105] Touran initially talks about his *quartier* in the generally negative dominant group discourse mode, but then seems to realise this and instead insists that the young people living in Aubervilliers and similar suburbs have a lot of potential:

> *...comment on se permet de dire que dans les banlieues il y a rien, il y a que du vol, que la casse, non je suis désolé, c'est le réserve de... de, c'est un potentiel énorme, je suis désolé, c'est un potentiel énorme, la preuve, tous les jeunes qui ont réussi dans le monde sportif, ils sont tous d'ici, beaucoup pour la plupart, c'est vrai ou pas ? Donc moi, j'ai envie de dire aux gens 'arrêtez [...] s'il vous plaît de dire, banlieue, quartier... non, on est des gens normaux, on vit normalement, on va à l'école, on essaie de travailler comme tout le monde.*[106]

Touran's recognition of the talent of his peers from Seine-Saint-Denis and his "volonté [...] d'être acteur" reveals that he does not just simply want to accept and internalise dominant group discourses. Yet his failure to recognise the potential of his peers *outside*

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[105] Interview with 'Aziz', 'Ibtisam', 'Majdi' and 'Yasser', 17/09/01.
[106] Interview with 'Touran', 22/03/01.

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of the sporting world, limits his subjectivity since it would seem that Touran falls 'victim' to the social stereotype of the 'ghetto dweller' who succeeds through sport. [107]

5.7 The *Quartier*

(i) 'Grands frères – grandes sœurs'

In addition to a strong sense of identity with regards to the *banlieue*, which is conceived of as a socio-economic and cultural 'imagined community' (to borrow Benedict Anderson's terminology once more), existing in opposition to Paris, some interviewees also reveal that they enjoy close ties with their immediate *quartier*.[108] These ties are expressed in a number of ways. For example, some twenty-nine interviewees are or have been involved in local neighbourhood associations that organise socio-cultural, educational and sporting activities for young people in a particular *quartier* or housing estate (*cité*). More often than not, those involved in such activities as *animateurs* or *animatrices* benefited themselves from such associations when as youngsters, they attended homework clubs (*soutien scolaire*) or participated in excursions and holidays (*sorties, colonies de vacances*) organised by the association involved.

It would seem that there is quite a widespread acceptance and praise of young people who are seen to be involved with their immediate community in the *cité* or neighbourhood where they live. The theme of the idealised image of the '*grand frère*' who protects their younger brothers and sisters (or their younger female and male acquaintances) is very prevalent in the respondents' experiences. It develops possibly as a result of the relative impotence of the parents who make up the first generation of immigrants – the father is a largely absent figure in the interviewees' presentation of their experiences, either because he is at work or eclipsed at home due to long-term unemployment or invalidity. Some mothers and fathers are absent or in the background because of their lack of fluency in French. So it is the eldest brothers and sisters who become the parents since it is they who deal with administrative matters such as banking, benefit claims etc. Older brothers and sisters may also have a significant influence on the

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[107] The phrase "volonté [...] d'être un acteur" is drawn from Alain Touraine, *Critique de la modernité* (Paris : Fayard, 1992), p. 242.
[108] Anderson (1991).

educational and career paths of their younger brothers and sisters since the parents are often unable to advise their children. Settlement in the new society would thus seem to have rendered some parents rather 'obsolete', and hence to a certain extent the notion of the North African family headed by a domineering father must be revised to more accurately reflect the post-migratory context.[109] The role of the *'grand frère'* is of course played by some biological brothers and sisters but it can also take on a more social meaning in the sense that the older inhabitants of the *cité* or the *quartier* are expected to look after the younger residents. Hence the *animateur* can be seen as the institutionalisation of the *'grand frère'* model as well as part of a process of erosion of paternal authority and capability once migration has taken place. The *'grand frère'* phenomenon is thus possibly linked with the high number of young people in the sample who were or had at one point been an *animateur* or *animatrice* in a youth association.[110] The notion of *animateurs* and *animatrices* taking on the roles of surrogate parents or older siblings is visible particularly in the case of Sara, due to her close relationship with many of the young women who attend the *maison de jeunes* in the *cité de Vandrezanne.*[111] In addition, a general sense of pessimism with regards to the possibility of finding employment combined with financial difficulties also means that many of the young people who were interviewed had obtained or were hoping to obtain their *BAFA* (*Brevet d'aptitude aux fonctions d'animateurs*: a recognised qualification in socio-cutural activities coordination or *animation*) so as to be able to obtain part-time or summer employment. In terms of gender, it would appear that the young men who are *animateurs* focus more on the *quartier* than the women.

The *'grand frère'* and *'grande sœur'* attitudes of the interviewees means that the *quartier* or the *cité* is for many, a metaphor for the family in a context of family

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[109] See Guénif Souilamas (2000), p. 124, where the North African father is described as "une figure brisée".

[110] The following interviewees are or have at some point been *animateurs/animatrices* in associations: Amir, Abdel, Fouad, Touran, Amira, Leila, Mona, Salima, Lamia. Sara, Nasser, Yacine, Mansour and Djamel. However, Fouad, Touran, Nasser, Mansour, Sara and Djamel were all contacted *through* the association where they worked/were volunteers and so in this sense, these interviewees cannot be fully included in an evaluation of the extent of associational/*animation* involvement amongst interviewees. (N.B. Fouad and Touran were initially contacted through an association but they are involved in *animation* activities in other associations elsewhere).

[111] The *cité de Vandrezanne* is a pseudonym.

disorganisation or de-institutionalisation.[112] The *quartier* thus becomes, to a certain extent, the family of the public sphere.

(ii) Socialising in the Quartier

In addition to being involved in the organisation of youth-oriented activities, the interviewees also show a sense of belonging to their immediate surroundings and those people in it by actually participating in the activities which are offered. For example, despite their more advanced ages of seventeen and eighteen, Fatima and Zina still claim that they enjoy the outings to the sea-side or elsewhere, organised by the local municipal youth organisation. Fawzia lives in a notorious *quartier* of Aubervilliers: Le Landy. It is perhaps the most run-down area of the town. She is proud of her *quartier* and boasts about the numerous youths who come from neighbouring towns (some of which are quite far away) just to 'hang out' in Le Landy:

> ... il a rien de spécial le quartier Landy, mais ils viennent, ils s'associent dans une square, ils parlent, ils fument... mais il y en a qui viennent de Drancy quoi [...] pour traîner là-bas, ils se lèvent le matin, à deux heures, ils viennent au quartier Landy, comme s'ils habitaient ici [...] pour eux c'est comme si c'était leur quartier...[113]

Most of Fawzia's close friends are from her neighbourhood and she describes herself as a "*meuf du quartier*".[114] She also talks about the importance of the *fêtes de quartier* which used to take place before the *boutique de quartier* was vandalised: "... *avant quand il y avait des fêtes de quartier, je pense que c'était mieux, ça se passait mieux parce qu'ils se sentaient concernés, 'c'est mon quartier, regarde, c'est moi qui anime, c'est moi qui fait ça.'*"[115]

Whilst generally, there is more of a tendency for the younger interviewees of the sample to boast about their *quartier*, *animatrice* Sara does *not* think that this pride fades

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[112] See Guénif Souilamas (2000), pp. 97-101 on the notion of the "de-institutionalisation" and disorganisation of the family.
[113] Interview with 'Fawzia', 18/04/01.
[114] Ibid. *Meuf* is the verlanised from of *femme*.
[115] Ibid.

as individuals grow older: *"Il y a toujours l'identification à un endroit, à un lieu, quelque soit l'âge. Je crois que ça restera toujours – 'moi je suis un mec de tel endroit' tout le temps, quoi, même marié, des enfants, 'moi je suis de Vandrezanne, moi je suis de là.'"*[116] However, it is interesting that when Sara talks about this sense of attachment to one's *quartier* or *banlieue*, she seems to want to imply that it is a universal, gender-blind phenomenon yet she then only refers to men - " *'je suis un mec de tel endroit'* ".

Brothers Mohamed and Waleed frequent the local *maison de jeunes* in the Vandrezanne *cité*. When I ask Mohamed why he thinks he has a good relationship with the youth workers at the *maison de jeunes*, he claims that it is helpful that they come from the same housing estate:

> *On se comprend mieux ... on se connaissait déjà avant. Après il y a pas de sujet tabou entre nous [...] on a moins de mal à s'exprimer avec eux, on les connaît déjà... [...] quand ils viennent d'Aubervilliers, c'est plus des jeunes des cités, des jeunes comme nous et quand ils viennent de l'extérieur, ils sont plus, ils sont...*[117] (sentence trails off).

This belief that it is not possible to understand each another unless one comes from the same sort of *banlieue* setting is perhaps not very surprising but it does reveal the extent to which living in Aubervilliers can be seen as a collective experience which leads some interviewees such as Mohamed and his older brother Waleed to ignore the capabilities or skills of the *animateurs* who are perceived as different because they are not from Aubervilliers. Waleed for instance contrasts the youth workers from the *cité* and those from elsewhere:

> *Ouais, ici, les animateurs sont bien je trouve. Saïd, j'aime bien, moi, j'aime bien Saïd. Plein de jeunes aiment bien Saïd ... parce que d'abord c'est des gens d'ici, [...] de la cité quoi parce qu'ils viennent d'ici. Ils essaient de nous aider, on respecte quoi, on respecte toujours... ils ont ramené quelqu'un d'autre, un autre adulte venu de nulle part, comme ça, c'est pas pareil...*[118]

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[116] Interview with 'Sara', 06/03/01, 09/03/01.
[117] Interview with 'Mohamed', 30/04/01.
[118] Interview with 'Waleed', 06/02/01, 19/02/01, 23/02/01.

Saïd is the *maison de jeunes animation* coordinator at the at the Vandrezanne *cité*. This confidence in the skills of a youth coordinator from the area can also take on a more 'ethnic' quality, as Sara, the *animatrice* reveals when discussing her former role as an *animatrice* in the *Maladrerie cité*:

> ... *dans d'autres maisons de jeunes, parce que l'animatrice n'était pas, était française ou quoi que ce soit, c'était, 'non, t'es pas' [...] 'elle est pas comme nous' [...]. Ils ont l'impression qu'il faut être solidaire entre eux, entre Arabes et le reste du monde, c'est des méchants [...]. Chaque fois qu'on leur mettait quelqu'un qui n'était pas d'origine maghrébine, c'était la foire.*[119]

This emulation of the *quartier* or the *cité* and its residents could be seen as a defence mechanism, a way in which the interviewees try and reverse the stigma that media and other dominant group discourses attach to those young people of North African and sub-Saharan African origin from the Parisian suburbs. It is therefore possible to argue that racial discrimination (whether latent or more direct) is an experience which many young people of North African origin in Seine-Saint-Denis are subjected to. In the next section, the question of discrimination, whether actual, perceived (i.e. no concrete 'incident' has taken place) or anticipated, will be considered as a phenomenon which links many of the interviewees who took part in the field research.

5.8 Racial Discrimination as a Collective Experience

Almost half of the sample of forty-four young people of North African origin claimed to have experienced some form of discrimination.[120] Fourteen men and seven young women (i.e. twenty-one in total) claimed to have experienced some form of racial discrimination in the work place; when trying to obtain employment or work placements (*stages*); or when trying to gain access to leisure activities such as nightclubs. Amongst the fourteen young men, four claimed to have experienced or to fear the experience of discrimination in the work place based on their physical appearance or their North African name. Six

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[119] Interview with 'Sara', 06/03/01, 09/03/01.
[120] This discrimination can either be seen to be racial (i.e. perceived to be based on physical appearance) or more cultural in nature (i.e. perceived to be based on generic cultural stereotypes). It is for this reason that it is possible to refer to cultural and/or racial discrimination. Not all interviewees will be discussed here, due to lack of space.

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men spoke of difficulties when trying to enter nightclubs and six young men claimed to have experienced racial discrimination in terms of insults or in a more discreet or latent manner. (N.B. Some interviewees claimed to have experienced discrimination in more than one of these situations). Only two young women claimed to have experienced some form of direct discriminatory treatment in the work place and the remaining five women concerned referred to their experience of "*des propos racistes*". Gender is a significant variable since the young men appear to suffer more racial discrimination, or at least they are more vocal about their experiences than their female counter-parts. Age also seems to be a factor since amongst the men: only five are of *lycée* age (Aziz, Fayçal, Mahmoud, Majdi and Yasser) and amongst the women only two (Idaya and Nadia) are of *lycée* age. Another feature which links the respondents is the general sense of helplessness or resignation in the face of racial stereotyping. Only three interviewees out of the twenty-one concerned, can be described as demonstrating a desire and ability to react against the discrimination they may suffer, in a positive or subjective manner.

Fouad, Mahmoud and Fayçal's reaction in the face of actual and anticipated discrimination with regards to employment and internships is fairly characteristic of the sense of resigned acceptance which seems to be reasonably widespread. For example, Fouad talks about his former job at a large Parisian department store, where he had worked for ten years in the music department:

> *Moi j'ai travaillé pendant dix ans dans un grand magasin, [...] très très très très motivé, très très speed, très professionnel, [...] je faisais le même travail carrément du cadre et pourquoi je suis parti, je suis parti, c'était en quatre-vingt dix-huit, je suis monté au bureau en disant au responsable, écoutez maintenant c'est bon quoi, je gagne neuf mille francs c'est bien mais j'aimerais bien qu'on reconnaisse mon travail, je fais un travail de dingue, [...] je fais tout ce travail là donc passez-moi cadre maintenant. Le responsable très gentiment m'a dit 'écoute, va faire un petit tour dans le magasin, si tu vois un étranger cadre, je te passe cadre dans les cinq minutes qui suit.' J'ai compris le message, ça veut dire, 'casse-toi t'es étranger' [...] la direction ne reconnaissait pas mon travail dans le sens où un Français pur qui s'appelle Damien, Jean-Pierre ou Jean-Patrick aurait eu tout de suite sa formation de cadre avec son badge orange. [...] Je voulais une vraie reconnaissance [...] quoi qu'on fasse, ça sera toujours pareil.*

When asked if he pursued the incident after he left his job, Fouad replies : "*Ça va changer quoi? Ça va changer quoi? Ils veulent pas de cadre étranger, ils mettront pas.*"[121]

Mahmoud and Fayçal are also very pessimistic about their chances of finding internships or employment, although they do not refer to any specific incident. Mahmoud refers to his experience of looking for work placements (as '*bac professionnel*' pupils, they are obliged to complete a work placement before they can obtain their baccalaureate):

> *Pour chercher un travail c'est compliqué, c'est difficile quand ils voient votre nom sur votre CV, voilà quoi. Ça joue beaucoup. Comme nous, on recherche des stages, c'est difficile de trouver des stages pour nous. Dans notre classe [...], le Français il trouve directement mais nous ils réfléchissent dix fois avant de nous prendre. [...] C'est comme ça que ça se passe. Envoyez un Français chez Renault, il y a des places chez Renault. Il y a un Français qui va se présenter, un Arabe derrière. Le patron il va plus dire 'je prends le Français'. Ça c'est sûr qu'il pense ça.*[122]

Later on in the group interview with Fayçal, Mahmoud and Razak, I ask about *revendications* they may have and whether they would make these demands simply as young people or with greater reference to their North African origins. Fayçal reveals a similar sense of disillusionment and resignation: "*...quand on cherche [du travail], ils veulent pas de nous...les diplômes ils veulent pas nous donner.*" When asked to explain why he thinks this is the case Fayçal replies : "*Parce que j'ai déjà fait... ouais avec tous mes diplômes et tout.*"[123] He then adds to this vague response by referring to a television programme he once saw about racial discrimination at nightclubs. So it would seem that his experience of racial discrimination is perhaps more a case of anticipation rather than *actual* experience, as in Fouad's case. However, what Fouad, Mahmoud and Fayçal *do* have in common is their sense of despondency in the face of actual or anticipated

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[121] Interview with 'Fouad' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01.

[122] Interview with 'Fayçal', 'Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01. Mahmoud also alludes to discrimination when trying to gain entry to nightclubs in Paris. However, once again, it is not entirely clear whether he has actually experienced this first hand.

[123] Ibid.

discrimination. As a result, they are stripped of their capacity to become subjects in two ways: first of all because of the discrimination they may face and secondly because of their inability to react constructively.[124]

Discrimination at nightclubs is a fairly common theme in a number of interviews with the young men who took part in the study. Tayeb, Larbi, Ahmed, Abdel Majid, Mansour and Mahmoud all mention this issue. No young women interviewees allude to this phenomenon, however. This could be due to a combination of factors: because women suffer this type of discrimination to a lesser degree and/or because they do not frequent nightclubs as much or at least they are reticent about admitting that they do so in front of their peers and a stranger (that is myself, the interviewer). The interviewees who *do* complain of such experiences tend to argue that they are discriminated against because they are from the Seine-Saint-Denis *département* ('*le quatre-vingt-treize*') and visibly of North African descent. The reference to '*le 93*' and how this can be a stigma (Ahmed and Mahmoud for example refer to how if they arrive at a nightclub by car, they try to park it some distance from the venue for fear that should the doormen see the Seine-Saint-Denis licence plate they will be refused entry) does however, seem to be less significant than the concern that they are visibly of North African origin. Indeed, Ahmed and Mahmoud both argue on separate occasions that Seine-Saint-Denis is synonymous with *les immigrés*. They and Mansour claim that someone of French or Portuguese origin from Seine-Saint-Denis or someone who has cultivated '*le look banlieusard*' has less difficulty gaining entry to nightclubs, restaurants or hotels.

The remaining male interviewees' experience of racism is more diffuse. For example, Mansour argues that his teachers and *animateurs* ruined his childhood dreams of becoming a lawyer because they destroyed his sense of self-worth when he was growing up. Waleed complains of being stereotyped : "*... j'aime pas trop, d'origine immigrée [...] on nous catalogue comme immigré quoi [...] d'origine maghrébine, parce*

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[124] Danièle Joly (1998), observed a similar sense of despondency when conducting research on identity amongst young people of Caribbean origin living in Birmingham: "Ce qui manque, c'est l'espoir de succès, qui entraîne un certain fatalisme." (p. 399) "Pourtant, bien qu'ils se disent attachés à la promotion des *blacks*, ils démontrent souvent leur défaitisme et leur négativisme devant le poids de leur handicap 'racial' et social." (p. 406).

qu'ici ça a une mauvaise image [...] je trouve que c'est un cliché... "[125] This contrasts with his insistence that he is '*shleh*' and that this should not be forgotten (5.1). Amir refers to daily police identity checks and "*des insultes par les forces de l'ordre*"[126] and Aziz, Majdi and Yasser talk at some length about their antagonistic relations with elderly French people on their respective housing estates. Aziz, Majdi and Yasser claim that they have been the victims of racist comments and jokes and they all react quite violently to the elderly people in question who are generally categorised as "*les petites vielles*". Their stance could of course be the result of a rather misogynistic and racist stance with regards to elderly French women. It is perhaps Majdi who reacts the most violently:

> *...on traîne pas en bas de chez nous par respect. On va chez les Français...tous les jours, [...] tous les jours on insulte... moi je suis sans pitié, je vous le dis, je suis sans pitié [...] on va pas voler où on habite. On va pas foutre le bordel où on habite... voilà [...] on va pas faire comme Ben Laden. Il va tuer des gens qui ont rien fait. Ceux-là qui me cherchent tous les gens... à chaque fois, que je sors de l'école, je me mets exprès en bas de chez eux, ces têtes là, je vais pas voir une dame qui m'a pas insulté, qui m'a rien fait... comme ils sont au premier, ça tombe très bien. On va se mettre exactement au premier...* [127]

The despondency and rage of the above interviewees' reactions to their experience of racism is problematic.[128] François Dubet points out in *Sociologie de l'expérience* that rage and rioting for example are sporadic and fairly short-lived. As a result, the individuals concerned are not able to develop and organise themselves into a social movement of any kind since there is no real leader and no specified goal or logic to their actions.[129] For example, although Majdi's daily 'squatting' of the apartment block where his 'aggressors' live is more long-term than one night of rioting for example, his intimidation tactics and refusal to recognise others do not enable him to engage in a process of subjectivity.

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[125] Interview with 'Waleed', 06/02/01, 19/02/01, 23/02/01.
[126] Interview with 'Amir', 21/12/00.
[127] Interview with 'Aziz', Majdi', 'Yasser' and 'Ibtisam', 17/09/01.
[128] I use the term *discrimination* to refer to racist/discriminatory *practice* such as refusal to employ someone on the basis of their origins and the term *racism* to refer to a more diffuse or latent behaviour, as expressed by a remark, comment or general attitude.
[129] See Dubet (1994), pp.193-194.

Many of the young women who participated in the field research can, to a certain extent, also be qualified as being passive observers of their own exclusion. Malika comes from Brittany and has only been living in the Paris region for the last two years. She contrasts the visibility of North African origin employees in *Ile-de-France* with their invisibility in Brittany and her views reveal limited expectations:

> *... chez nous [Bretagne] [...] il y a pas beaucoup de boulot. Il y a quand même des racistes chez nous, on trouve moins facilement de boulot qu'ici, enfin je vois beaucoup d'amis là-bas qui ont étudié et tout ça, ils sont obligés de bouger à l'extérieur pour trouver du boulot... on a encore du mal à trouver du boulot quoi... en Bretagne alors qu'à Paris, non, c'est quand même plus accessible pour trouver du boulot. Pourtant, même s'ils en parlent aux médias comme quoi il y a des problèmes mais je trouve, je sais pas, quand je suis arrivée ici, caissière rebeu, c'était, ils ont du mal, près de chez moi de prendre une caissière rebeu alors qu'ici, c'était oh là là, c'était extra quoi ! Ah oui ! Je dis enfin, moi j'ai fait trois années de chômage quand même et [...] j'ai eu affaire à ça, j'ai failli être vendeuse dans un petit magasin, j'étais prise, et en fait au dernier moment le directeur ne voulait pas parce que le fait que je sois arabe quoi... ouais je l'ai su parce que je connaissais la vendeuse qui travaillait dans le magasin mais autrement j'étais pas censée savoir... [...] mais à Paris c'est différent.*[130]

Malika is the only female interviewee, (apart from Sara who will be discussed in Chapter 6) to have been confronted with discrimination when applying for a job or a promotion. The other young women who *do* actually claim to have had experience of discrimination allude to more diffuse situations. For example, Idaya and Nadia refer to incidents when adults and elderly people have made racist comments relating to young people of non-European origin on the public transport system for example. Salima and Lamia also refer to several occasions when work colleagues have made remarks and allegations about North African families wanting to take advantage of the social security and family benefits system in France. Myriam vaguely alludes to '*des regards bizarres*' in certain areas of Paris:

> *Rien que dans la rue, des quartiers vraiment, Bastille, Opéra tout ça ben c'est des, vers la rue de Rivoli, c'est des coins, la rue Saint-Paul tout ça, l'Hôtel de Ville, je dis pas qu'ils sont tous comme ça mais c'est vrai que des fois, on regarde un peu bizarrement comme si tu faisais, je sais pas... genre tu vas dans un*

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[130] Interview with 'Malika' and 'Nacira', 21/11/00.

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magasin, acheter n'importe quoi... il y a un Black ou un Arabe qui rentre au BHV, bon ben le mec il va suivre quoi, tu vois ce que je veux dire, le mec qui est tout ce qui est surveillance tu vois ?[131]

Despite this statement, it is significant that Myriam does not use the first person when describing the scenario and she automatically talks about *"un Black ou un Arabe"* as though discrimination is something which is primarily a male experience. When asked if she has ever experienced anything like this herself, Myriam initially claims that she has not and then concedes that perhaps she may have to a limited extent but does not develop further.

So, it is possible to argue that racial and cultural discrimination in all its various forms is a fairly common experience amongst young people of North African origin living and working in Aubervilliers and its neighbouring towns. However, it does appear to be more present in terms of a collective conscience amongst the young men who took part in the research. Not only are the young men who claim to have suffered racial discrimination more numerous, they are also more likely to have related their experiences as a unified group, in a group interview situation for example. Tayeb and Larbi; Ahmed and Abdel Majid; Fayçal and Mahmoud; Aziz, Majdi and Yasser all presented their experiences of racism in a group context, and it is possible to argue that the individuals were perhaps encouraged to speak about their experiences by their peers and fellow interviewees. This dynamic is largely absent amongst the young women where, if in a group interview situation, one of the female interviewees *does* relate an incident, the peer rarely adds information in the same vein. (The exception is the interview with Lamia and Salima). So racial or cultural discrimination or the fear of future discrimination is something many of the interviewees share. It is a feature of a collective sense of experience – an experience which leads to the formation of a particular identity though not necessarily a *communautariste* identity. However, this sense of collective experience can develop, as we have seen above into a more *communautariste* stance, an example being Majdi and Yasser who subsequently target elderly French women on their housing estate. Less serious but equally 'désubjectivation' in character are the experiences of

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[131] Interview with 'Myriam', 20/03/01.

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Fouad, Mahmoud, Fayçal, Mansour and the young women.[132] Although they are able to identify their own alienation or exclusion (through recounting their experiences of discrimination) they remain resigned observers. Only a handful of interviewees are able to demonstrate a more subjective stance towards their past or anticipated experiences of discrimination and they will therefore be discussed in the next chapter which will focus on the processes of subjectivation observable amongst certain young people and absent amongst others.

We have now considered how, in relation to certain themes, the interviewees construct their experiences in terms of community dynamics and in relation to other themes, they construct their experiences according to more individualist/universalist values. The next chapter will examine how some interviewees are reasonably able to circulate around the three poles of Wieviorka's triangle of identity, whilst others do not manage to circulate at all and instead tend to oscillate in an erratic manner between the first two poles without entering into a process of subjectivation or *construction de soi*. It is neither possible nor desirable take into consideration all forty-four interviewees in one chapter. Rather, certain interviewees will be discussed by way of 'portrait' in an effort to demonstrate who is more or less able to engage in a process of subjectivity and who is not, and more importantly, *why*.

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[132] The term *désubjectivation* is used by Farhard Khosrokhavar and Alain Touraine in Alain Touraine and Farhard Khosrokhavar, *La Recherche de soi: dialogue sur le sujet* (Paris : Fayard, 2000). See for example, pp. 104-106.

CHAPTER 6

Subjectivity Amongst Interviewees

Introduction

The last two chapters have concentrated on how the young people of North African origin who participated in the field research constructed some of their life experiences according to individual-universalist values whereas other areas of their lives tended to be constructed with reference to a cultural or socio-economic (or socio-spatial) community. This chapter will focus on the subjectivity of the interviewees, that is, to what extent they can be seen to circulate successfully around the *espace identitaire*. Do they manage to articulate contending aspects of their identity? Or do they simply oscillate between individualist representations and more community-imposed representations of the self and their experiences? Or do they simply remain within one dimension or on one pole? (For example, do they try to show themselves to be as 'assimilated' as possible or on the contrary do they close in on themselves and their 'community'?) In response to these questions, a number of interviewees will be discussed by way of 'portrait' and this chapter will be divided analytically into three parts. The first section will focus on those interviewees who can be described as engaging in a process of subjectivity. The second section will focus on those interviewees whose experiences are characterised by a more fragmented or precarious subjectivity and the third will consider those interviewees who demonstrate very little subjectivity at all. However, before embarking on the analysis and portraits of the interviewees, it is necessary to revisit the notions of the subject, subjectivity and subjectivation, three concepts which were discussed in Chapter 3, but which it would be useful to re-clarify briefly.

Wieviorka defines the third pole of the triangle of ethnicity (the pole of subjectivity) as follows:

> Le troisième sommet du triangle de l'ethnicité nous oblige à nous dégager de l'idée d'une opposition entre modernité et tradition/communauté en imposant un

troisième terme, la subjectivité des acteurs. Celle-ci peut s'exprimer sous la forme d'un jaillissement culturel, d'une innovation, qui s'écarte des pratiques de reproduction liées au communautarisme pour renouveler la danse, la musique, la littérature, le cinéma, mais aussi, beaucoup plus largement, le style de vie, les pratiques vestimentaires ou alimentaires, ou encore le rapport au corps et la sexualité. Elle peut aussi passer par une expérience religieuse dans laquelle l'acteur se réfère non pas tant à une communauté qu'une exigence personnelle et morale.[1]

Wieviorka illustrates the notion of subjectivity by referring to Nilüfer Göle who argues that it would be erroneous to claim that all Muslim women who wear a headscarf are simply oppressed by Islam and the community but rather that for many women the decision to wear a headscarf can be seen as a personal choice which may also refer to certain political or social ideas. The analysis of the interviewees that follows will concentrate on the notion of "innovation" or creativity in the widest possible sense, i.e. in terms of lifestyle.

By creativity, I am referring to the ability to reinterpret the 'roles' which are handed down to an individual by their own community of origin as well as the more Republican or universal 'roles' which the public sphere imposes on citizens. Wieviorka writes about the notion of combining the community and universalist dimensions of experience as characterising subjective ethnicity and how difficult this process can be:

Fragile, le pôle subjectif de l'ethnicité est également instable; il produit des rassemblements plus ou moins éphémères, des mouvements culturels en constante transformation, des modes dont l'existence peut être brève. Sa faiblesse doit beaucoup à la difficulté qu'il y a pour l'acteur, à conjuguer la référence identitaire, collective, et une demande d'égalité, individuelle, inscrite dans le premier des trois sommets de notre triangle.[2]

According to Wieviorka, in order for this fragile subjectivity to develop, the actor must maintain a reference to a community but also be able to distance him or herself from this community of origin, and within this process the actor must reveal a capacity to demand recognition in the face of racism (whether institutional or 'direct') and exclusion. It is this

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[1] Michel Wieviorka, *La Démocratie à l'épreuve : nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris : La Découverte, 1993), p. 129.
[2] Ibid., p. 132.

capacity to demand recognition and change which links the concept of the subject (*le sujet*) with that of the social movement, which will be discussed further below, in relation to the work of Alain Touraine. However, subjectivity or as Wieviorka calls it, subjective ethnicity, should not be understood as merely the synthesis of collective-community and individual-universalist identity. Rather, as Wieviorka points out: "...la subjectivité [...] témoigne en effet bien plus d'une tension que d'une synthèse."[3] It is for this reason that although Wieviorka and other researchers discuss the notion of ethnicity or identity in terms of circulation, we should not expect individuals to circulate in an entirely coherent manner. However, we can still argue that some individuals circulate more easily than others, i.e. they manage "tensions" more successfully. Subjectivity is therefore perhaps best understood as a process and it is for this reason that I shall use this term as a general rule rather than the 'subject', since it conveys better the notion of tension and action. Wieviorka claims that this process is precarious in that there is always a risk that the individual will fall back on one of the two other poles, either attempting to subscribe entirely to individualist/universal values or on the contrary remaining within the protective realm of the community.

Thus, it is possible to identify three main themes which arise out of Wieviorka's definition of subjectivity: the notion of erratic and unstable identity, the theme of innovation or creativity (also present in the sense of *bricolage identitaire* or Roger Bastide's *sociologie du bricolage* and Lapeyronnie's *construction de soi*) and the notion of action or the social movement.[4]

As pointed out above, the focus of Wieviorka's model is ethnicity or subjective ethnicity and how this is achieved. The triangle of ethnicity can be seen as an addition to

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[3] Wieviorka (1993), p.132.
[4] Here, my use of the term *bricolage identitaire* also draws on Roger Bastide's definition of *a sociologie du bricolage* as detailed in Chapter 3. See Roger Bastide, 'Mémoire collective et sociologie du bricolage', *L'Année sociologique*, 21.3 (1970), 65-108. Nacira Guénif Souilamas, *Des "beurettes" aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains* (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 2000) also uses the term *le bricolage* to refer to the process of reinterpretation of roles as do other sociologists such as Dominique Schnapper, Pascale Krief and Emmanuel Peignard in the EFFNATIS (Working Paper 30) European Commission study 'French Immigration and Integration Policy: Between Universalist Principles and Social Practice' (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, January 2000).

a larger body of literature on the *subject* and the sociology of action. Indeed as mentioned in Chapter 3, one of the main authors whose work has focused on the subject and subjectivation is Alain Touraine. At the heart of Touraine's definition of the 'Subject' is the notion of action and change. As referred to in Chapter 3, the subject is thus also referred to as an actor:

> *Le Sujet est la volonté d'un individu d'agir et d'être reconnu comme acteur.* (Italicised by Touraine) [...] l'acteur n'est pas celui qui agit conformément à la place qu'il occupe dans l'organisation sociale, mais celui qui modifie l'environnement matériel et surtout social dans lequel il est placé en transformant la division du travail, les modes de décision, les rapports de domination ou les orientations culturelles.[5]

This process of transformation can also be called *la subjectivation*, which (to recapitulate) Touraine defines in the following manner:

> La subjectivation est le contraire de la soumission de l'individu à des valeurs transcendantes : l'homme se projetait en Dieu ; désormais, dans le monde moderne, c'est lui qui devient le fondement des valeurs, puisque le principe central de la moralité devient la liberté, une créativité qui est sa propre fin et s'oppose à toutes les formes de dépendance.[6]

So in relation to the interviewees who took part in the field research, it is interesting to examine to what extent they engage with or submit to the *"valeurs transcendantes"* of their community (in the sense of their family for example) and whether they are capable of this creativity or *bricolage identitaire* with regards to their own experiences.

As well as understanding Touraine's notion of *"créativité"* in terms of how individuals might construct their identity on an individual, personal, or micro level, it can

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[5] Alain Touraine, *Critique de la modernité* (Paris : Fayard, 1992), pp.242-243. Although Touraine argues in *Critique de la modernité* that "Sujet et acteur sont des notions inséparables ..." (p. 244) he explains in *La Recherche de soi : dialogue sur le Sujet* that he prefers to focus on the notion of the *sujet* more than the *acteur*: "Je me suis d'abord battu pendant trente ans pour défendre l'idée *d'acteur*, mais aujourd'hui il me semble beaucoup plus pertinent d'insister sur l'idée de *sujet*, car on n'est acteur que dans la mesure où l'on se constitue soi-même comme sujet de sa propre vie et de ses actes." (Alain Touraine, Farhad Khosrokhavar, *La Recherche de soi : dialogue sur le Sujet* (Paris: Fayard, 2000), p. 113. See also Chapter 3.

[6] Touraine (1992), pp. 244-245. See Chapter 3 for further discussion of subjectivity and subjectivation.

also be understood on a more *macro* level, that is, in terms of social movement or action. So as well as considering how the interviewees juggle their individual-universalist and collective-community identities, the analysis of the various trajectories will also attempt to show whether they can be described as potentially forming a social or cultural movement. Touraine defines a social movement as follows: "Un mouvement social n'est pas un courant d'opinion, puisqu'il met en cause une relation de pouvoir qui s'inscrit très concrètement dans les institutions et les organisations, mais il est la visée d'orientations culturelles à travers des relations de pouvoir et des rapports d'inégalité."[7] The example *par excellence* of a social movement as defined in Touraine's terms is the workers' movement which, during the industrial age, was able to conflictualise its relationship with the *bourgeoisie* by organising itself into trade unions. We have shown how racial or cultural discrimination (actual, anticipated and perceived) is a phenomenon which links many of the young people who took part in the field study. However, can the interviewees be said to conflictualise their experience of exclusion and domination into social or cultural action?

6.1 Three Axes of Subjectivity

So the main axes of the analysis of the subjectivity of the interviewees are as follows: 1. the degree of circulation around the triangle of ethnicity (identity); 2. the extent to which the interviewees can be seen to 're-invent' their roles and sense of identity (*bricolage identitaire/construction de soi*) and 3. the extent to which they can be seen to potentially be social or cultural *actors* (on an *individual* level) as well as the extent to which they can be seen as potentially becoming part of a *collective* consciousness which not only denounces cultural and social domination (e.g. racial discrimination, unequal wealth distribution) but also advocates change.[8] These three axes will be discussed in relation to

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[7] Touraine (1992), p. 282.

[8] This third 'axis' of subjectivity corresponds to Alain Touraine's definitions of social movement, the Subject and the actor, as detailed in the introduction to the present chapter and as further detailed in Chapter 3. My understanding of a social movement/capacity for social action will therefore include the denunciation of and action against institutional and cultural domination. N.B. When I refer to the capacity to become a social or cultural actor on an 'individual', 'personal' or 'micro' level, this should *not* be confused with 'individualist' action or action purely for individual gain, such as the desire to be a consumer for example, where no reference is necessarily made to the exploitation of one's community of 'origin' or *appartenances ethniques* etc. Rather, the use of the term *individual* social/cultural action as opposed to *collective* social/cultural action is used to distinguish between, for example, an 'ethnic minority'

the various interviewees' portraits. Since the sample was comprised of forty-four interviewees, it is not possible to discuss each respondent's case in detail. Rather, I have chosen to concentrate on a reduced number of interviewees for each 'category' and each category reflects, as pointed out above, the varying degrees of subjectivity 'achieved' by the interviewees. The interviewees to be discussed in this chapter have already appeared in Chapters 4 and/or 5. However, whereas the two preceding chapters showed that some aspects of the interviewees' lives were governed by individual-universalist values whilst other aspects were governed by collective-community values, the portraits of the interviewees in *this* chapter will be more holistic. The next section will discuss the trajectories of a number of young people of North African origin who can be considered as achieving a fairly advanced degree of subjectivity in the construction of their experiences.

6.2 'Advanced' Subjectivity

Myriam

Myriam featured to a certain extent in Chapter 4, which dealt with the individual elements of the interviewees' identity. She also featured in Chapter 5 but only marginally in the sections on marriage and discrimination. In other words, although her experience was discussed in Chapter 5, it should be pointed out that she is more concerned by the collective as opposed to *communautaire* dynamic. To briefly recapitulate, Myriam is a twenty-four-year-old student nurse, training at a further education college based in Aubervilliers. She was born in Paris and has lived in Paris' 11th *arrondissement* for most of her life until she and her mother moved to the 19th *arrondissement* two years ago. Her father, who is now deceased, emigrated to France from Algeria (Kabylia) in the 1960s and was a '*chef de rang*' in a restaurant. Her mother later joined her father and worked as a nursing auxiliary until recently. Myriam is the second of three children and she is a French national. She understands '*kabyle*' (Algerian Berber) very well and speaks it with a French accent.

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individual's denunciation and desire to overcome discrimination etc. and their involvement in an identifiable 'movement' with such aims.

Myriam is a rather exceptional interviewee because of her insistence on her link with France throughout the interview. Where Myriam's self-definition differs from that of the majority of the interviewees is that she claims that she has *"la mentalité de la France"*. Although most other young women interviewees distance themselves from the *'mentalité du bled'*, they do not explicitly argue that they have a French 'mentality' since this would indicate that they equated themselves and their life-styles with their *'français de souche'* counterparts – a life-style which many (about half) of the female interviewees implied was too liberal in their view.

Myriam identifies more or less unproblematically with the notion of being French: *"Je suis née en France. J'ai la mentalité de la France [...] je considère que mon pays c'est la France."*[9] However, she is reinventing what it means to be French because she does not refer to herself as *'française'* unequivocally – that is she does not perceive herself as sharing the same values as 'French-origin' young people. By articulating her sense of identity in terms of being French, she is not trying to prove that she has become 'assimilated'. Rather, her articulation of identity is an active individual process where she 'takes and leaves' what suits her when it comes to what she perceives as *"la mentalité française"*. Indeed, when alluding to the stereotypes that North African families are subjected to with regards to marriage (arranged marriages for example) she reveals that she does not unquestioningly reproduce a celebratory discourse about liberty:

> *... tous les préjugés qu'il peut y avoir sur les Arabes, tout ça, ça m'énerve un petit peu [...] qu'ils ont tous des mariages arrangés, que les filles ont pas le droit de sortir [...] alors que c'est pas vrai, ils sont pas tous pareils, une certaine liberté, c'est vrai, mais bon, [...] la liberté, mais bon après la liberté, liberté, je veux dire, je·sais pas, ils font des conneries aussi, c'est pas non plus...* [10]

When discussing her choice of future marriage partner, Myriam also swings over to a more community-type approach, emphasising the importance of her Kabyle background. She insists that her choice (that he is a Muslim above all – born or converted) is of the most utmost importance but that she will also take into account her family's preferences

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[9] Interview with 'Myriam', 20/03/01.
[10] Ibid.

for a Muslim (non-convert) man of Kabyle origin. She adds that she would also prefer a Kabyle partner herself if possible, the reason being linked to the notion of 'mentality':

> *... ma mère elle va pas m'obliger de me marier avec un tel ou un tel. Je choisis, j'ai mes études, je choisis la personne avec qui je me marie, [...] c'est vrai que je préférais au niveau de la culture que la personne soit musulmane, si possible kabyle. Maintenant on verra la personne que je trouverais mais musulmane en priorité parce qu'au niveau des cultures [...] et puis au niveau de la famille franchement, je dis, ce qui est, quelqu'un qui est pas musulman, il sera mal accepté...* [11]

When asked if she can explain her preference for a Kabyle partner Myriam replies: "*Ben c'est par rapport à la langue. On parle la même langue. On a les mêmes, on a la même, entre guillemets, la mentalité, voilà quoi. Moi je préfère.*"[12]

So on the one hand, Myriam is keen to point out that she has a French 'mentality' or outlook, yet at the same time she claims that it would be preferable to marry a *Kabyle* because he would share the same outlook or 'mentality' as her. Her French outlook or 'mentality' comes into play in terms of personal choice and her sense of Kabyle identity also comes into play as far as relationship compatibility is concerned. Myriam's ideas about marriage thus demonstrate her ability to circulate around the *espace identitaire* rather well. In addition, it is possible to argue that she is a *bricoleuse* because she is creative but at the same time remains within a negotiating dynamic vis-à-vis her family's wishes and expectations. Myriam could therefore be described as an "*artisane d'une liberté tempérée*", to borrow the term used by Nacira Guénif Souilamas.[13] (See 5.5)

With regard to religion and religious practice Myriam demonstrates her subjectivity by claiming that she is a practising Muslim, yet she adds that for her, religious faith and practice should remain in the private sphere: "*...je fais ma religion mais chez moi, voilà, donc je fais pas, je pratique mais bon, j'ai la foi et uniquement pour*

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Guénif Souilamas (2000).

moi. Je montre pas aux autres donc je suis très croyante et puis voilà quoi."[14] Myriam

does *not* pray as she has no knowledge of Arabic. However, she is learning Arabic so as

to able to pray in the near future. She observes Ramadan and does not consume pork or

alcohol. Myriam also volunteers her thoughts on the Islamic headscarf despite the

absence of a question concerning this issue: "... *bon au niveau voile et compagnie tout*

ça, je suis contre. [...] bon je suis civilisée, ça veut dire, je m'habille à l'européenne,

enfin je veux dire, je suis en France, je suis complètement adaptée à la façon de vivre des

Français, complètement..."[15] Myriam demonstrates a certain degree of subjectivity

because of her combination of a commitment to Islam and a critique of the aspects she

does *not* agree with. However, her position, although subjective to a significant extent, is

not an example of a "gestion harmonieuse" of collective-community and individual-

universalist values. (Wieviorka points out that a "gestion harmonieuse" is not, in any

case, possible.)[16] This is because of her apparent inability to recognise that women who

wear the headscarf could also be considered as "*civilisée*". The colonial connotations of

the term '*civilisé*' seems therefore to indicate a certain inability on Myriam's part to

recognise others who practise differently to herself, as subjects.[17]

Despite her refusal to recognise the possible subjectivity of those Muslim women

who may choose to wear a headscarf, Myriam does seem to circulate fairly well within

the triangle of identity and demonstrates a capacity and a desire to reinterpret certain

roles and therefore create her own experience).[18] So it is possible to argue that Myriam's

subjectivity is expressed according to the first two axes of subjectivation outlined above

(circulation and *bricolage identitaire*). However, it is not possible to claim that Myriam

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[14] Interview with 'Myriam', 20/03/01.
[15] Ibid.
[16] See Wieviorka (1993), p. 136.
[17] Alain Touraine writes about subjectivity and recognition of the Other in *Critique de la modernité*, (Paris : Fayard, 1992): "Pour sortir de la conscience et de ses pièges, il faut que le sujet s'affirme en reconnaissant l'autre comme sujet." (p. 259).
[18] As pointed out in Chapter 3, for further discussion of the notion of 'experience' see François Dubet, *Sociologie de l'expérience* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), where he introduces the concept in the following terms : "La notion d'expérience sociale s'est imposée à moi comme étant la moins maladroite pour désigner la nature de l'objet rencontré dans quelques études empiriques où les conduites sociales n'apparaissent pas réductibles à de pures applications de codes intériorisées ou à des enchaînements de choix stratégiques [...] Pour autant, ces conduites [...] sont organisées par des principes stables mais hétérogènes. C'est cette hétérogénéité elle-même qui invite à parler d'expérience, l'expérience sociale étant définie par la combinaison de plusieurs logiques d'action.", p. 91.

could potentially be part of a collective consciousness (social movement) as it is defined by Touraine (see above), since although she does express some annoyance at the stigmatisation of "*les Arabes*", she generally does not see the need to react against this and demand particular recognition of such a state of affairs: "*Non, quelque chose à revendiquer, non, moi je suis kabyle, je suis musulmane, je suis fière de l'être et j'ai ma vie, ma religion, je la vis chez moi, je m'habille comme je veux donc à partir de là, ça va...*"[19]

Nevertheless, it is still possible to argue that Myriam's construction of her experiences reflects an advanced degree of subjectivity. Why does she manage this? The fact that she is doing well in her studies and has a clear career path before her may be of significance. Myriam also took part in an individual interview as opposed to a group forum and this may mean that she felt more 'free' to express her ideas without pressure from classmates and peers. We saw in Chapter 5 how the notion of group unity and presenting a homogenous image to the researcher was fairly prevalent in group interview situations.[20] Furthermore, Myriam has always lived in Paris and for most of her life in a relatively middle-class *arrondissement* (the 11th *arrondissement*). Her mother works and her father was a service sector employee as opposed to a worker. Her socio-economic background and inexperience of social exclusion is surely also linked to her increased capacity to circulate and invent her own sense of identity since she does not feel that she is *assigned* her Algerian origins in a negative and stigmatising manner, in contrast to Mahmoud for example, whose case was partially discussed in Chapter 5 and who will be discussed further below.

Hala

Hala is an eighteen-year-old pupil at *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She is in her final year and about to sit her baccalaureate examinations in the *Economie-Sciences Sociales* stream. She was born in France and both her parents are Tunisian. She holds dual French - Tunisian nationality. She has four sisters and one brother. Hala is one of the few

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[19] Interview with 'Myriam', 20/03/01.
[20] With regards to interviewer 'effect' as opposed to 'peer' effects, see Appendix 2.

interviewees in her age group to want to discuss her parents' past and their arrival in France in detail. For instance, several interviewees (eleven individuals) admit that they are not sure when their parents (or their fathers) arrived in France, nor how they earned their living. Hala, however, is able and willing to describe her parents' backgrounds at some length. Her father arrived in France in 1974 and her mother joined him five years later. He initially worked as a warehouse operative and then became a company employee. Hala's mother does not work.

Hala is one of a handful of interviewees who takes Arabic lessons in an immigrant association. She is enrolled in a Tunisian women's association. Hala claims that she decided to learn Arabic formally so as to be able to communicate better with her extended family who live in Tunisia. Although she feels slightly under pressure to be able to talk to relatives in Arabic during their annual holidays, she is critical of what she perceives as the homogeneity of the other Tunisian and Tunisian-origin women who are part of the association in question, and as a result, she distances herself from the 'community': " *Les Tunisiens, les femmes surtout, il y a une certaine manière de vivre que j'accepte pas du tout quoi... C'est la manière de vouloir toujours rejeter la personne qui est pas comme les autres. En fait elles sont un peu toutes faites dans le même moule ...*"[21] Hala's comments about the association and her desire to learn Arabic is an example of her subjectivity because it reveals her ability to engage with, yet distance herself from, her 'cultural community.' Indeed as Touraine points out: "Le sujet est individu et il est communauté... "[22]

Hala also demonstrates an ability to detach herself from community-sanctioned stances with regards to religion. She is a practising Muslim and she is also one of the few interviewees who regularly prays in addition to fasting (during Ramadan) and observing the dietary restrictions. Although her practice does not diverge from that of her parents and siblings to a great extent, and the family does seem to practice as a family unit, it is

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[21] Interview with 'Hala' and 'Mona', 18/05/01.
[22] Alain Touraine, 'La Formation du sujet' in *Penser le Sujet : autour d'Alain Touraine* ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris: Fayard, 1995), pp. 21-45 (p.32).

the reflection and focus on the notion of religiosity or faith (as opposed to religion[23]) which suggests that Hala's approach to Islam *cannot* be reduced to a simple internalisation of certain norms, handed down by her parents:

> ....*ils* [les parents] *nous ont dit ce qu'il fallait faire, ce qu'il fallait pas faire et moi j'avoue que j'étais la seule dans ma famille, [...] quand j'étais adolescente à me poser des questions. 'Comment ça se fait ci, pourquoi je peux pas faire ça, pourquoi je peux pas faire ça, pourquoi je peux pas faire ceci' et j'ai eu un temps comme ça où j'avais des doutes mais là non non, je suis, toute ma vie j'y ai cru mais j'avais un doute au niveau, pourquoi je devrais pas manger de porc, pourquoi je devrais porter le foulard et là j'avoue que non, on est tous croyants dans ma famille, on est tous pratiquants, on est tous pratiquants du mieux qu'on peut, c'est-à-dire qu'on fait tous la prière sauf la petite évidemment mais il y a eu une certaine manière de nous y mettre qui était vraiment différente de ce qu'on peut voir dans une autre famille. Par exemple j'étais la dernière à faire la prière alors que j'ai ma petite sœur, elle avait commencé depuis longtemps parce que mes parents m'ont laissé le choix, mes parents m'ont dit, 'tu la fais quand tu pourras, quand tu sentiras que tu dois la faire' [...] j'avoue que mes parents, parce qu'ils sont pas nés dans une famille où [...] l'islam, c'était pas juste des pratiques ni tradition... là moi-même, mon grand frère, ma sœur ou toutes les sœurs, on lit énormément des livres pour apprendre la religion en elle-même...*"[24]

Indeed it would seem that Hala's faith is a very important if not the most important aspect of her sense of identity since she tends to focus on being a French Muslim rather than on her Tunisian origins:

> ...*je suis née ici, ma vie est ici, l'école ici, les amis sont ici, mais ma manière de vivre, je parle, je parle en même temps l'arabe et j'ai une manière de vivre qui est arabe et j'ai aussi envie de garder, c'est clair que je me sens évidemment plus musulmane que française ou arabe et je sais que la culture arabe, je voudrais aussi la transmettre à mes enfants par exemple, je voudrais que mes enfants apprennent l'arabe aussi quoi mais je serais pas par exemple contre épouser [...] un petit Chinois même...*[25]

Thus, the axes of subjectivity which relate to Hala's experience are circulation and *bricolage identitaire/construction de soi*. Hala's subjectivity (expressed through her

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[23] Georg Simmel makes this distinction in *Essays on Religion* edited and translated by Horst Jürgen Helle in collaboration with Ludwig Nieder (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). See Chapter 5 as well.
[24] Interview with 'Hala' and 'Mona', 18/05/01.
[25] Ibid.

ability to distance herself from the notion of roles and create her own sense of values) is possibly due to a number of factors. Academically, she is a high achiever. After she sits her baccalaureate, she intends to register in preparatory classes and sit the competitive examination for the prestigious *École Normale Supérieure*. In socio-economic terms as well, Hala does not face exclusion – her father is a company employee, rather than a worker and she does not live in a stigmatised or deprived *cité* or housing estate environment. Both of these factors means that she does not feel at risk of social exclusion and is thus more 'at liberty' to construct her own sense of identity by referring at times to more individual-universalist ideas and at others to more collective-community values.

Djamel

Djamel featured in Chapter 4 because he tends to articulate his experience according to the individual-universalist pole of the triangle of identity. However, he does manage to reconcile his sense of individual-universalist values with his Algerian origins. Djamel is thirty-one years old and works as a *conseiller principal d'éducation* (chief school supervisor) in a *collège*. He was born in France and grew up as an only child in le Blanc-Mesnil, a suburb close to Aubervilliers.[26] He completed a *maîtrise* in Social Communication at the University of Paris III – Sorbonne Nouvelle (Censier). Like Hala, Djamel is one of the few interviewees to visibly take a keen interest in his parents' past. He points out that his father fought for France during the Second World War and then returned to his village near Constantine in Algeria shortly afterwards. He then returned to France in 1954 and found employment with the *SNCF* as a railway layer, where he worked until retirement. His mother emigrated to France in 1955 with her sister and married Djamel's father in 1965. His mother, who is now deceased, had worked as a cleaner.

Djamel is very aware of the significance of his cultural origins and his education in France within a Republican, secular education system and how both have informed his sense of identity:

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[26] As a leading member of a football association in Aubervilliers, Djamel has close ties with the town.

....on a un apport culturel important, qu'il faut pas renier, et qu'il faut accepter complètement, c'est comme la religion je pense, les valeurs, faut pas oublier ses racines parce que c'est important, c'est le socle de notre identité individuelle quoi et en même temps, il faut s'adapter, s'adapter à un milieu, à un endroit, à un environnement qui n'est pas l'environnement familial [...] Alors comment est-ce qu'on on s'adapte? On s'adapte avec les amis, avec les amis qui nous entourent d'origine française, on s'adapte aussi à l'école, surtout avec l'école, je crois que le système éducatif à l'époque où je l'ai vécu en, dans les années soixante-dix, soixante-dix-huit, soixante-dix-neuf, quatre-vingt a contribué vraiment à créer une identité sociale en gros en même temps qu'une identité culturelle [que] mes parents m'apportaient entre l'école, les valeurs républicaines laïques et les amis qui nous montraient autre chose de ce qu'on était culturellement quoi donc ça, ça a contribué à faire un mélange.[27]

Although most other interviewees who participated in the study are also profoundly marked by the fact that they have been/are being educated in a Republican, secular school system which informs how they relate to their families and their background, very few would explicitly comment upon this in such a manner. It is not clear that this is because the younger interviewees are not really fully conscious of their multiple identities or whether they are aware of them but begrudge or are hesitant to acknowledge this in front of peers or in front of an interviewer.

Djamel discusses the 'benefits' of mixing with people from different backgrounds and he claims that the reason some of his friends have not achieved the same level of success academically and professionally is due to their lack of exposure to people with different horizons:

Moi, ça s'est plutôt bien passé parce que scolairement ça s'est passé plutôt bien, j'avais beaucoup d'amis de différentes origines, de différents horizons mais je sais que ça peut être difficile à vivre [...] chez certains qui sont très accrochés au milieu familial et en même temps qui ont des amis de même origine culturelle, qu'eux, donc de même origine maghrébine [...] J'ai des amis qui ont plus de mal à trouver leurs places dans la société parce qu'il y avait un petit, comment dire, il y avait une communauté [...] en gros quoi et ils ont un petit peu de mal à s'en sortir ...[28]

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[27] Interview with 'Djamel', 15/05/01. *SNCF – Société nationale des chemins de fer* : French national railway company.
[28] Ibid.

Djamel has an individualised or personalised practice of Islam. He does not reject the notion of being a Muslim. Rather, he tends to 'take and leave' what he personally believes to be legitimate. Djamel's own personal convictions become apparent in his explanation of why he has never fasted during Ramadan :

> *Moi, le ramadan, j'ai jamais fait... et quand on me disait 'pourquoi tu fais pas ?' je disais bon j'ai pas envie de la faire [...] parce que ça m'intéressait pas, que c'était pas un signe fort pour moi culturellement [...] par contre, j'ai jamais mangé du porc [...] parce que pour moi, c'était vraiment un signe identitaire culturel important...* [29]

Although it could be argued that Djamel is simply reproducing his parents' more secular attitudes to religious practice and thus is just as much represented by the community model of Islam, it should be pointed out that the community model should not only be understood in family terms, but in terms of the social/peer group community. In this respect then, Djamel can still be seen to construct his experience of religion in a subjective manner because he mentions that his school friends and peers who fasted often questioned why he did not fast as well.

It is perhaps surrounding the question of discrimination that Djamel's attempts to become a *sujet* or an *agent actif* in the Tourainian sense, are most visible since he insists that young people of North African origin should not fall into the trap of the victim:

> *... ça [la discrimination] doit exister sans aucun problème. Moi je l'ai pas vécue, je suis rentré dans la fonction publique et je l'ai pas vécue. Ça doit exister, c'est sûr. Fais attention de pas se poser en victime par rapport à ça. Il faut travailler pour changer les choses c'est sûr. Qui peut travailler pour changer les choses ? Ceux qui [...] les quarante ans, ceux qui ont vécu ces discriminations mais surtout pas se poser en tant que victime [...] si on se pose en tant que victime, on fait rien...* [30]

Djamel's attitude with regards to racial discrimination thus corresponds to Touraine's definition of social movement as follows :

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[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

Quand je parle de mouvements sociaux je ne parle pas des crises, des éruptions, des bouleversements d'un système social. Je parle, je ne parle que d'un acteur collectif qui porte en lui le sens, non pas de ces crises, mais d'une volonté de changement et de réappropriation de la société. [...] Un mouvement social est un rappel à soi et à la liberté créatrice d'un acteur qui lutte contre sa déshumanisation, son exploitation, sa dépendance. [31]

One of the main differences between Djamel and many of the younger interviewees (particularly the young men who were interviewed at the local *Lycée professionnel Van Gogh*) is that Djamel sees his 'origins' as just *one* aspect of his identity whereas some of the younger, more disillusioned men see them as the only thing they have. This is therefore experienced in a paradoxical manner because on the one hand, they think that they will find it difficult to find employment because they are visibly of North African origin, yet in order to deal with this stigma, they try to transform it into something positive, something to be proud of, in a rather hostile manner.[32] This over-inflated 'pride' resulting from stigmatisation is one of the main factors which prevents them from circulating around all three poles of the triangle of identity.

There are a number of factors which are most likely linked to Djamel's ability to circulate around the various poles of identity whilst creating his own sense of identity and displaying his social actor potential. First of all there is Djamel's age. He talks about his period of 'identity crisis' when he was in his late teens and it is possible to argue that his increased maturity allows him to reflect on his past and current trajectories:

... à certaines périodes, ce mélange entre seize, dix-sept, dix-huit, dix-neuf ans, ce mélange s'entrechoque entre guillemets. On n'a plus l'impression que c'est complémentaire. On a l'impression que c'est contradictoire alors soit on se dit je suis tout maghrébin ou je suis tout français, anti-maghrébin en gros. Vraiment un choc. Moi c'est ce que j'ai vécu à cette époque là, seize-dix-huit ans, ça a été un petit peu difficile parce que justement ce choc de cultures entre guillemets [...] une fois que cette... [période] est passée, on s'adapte, on s'adapte et puis je crois on prend le modèle culturel sans aucun problème parce qu'on bâtit un peu notre

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[31] Alain Touraine, Farhad Khsorokhavar (2000), p. 168. See also Chapter 3.

[32] See Chapter 5 for a reference to Erving Goffman's work on stigma and the attempts of stigmatised individuals to reverse their stigma. (Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Book, 1963).

idéologie là-dessus mais en même temps, on s'attache surtout, enfin moi, c'est ce que j'ai fait, à ce qu'on soit un modèle social, enfin à qu'on soit (sic) [ait] une identité sociale[...] parce que, parce que c'est celle-là qui va me permettre [...] de m'épanouir et d'évoluer, avoir une promotion sociale entre guillemets...[33]

Secondly, Djamel establishes a link between his lack of experience of discrimination and his entry into the civil service. The sense of security he has achieved through stable employment also leaves him the 'space' to create his own sense of hybrid identity that those in the shadow of social exclusion do not enjoy. Djamel's family and upbringing represent significant factors as well. His mother appears to have been a central figure in his life, his father receding into background, like so many of the immigrant fathers.[34] Djamel talks about his mother's supportive stance with regards to his education and use of the French language. Thus the linguistic home environment was not an obstacle but rather a complement to Djamel's identification with the 'French' aspect of his experience or identity.

Thirdly, Djamel's relationship with Algeria, reflected in his recounting of the unpleasant aspects of going back to the '*bled*' during the school holidays, may have been encouraged by his mother's own detachment and disillusionment:

Moi j'ai toujours gardé des souvenirs mitigés de là-bas parce qu'il y avait des gens qui m'insultaient, qui me respectaient pas... qui me disaient 'sale immigré retourne dans ton pays', c'est-à-dire 't'es pas algérien, retourne en France' en gros, 'ton pays c'est la France.' Donc j'avais quelques conflits avec certains y compris avec mes cousins qui me prenaient un peu de haut, surtout quand j'étais petit, c'était pas facile quand j'étais petit. [...] Ma mère... elle était considérée comme des gens qui avaient de l'argent, parce qu'on était venu en France [...] donc on retournait dans ces petits villages là, donc il fallait qu'on ramène des choses aux gens parce qu'on avait de l'argent, fallait qu'on ramène... donc on ramenait à la famille c'est sûr mais c'était un peu trop. [...] donc ma mère comme elle était assez forte de caractère elle hésitait pas leur dire, 'faut pas nous prendre pour des vaches à lait' entre guillemets, [...]. 'Nous, on travaille, on a du mal à travailler.'[35]

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[33] Interview with 'Djamel', 15/05/01.
[34] See Nacira Guénif Souilamas (2000) in section entitled, "*Une figure brisée, le père*", pp.124-139 for further explanation about immigrant fathers receding into the background.
[35] Interview with 'Djamel', 15/05/01.

Touran

Touran has, like the above interviewees, also featured in the two preceding chapters. In Chapter 4 Touran's rather Republican and secularised approach to religious belief was discussed and in Chapter 5, his strong sense of attachment to his *quartier* (especially during Ramadan) revealed his sense of collective identity. However, it is more appropriate to discuss the case of Touran in terms of his subjectivity, that is, in terms of his ability and potential as a social actor. Touran is a twenty-one year old sports science student at the University of Paris XIII. He was born in Algeria (Kabylia) and came to France with his family at the age of eight. He is Algerian. His father emigrated to France in search of work in the early 1980s, Touran and his mother following two years later. His father has worked as a foreman at a well-known paper factory for twenty years and his mother is a housewife. He has five younger sisters and one younger brother. Touran has always lived in the same area of Aubervilliers. He started amateur boxing in a local club three years ago. The coach at the club is a well-known former Olympic boxer of Moroccan origin. Touran has been competing for the last year in regional and national boxing championships

Boxing has become a central aspect of his life and is linked with his subjectivity and more specifically with his social actor potential. Touran is the treasurer of a newly formed Aubervilliers-based boxing association. The association, set up by Touran's boxing coach, has existed for eighteen months and its primary aim is to provide better boxing facilities for young people in Aubervilliers. It also has an educational dimension as well. Touran talks about the objectives of the association:

> ...c'est une association qui regroupe des boxeurs, des artistes connus, il y a le maire d'Aubervilliers, il y a le groupe I AM et [...] il y a KDD, [...] il y a Claude Nougaro aussi, il y a tous les boxeurs actuels français, Mamadou Cham, Binchou tout ça et c'est une association qui vise à offrir des meilleurs moyens aux jeunes surtout dans les banlieues, dites défavorisées, on est pas défavorisé autant que ça, c'est un manque de moyens par rapport à d'autres départements ou par rapport à d'autres villes, notamment certaines villes de Paris, seizième tout ça, mais voilà faut dire ce qui est, [...] la boxe c'est un moyen, c'est un sport déjà , moi, je tiens à le dire, j'en ai marre que les gens (qui) pensent, boxe-violence, boxe-ghetto non, [la] boxe c'est une discipline olympique, [...] donc il faut arrêter de mettre

*la boxe comme un sport de voyous donc l'association elle se base sur ça,
justement, donner des moyens par des concerts, par la création des albums, les
artistes se réunissent pour récolter des fonds voilà. C'est une association, en fait
c'est pouvoir offrir autre chose que des gants et une corde à sauter aux jeunes qui
viennent dans la salle,[...] s'ils ont envie de faire une recherche, ils ont besoin
des bouquins, qu'on puisse faire une bibliothèque, qu'on puisse faire une salle
audio, une salle Internet, qu'ils puissent faire après l'entraînement, leurs devoirs
dans une salle paisiblement, [...] c'est pas que la boxe, c'est un soutien vraiment,
c'est vaste quoi [...].*[36]

Touran links boxing with the demands or *revendications* of young people to
succeed. He talks about the demands and expectations of his neighbourhood and boxing
club peers in such terms:

*Ils ont beaucoup de choses à revendiquer. [...] c'est vrai que niveau boulot, c'est
un manque de moyens, faut dire ce qui est. [....] vous voyez là, la salle ? Elle est
remplie là avec tous les jeunes, donc moi, les gens ils viennent, j'ai envie de leur
dire 'venez voir les jeunes là'. Ils ont entre six et trente-cinq ans, les jeunes ils
s'entraînent, pour pouvoir réussir dans le monde de sport, parce que pour eux
c'est un espoir [...] ces jeunes ils veulent des moyens et puis voilà ! C'est tout. Ils
veulent qu'on pense à eux [....] il y a des maires, des députés tout ça [...], je vois
pas pourquoi ils vont pas parler aux jeunes, comment un maire il va changer la
situation dans sa ville au niveau de la violence, des cités, na na na s'il va pas
demander concrètement à un jeune : 'écoute, quels sont tes problèmes ? Qu'est-
ce que, de quoi t'as besoin ?' [...] c'est des choses simples, [...] voilà c'est tout.
Un minimum d'attention pour résumer.*[37]

Touran's attitude towards racial discrimination, something he claims to have
experienced when applying for a summer job, also demonstrates his subjectivity because
his reaction places him within a social action dynamic rather than that of the despondent
structural victim. Indeed, he restates his determination to become a physical education
teacher unlike some of the other young male interviewees who are more disillusioned
about their employment prospects (see Chapter 5): "*...c'est pas pour ça que les gens vont
m'empêcher d'enseigner. Moi, ces barrières là...non que les gens veuillent ou non, de
toute manière, ces jeunes, ces gens là que les gens veulent pas, ils trouveront leur place,
je vous dis sincèrement [...] quoi qu'il arrive.*"[38]

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[36] Interview with 'Touran', 22/03/01.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.

It is possible to describe Touran's experience as subjective in terms of circulation around the different poles of the triangle of identity as well as in terms of the social movement 'axis' of subjectivity. This articulation of contending values, a 'circulation' which is erratic and even somewhat confused at times is expressed in relation to Islam and future marriage partners. With regards to Islam, Touran is at first reluctant to talk about his beliefs since he argues that religion should be kept to the private sphere. This would seem to suggest an interiorisation of individual-universalist values. However, when asked to confirm whether he believes that his religious faith and practice are a question of personal conviction and choice, he argues that it is illusory to claim that there is a great element of choice with regards to religious observance:

> C'est un choix, c'est clair, c'est un choix, mais c'est un choix dans la mesure où on peut faire le choix, mais vous savez, tu grandis dans une famille musulmane, les choix, ils vont venir comment les choix? Quoi qu'il arrive t'es influencé [...] quand tu grandis dans une famille musulmane, il y a grande chance que tu finis musulman ... quand ils sortent avec leur bande de copains, huit sur dix, c'est des musulmans, c'est, ils sont issus de l'immigration, ils sont musulmans, donc le choix il est pas, c'est, c'est ils se moulent en fait, à la maison, c'est religion, dehors avec les copains, ça parle religion...[39]

Touran's awareness and honesty with regard to the issue of 'free' choice and the role played by family and friends (peers) as well as his insistence on the personal nature of religious faith, suggests that he 'attains' a certain degree of subjectivity.

Boxing is central to Touran's experience and although he has only been boxing for the last three years, it seems to have enabled him to mature and increase his self-esteem. He talks at length about the change in his outlook since taking up boxing:

> ... ça tombait bien parce qu'à ce moment-là, c'était la période de mes dix-huit, dix-neuf ans, où on commence à être fragile dans sa tête, où on se pose des questions sur l'avenir, où on commence à faire des petites bêtises. Pour moi c'était un moyen de me dire bon tu veux t'en sortir, [...] je m'énervais très vite [...] Ça m'a permis de me canaliser, de prendre sur moi et d'évoluer dans ma

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[39] Ibid.

tête. Je suis devenu, j'ai mûri parce que j'ai pris conscience que aussi la boxe était pas un sport facile, [...] je me suis dit, là c'est plus la rue là, c'est plus les petites bagarres entre copains, c'est des choses sérieuses, j'ai tout de suite mûri, dans six mois j'avais pas mal changé dans ma tête quoi. Je suis devenue très très posé donc maintenant, pour m'énerver il faut beaucoup beaucoup [...] de toute manière la première vertu du sport c'est la maîtrise, ça apporte la maîtrise de soi, [...] c'était au départ pratiquer une activité sportive tout simplement et c'est après, après c'est devenu une chose de plus sérieux parce qu'on rentrait dans des compétitions, fallait prendre des responsabilités [...] c'est individuel donc [...] c'est encore plus valorisant... déjà pour monter sur le ring, faut avoir des tripes comme on dit, faut en vouloir déjà donc rien pour ça, on mérite quand même un minimum de respect...[40]

So Touran links boxing with a possibility of financial/professional success; with the idea of 'growing up'; learning about responsibility and with commanding 'respect' or increased legitimacy. It has allowed him to build a new sense of identity, which suggests that his trajectory can also be described in terms of the *construction de soi* axis of subjectivity.

Like Myriam, Hala and Djamel, Touran's subjectivity (although different in nature since it is more defined by the capacity for social action rather than by an articulation of a hybrid sense of identity) is most likely linked to his academic success, his sense of direction in terms of his future career as a physical education teacher and his involvement in boxing.

6.3 Fragmented Subjectivity

Not all interviewees manage to circulate so well around the various poles of the triangle of identity. They may hover on one of the poles more than the others or their experience may be characterised by an erratic oscillation between individual-universalist and more collective-community values. A number of interviewees fall within this category for different reasons. It is not possible to discuss all their cases in detail so this section will focus on the experiences of a handful of interviewees whose trajectories can be described as reflecting their fragmented subjectivity.

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[40] Ibid.

Leila

Leila is a seventeen-year-old pupil in *première littéraire* at *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in France but her parents are Algerian. She holds dual French-Algerian nationality and she is the fourth-born of seven children. Her father emigrated to France when he was eighteen and he works at one of Paris' *SNCF* stations as a cleaning inspector.

We can describe Leila's trajectory as precariously subjective due to how she constructs her experience of religion and religiosity. The interview discussion of religion centres on the fact that Leila has recently started wearing a turban as the first step towards wearing a more conventional headscarf. Her decision to wear the turban which, due to its stylised appearance, could be mistaken for a fashion accessory, can be described as what Nacira Guénif Sòuilamas would call a *"manière d'être inédite(s).*"[41] Furthermore, the manner in which Leila refers to it diminutively as *"mon petit foulard sur la tête"* also reveals a rather original approach in that she seems to be attempting to play down its significance in the secular context of the *lycée* where the interview took place. However, it is not clear whether Leila's religiosity is entirely subjective since she seems to be rather confused as to whether her faith and practice is the result of her own reflection or family influence. Whereas she focuses on the individuality and seriousness of her decision to wear her headscarf, she seems more reluctant to subscribe to a personal reflection model with regards to her recent and deeper commitment to Islam. This suggests that Leila is a rather 'tentative' *bricoleuse identitaire*:

> *... depuis que je suis arrivée en collège, on va dire en troisième, donc là je me suis un petit peu réveillée et puis là j'essaie de, je me suis rendue compte [...] que ma religion, c'est vraiment pas une honte, au contraire c'est quelque chose que je devrais exposer et [...] depuis que j'ai compris ça, ça va faire depuis le mois d'octobre que je mets le foulard sur ma tête [...] non c'était pas une réflexion intérieure, c'était qu'en fait c'était une petite influence, [...] tous les trois mois, il y a une conférence sur l'islam [...] voilà voilà et en parlant avec les sœurs [...] c'est en ayant plus de complicité avec mes grandes sœurs que j'ai compris ça, et puis voilà.*[42]

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[41] Guénif Souilamas (2000).
[42] Interview with 'Leila', 15/05/01.

Where Leila *does* seem to affirm her subjectivity in a more assured manner is with regards to her ambitions to become a primary school teacher in the public sector, despite her acknowledgement that her headscarf could pose an obstacle:

> ... *j'espère enseigner mais ça serait bête pour pouvoir enseigner avec mon foulard de passer par la justice mais bon, si on est obligé de faire un procès, on sera obligé mais moi je compte vraiment aller jusqu'au bout, je compte vraiment me battre mais je sais que mon combat sera pour des autres derrière moi mais voilà quoi...* [42]

Her sense of determination in the face of such a symbolically powerful concept of *laïcité* (secularism) reveals a capacity for social action (through her demand for cultural/religious recognition), absent amongst many other interviewees.

However, Leila's subjectivity is fragmented in a number of ways. Although she seems capable of becoming a social actor in terms of overcoming the *laïque* obstacle and by taking an interest in socio-cultural associations as a means of helping young people in an economically-deprived setting, she *does* at the same time seem to have internalised some aspects of the negative and exclusionary discourse about young people of North African origin. For example when asked whether she thinks that young people of French origin have different political or social claims to their North African origin counterparts, she argues that young people of North African origin are more likely than their French counterparts to fall into delinquency since they are poorer. This reveals the rather stereotyped image Leila has of young people of North African origin in general, whose main demand is reduced to a desire to accumulate material wealth and consumer status:

> ... *quand tu habites dans un milieu, ton père ramène pas beaucoup d'argent, tu peux pas te permettre tout ce que tu veux, t'as à côté un Français qui peut se permettre des baskets à cinq cents et maintenant le seul moyen d'être à la même hauteur que lui c'est d'aller voler et passer par la délinquance...* [43]

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[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

When I challenge Leila's response by claiming that a 'French-origin' youth from a socially deprived background could also be of the same predicament she attempts to rectify her initial stance ("...*je veux pas dire que tout dépend des origines. Tout dépend du milieu*") yet it does seem that she more readily equates poverty and delinquency with young people of North African or sub-Saharan African origin than those of European origin. In a similar manner, Leila argues that she would prefer her children to attend a school in Paris since she believes that the 'mentality' in Aubervilliers could prove to be a harmful influence. She thus presents the *banlieue* and it's inhabitants in a rather monolithic and simplistic manner and '*les Français*' as higher achievers.

However, although Leila claims that she would prefer her own children to be 'surrounded' by French peers, she points out that she herself would not want to live in Paris for fear of being 'swamped' by French neighbours. This rejection of Paris and '*les Français*' (see 5.6.ii) who are automatically associated with it, leads to a desire for a sort of voluntary residential segregation and the spectre of '*l'enfermement communautaire*' which accompanies this.

So, to sum Leila's case up, her's is a fragmented subjectivity since although she demonstrates the capacity to be a social actor she does seem to stigmatise her surroundings as well as her peers and she also rejects outright the idea of living amongst '*français de souche*' counterparts. This collection of contradictory stances could be due to a number of factors, including her relatively young age and an experience of rejection/stigmatisation, which she herself has known within her own family (see 5.6.ii). Her lack of clarity is apparent if we consider the manner in which she tries to define herself:

> ...*je me considérais comme française d'origine algérienne mais je me considère plutôt comme une Algérienne, je sais pas, ça existe pas du tout algérienne d'origine française mais bon... voilà je me qualifierais plus d'algérienne de nationalité française. Pour moi c'est seulement un titre d'être de nationalité française. Si, enfin je me considère comme une Française, mais bon je suis plutôt algérienne (rire). Voilà.*[44]

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[44] Interview with 'Leila', 15/05/01.

Aicha

Aicha is another example of an interviewee whose subjectivity is more erratic or fragmented than those whose trajectories featured in section 6.2. Aicha is a twenty-eight-year-old care auxiliary trainee of Algerian (Kabyle) origin. She was born in Algeria and was brought to France by her parents, at the age of two. She has not yet been naturalised. Aicha's father, who is now retired, was a worker who emigrated to France in 1962. Her mother also no longer works but was formerly a nanny. Aicha is one of six children (third-born). Despite the absence in the interview guide of direct questions concerning the relationship between the interviewees and their parents, Aicha alludes to the difficult relationship she has with her parents at the start of the interview and it remains a central theme throughout. Indeed, it would seem that this is a major element in the construction of her experience. Aicha complains of her parents' inability to communicate with her and to 'transmit' their values and heritage. (The theme of the lack of or total absence of communication between interviewees and their parents is fairly common within the fieldwork sample). Thus, once again the theme of the 'obsolete' or incapable parents is present.[46]

It would seem that Aicha's troubled relationship with her parents is linked (either as a cause or as the effect or as both) to her attempts to redefine her experience. She talks about her enrolment in a Berber cultural association whilst she was in Year 13 at school. Her motivations for joining were linked to her desire to fill her knowledge gap with regards to her origins (a knowledge gap which she blames on her parents' inability to communicate with her).[47] However, according to Aicha, the association in question became too politicised for her liking and she left after three years of membership. She

[46] Nacira Guénif Souilamas writes about the 'de-legitimation' of the father figure in some North African families. See Guénif Souilamas (2000), "*Une figure brisée, le père*", pp.124-139.

[47] Aicha's lack of knowledge with regards to her heritage and her subsequent desire to reconstitute a cultural 'map' of her ancestors by joining the Berber cultural association illustrates Roger Bastide's notion of a *sociologie du bricolage* which can also be understood as a reconstruction process in the absence of collective memory: "Le bricolage alors n'est point invention, ou logique de l'imaginaire. Il est réparation d'un objet existant, comme d'une chaise dont il manque un barreau. " (Bastide, 1970, p . 100) "... il s'agit bien toujours de créer des structures à partir d'événements, plus exactement de souvenirs, mais détaches de toute chronologie." (Bastide, 1970, p. 108). See also Chapter 3.

adds that her decision to withdraw from the association also coincided with her increasing desire to 'detach' herself from her 'origins' and her 'culture':

> *...à ce moment-là, j'avais envie de connaître plein de choses. J'étais beaucoup plus proche de ma culture bon, maintenant je m'en détache un peu [...] parce que je trouve que c'est plus vital. C'est plus comme avant. J'ai d'autres intérêts. J'ai d'autres projets [...] et j'ai plus le temps...*[48]

Aicha is very keen to talk about this process of 'detachment' and she introduces this to the interview when asked about her career history:

> *...j'ai travaillé dans une boîte [...] une boîte de restauration...restauration d'aviation [...] j'ai travaillé avec beaucoup d'Égyptiens [...] c'est surtout en ayant travaillé dans cette boîte que je me suis un peu détachée avec mes origines [...] c'est parce que j'ai trouvé autre chose [...] et bon il fut un moment où je l'acceptais [ma culture] [...] et puis au bout d'un moment, bon, je me suis rendue compte que bon, la vie c'était pas ça, c'est, il y a beaucoup de choses et puis nous, on nous frustre, c'est, je me suis rendue compte que c'était devenu une frustration et qu'elle m'empêchait d'avancer quoi et le fait que je voulais plus me renfermer dans cette - je vis en France, il faut que je m'adapte. Autant me dire que j'ai deux cultures et autant prendre le meilleur des deux quoi. Et puis il faut avancer, non pas stagner, ce que mes parents, je sais pas s'ils ont conscience mais c'est ça quoi, stagnation et c'est pas bon.*[49]

Part of this 'detachment' is visible in her attitude to marriage. Indeed, as discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, Aicha is the only interviewee to declare that she does not agree with the institution of marriage, favouring cohabitation instead. However, her stance is rather original because although she rejects marriage because she vows to never 'go through' what her parents have been through, she does still argue that she would like to find a partner of Kabyle origin because she insists that she is not able to enjoy a functional relationship with a man of any other 'origin'. Aicha's approach to marriage and relationships is thus a good example of *le bricolage identitaire*.

Her 'take and leave it' approach also reveals itself in relation to living space and community. Aicha is training in Aubervilliers but she lives in another suburb in Seine-

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[48] Interview with 'Aicha', 12/12/00, 14/12/00.
[49] Ibid.

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Saint-Denis (le Blanc-Mesnil). She points out that she would prefer to move to Aubervilliers so as to able to live within 'her community':

> ... ben ça va te ressembler bizarre tu vas dire parce que je me dis je me détache [de ma culture] mais je me dis que j'aimerais bien aller à Aubervilliers ou à Saint-Denis ... (rire) ... pourquoi? Parce qu'on retrouve ce métissage tu sais, cette ambiance on va dire cosmopolite ... c'est vivant ... Quand tu habites un quartier où il y a pas mal de Français, c'est, il y a pas d'ambiance, il y a pas ... les Français...j'ai l'impression qu'ils ont du mal à aller vers les autres alors que nous, entre nous, c'est pas dur de dire bonjour...c'est normal. C'est le bonjour du, commencer la journée avec un sourire. Eux, on a l'impression qu'ils ont, ben ils ont peur, je sais pas... vivre avec des Français enfin, je trouve c'est, enfin, ennuyeux alors que vivre au sein de sa communauté ben même s'il y a des choses que tu tolères pas [...] l'ambiance c'est assez chaleureux, je ressens ça, la chaleur, la chaleur humaine... [49]

Aicha is one of the few interviewees to link both a social and cultural dimension with regards to her social and political claims: "*ben qu'on nous reconnaisse....par rapport à la culture, par rapport à la vie de tous les jours...*".[50] This response reveals a simultaneous reference to individual-universalist values, fuelling her rejection of exclusion and racism, and an 'anchoring' in a more cultural-collectivist dynamic. Aicha's understanding of *recognition* is two-fold. On the one hand, she conceptualises recognition in terms of a fuller acceptance of minority North African 'culture' and on the other hand, she defines recognition in an 'a-cultural' manner, that is she demands a form of recognition which does not take into account any cultural 'specificity' whatsoever. For example, let us consider her comments with regards to racial discrimination in the workplace: "*....qu'on leur parle pas d'intégration ou de, ouais, qu'on les reconnaisse en tant que Français vivant dans le pays et puis qu'ils aient les mêmes droits.*"[51] So Aicha's subjective articulation of the importance of the recognition of a culturally-defined community and a demand for universal rights means that in this respect, it is possible to describe her experience as potentially corresponding to a 'logic' or rather a dynamic of social and cultural action.

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[49] Interview with 'Aicha', 12/12/00, 14/12/00.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.

However, Aicha's potential capacity to become a social or cultural actor is not always so apparent. For example when encouraged to further develop her initial comments with regards to cultural recognition, she reverts back to a more 'standard issue' Republican approach:

> *...la société française, t'as vu, elle est très laïque. Elle te laisse créer comme ça, des associations, de toute origine donc ça il y a pas d'interdit dessus. Au contraire. Au contraire. Non, de ce côté là, elle te laisse, à partir du moment où tout est, tout est, est fait dans le respect des lois quoi. [...] Quand tout ça est respecté en France, on pose pas de problèmes, tu peux faire ce que tu veux. Ah non, de ce côté là, il y a aucune revendication. Au contraire, au contraire, ouais, il y a une démocratie totale [...] ici en France, ...c'est terrible...*[52]

So here, Aicha 'falls' back into a mode of discourse which focuses much more on the more limited concept of *tolerance* as opposed to *recognition* and means that Aicha does not develop the link she makes between the accordance of greater legitimacy to minority 'cultures' and their greater social integration within French society in terms of employment for instance, an issue which she *does* complain about at some length.

Aicha also seems to revert to 'tradition versus modernity' explanations of her experience ("*tout ce qui est tradition tout ça, à la longue, ça étouffe, ça étouffe.*"). This is particularly apparent in the way she describes her relationship with her parents. From the outset of the interview one gets the impression that she imagines that she is telling the outside researcher what she would like to hear. She thus highlights one of the rather familiar themes – family (especially daughter-parental) conflict. Her allusion to her parents' opposition to her desire to take French nationality allows her to introduce this conflictual relationship:

> *...pour eux, ils ont encore du mal à accepter que leur fille veut se naturaliser, pour eux, ...alors que c'est qu'une histoire de papiers [...] parce que je vis encore chez eux, malheureusement [...] c'est difficile quand même de vivre avec des parents qui suivent pas la mentalité du pays ...enfin c'est, ils vivent encore, on*

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[52] Ibid.

*va dire vingt ans en arrière donc c'est difficile quoi, la communication c'est,
c'est, c'est dur.*[53]

Her reference to the "*mentalité du pays*" as though it represents an identifiable and
unified (monolithic?) phenomenon suggests that Aicha subscribes to a modernity-
tradition dichotomy.

Aicha's conflict with her parents also extends to the religious sphere since her
mother does not easily accept the fact that Aicha does not fast. On this front, Aicha
claims that she has abandoned trying to communicate with her parents which suggests
that her experience is one of rupture rather than negotiation, (referred to by Nacira Guénif
Souilamas):

> *C'est vrai qu'elle voit ses enfants ne pas faire le ramadan, ça la gêne, ça la
> dérange par rapport à ses convictions [...] elle comprend pas, elle comprend pas.
> Je lutte plus, c'est fini (rire)...je suis fatiguée de parler, je suis fatiguée avec eux.
> Je suis fatiguée parce que j'ai l'impression de parler à un mur [...] c'est vrai qu'il
> y a une génération de différence quand même donc on peut pas se
> comprendre... non... c'est dur.*[54]

So, in some ways, Aicha is a *bricoleuse* because of her creativity in the
construction of her experience. However, at times she seems to identify her '*culture
d'origine*' uniquely with 'tradition', which would suggest that her *bricolage* is an
external mixing up of '*culture d'origine*' and 'French' values rather than a re-
interpretation of each dimension from *within*. Aicha can thus be described as being more
engaged in a process of *bricolage identitaire* rather than a more global process of
subjectivity or subjectivation because she tends to either situate herself on the
communautaire pole *or* the individualist pole. She has distanced herself from what she
calls 'her culture', has very personalised views on marriage and relationships, argues that
religion should remain in the private sphere yet claims that she could only have an
enduring relationship with a partner of Kabyle origin because of similarity in mentalities.
She would also prefer to live in Aubervilliers so as to able to live within 'her

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Interview with 'Aicha', 12/12/00, 14/12/00. See Guénif Souliamas (2000).

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community'. Her difficult relationship with her parents (non-communication) could be seen as one of the main reasons for her fragmented subjectivity since it leads her to oscillate even further between these two 'poles' in a rather contradictory manner.

Mansour

Whereas Aicha is an example of a *bricoleuse* whose subjectivity is thwarted for various reasons, Mansour's fragmented subjectivity is articulated in terms of social action. He has featured in both Chapters 4 and 5 for his individual pole viewpoints and his experience of racial discrimination. However, it is his role as a social actor which is of particular interest to us in this chapter. To recapitulate, Mansour is a twenty-two year old young man of Moroccan origin. He was born in France and has always lived in Aubervilliers with his parents and siblings. He has dual French-Moroccan nationality. His father, a retired factory worker and mechanic, emigrated to France from Agadir in search of work. His mother formerly worked as a child-minder. Mansour is the youngest but one in a family of ten children. (He has four brothers and five sisters).

Mansour's experience of school was rather chaotic ("*Moi, personnellement, moi, l'expérience que j'ai eue de l'école, elle m' a rien apporté ...j'étais un touriste moi, à l'école...*") and since the age of nineteen he has been been working on an *emploi jeune* basis for the municipality as a local 'mediator'.[55] Mansour is also one of the leading members (*responsables*) of a local association called *Les Potes de Vandrezanne.*[56] The association's main aims are to facilitate dialogue between the elderly and younger residents living in the *cité* where the association is located. It offers careers advice, computer facilities and boasts a television and sound system. Mansour and his fellow *associatifs* also organise football and other sporting and musical activities for the young people (mostly boys) living in the *Vandrezanne cité*. The association has its own premises or *local* in one of the *cité*'s apartment blocks.

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[55] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01. As a mediator, Mansour is employed by the Aubervilliers municipality to patrol the town and resolve potential tensions between residents, neighbours and youths.
[56] This association name is a pseudonym.

So it would seem that Mansour's *grand frère* role within the *cité* is linked to his involvement in the association, thus demonstrating his potential as a social actor. He is certainly aware of his own capabilities and the effect the association has had in the neighbourhood. Here Mansour explains the association's role in relation to an ongoing dispute between two housing estates:

> *... nous, on est respecté un petit peu sur Aubervilliers [...] moi, je connais des grands de leur quartier et j'essaie de discuter avec eux. Ils vont discuter avec leurs jeunes et on va discuter avec nos jeunes. Première fois, ça s'est calmé, deuxième fois encore. On discute avec leurs grands, on essaie d'arranger toutes les histoires. Ça se calme, ça repart. A chaque fois il suffit d'une étincelle pour que ça reparte. Il suffit qu'on aille partir en vacances et hop ça y est, ça reprend, les jeunes de là-bas, ils viennent ici, les jeunes d'ici, ils vont là-bas. Tant qu'on est là, les jeunes de là-bas, ils viennent pas ici...* [57]

However, there is a certain element of ambiguity with regards to Mansour's involvement in the association. It was not his, nor his associates' idea to establish *Les Potes de Vandrezanne*. Rather, those involved in the association already constituted a group of friends who regularly 'squatted' the entrance halls and basements of various apartment buildings on the housing estate. The group's behaviour had become anti-social and certain members were allegedly involved in illicitly lucrative activities such as the breeding of pit-bull dogs. When they were discovered and successfully ousted from the premises, the group requested their own 'meeting place' since they felt that they were too old to attend the local *maison de jeunes*. The municipality agreed that they could be granted an apartment by the *OPHLM* (the social housing property company) in one of the housing estate's apartment buildings on the condition that they establish themselves as a 1901 association. Mansour claims that he nominated himself for a leader position because nobody else wanted to do the job and that he would like to be relieved of his responsibilities as soon as possible. So although it *does* seem that the association has accomplished some positive goals such as organising activities for young people and ameliorating resident-youth tensions ("... *maintenant ça se passe bien avec les locataires [...] et maintenant on travaille avec tous les jeunes...*"[58]) it should be pointed out that

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[57] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.
[58] Ibid.

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there would seem to be an element of the municipality delegating important socio-cultural work to young under-qualified individuals.

Mansour's attitude towards the association also suggests that it would be erroneous to unequivocally describe him as a social actor or as active within a 'social movement' paradigm. Mansour explains the difficult task he and his associates are assigned and he points out that they are not necessarily capable of playing the *grand frère* role:

> *... il y en a qui tournent mal, on essaie de leur remettre mais c'est pas facile de discuter avec un jeune, quand il s'est dit dans sa tête que ... on essaie de leur dire de faire des choses concrètes, d'aller à l'école, de pas traîner, [...] c'est des choses des grands frères mais [...] donner l'exemple. On peut pas donner l'exemple parce que nous [...], ils nous voyaient quand on était jeune comme eux [...] nous on était pire qu'eux [...] donc on peut pas maintenant leur dire 'non non' de pas faire des choses qu'on a faites parce qu'ils nous ont déjà vus les faire...*[59]

This contradictory discourse with regards to his and the association's role is also apparent when Mansour talks about his own academic/professional trajectory. Mansour had wanted to become a lawyer, however, he did not obtain his *BEP* in mechanics (*Brevet d'études professionnelles*).[60] He now claims that his childhood ambitions have been ruined and that it is too late to pursue this career path. On the one hand, he seems to want to take responsibility in a philosophical manner: *"Moi, je reproche rien à personne. Si j'avais vraiment envie de faire quelque chose, je l'aurais fait, je sais. Moi personnellement moi-même je sais que je suis capable de faire beaucoup de choses..."*[61] He alludes to the difficult relationship he had with his teachers yet he does not seem to think that this had a particularly detrimental effect on his career : " *... quand t'es jeune, des professeurs tout ça [ils te disent] que tu réussiras jamais, que tu finiras clochard, tu trouveras jamais du travail, tu serais jamais responsable...j'aimerais voir ces gens là aujourd'hui.*"[62] On the contrary, Mansour considers that he has succeeded and is proud of his achievements: *"...regarde-moi, je suis devenu un mec normal, tranquille,*

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[59] Ibid.
[60] A *BEP*, a pre-baccalaureate qualification, is equivalent to a certificate of technical education.
[61] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.
[62] Ibid.

je suis posé, je vis ma vie…"[64] However, at other points in the interview, this apparent self-confidence recedes and a more bitter discourse comes to the fore when we discuss the issue of discrimination:

> *Ça m'a touché. Ben, mes rêves d'enfant… c'est fini -- avant quand t'es petit, tu fais pas attention aux gens, les racistes tout ça, tes professeurs, c'est des blancs tout ça, tu les aimes bien, tu dis, elle, c'est ma maîtresse, lui c'est mon professeur, lui, c'est mon animateur, oui c'est ça mais après plus tard quand tu vois, quand tu penses ces gens-là ils t'aimaient pas en vrai donc […] donc ces gens là, tu repenses à toi, tu te dis, les racistes, il y avait pas qu'eux.*[65]

In addition, he further contradicts his earlier comments about responsibility and free choice with regards to what one can achieve when he complains of the lack of job opportunities in Aubervilliers and Seine-Saint-Denis:

> *… les seuls boulots qu'on propose ici c'est monter des carrelages, livreur, […] manutention, c'est les quatre travails, [sic…] ou dans la sécurité […] c'est pas terrible. Moi, c'est pas des boulots que je me voyais faire quand j'étais petit […] bon on choisit pas ce qu'on devient de toute façon…*[66]

Mansour's construction of his sense of identity is also contradictory in nature. For example he seems to distance himself somewhat from his family's practice of Islam and from Morocco, yet he seems to have a less elastic stance when it comes to his self-definition. When asked whether he is a practising Muslim, Mansour answers in the following manner: *"Moi, je suis pas trop religion. Moi, je …comme je t'ai dit, je fais le Ramadan, je sais qu'il y a un Dieu qui nous observe, je sais qu'on va se faire juger et chez moi ils sont pratiquants, c'est des gros pratiquants en plus."*[67] He therefore makes a point of distinguishing his own practice from that of his family. However, this more subjective or *bricoleur* relationship to his 'cultural community' is later contradicted when discussing Mansour's self-perception. In this respect, he reverts to a more assigned 'external categorisation' mode of identity:

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[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.

Ah moi, je suis marocain, marocain, marocain...De toute façon, tu peux pas changer ça. Mon père est marocain, ma mère est marocaine. Je suis marocain marocain ! [...] il y a des contrôles d'identité, je sors ma carte d'identité française, et ils me demandent, je dis, je suis du Maroc...[68]

Mansour can thus be seen as someone who is trying to be a social actor (or an *agent actif* in the 'Tourainian' sense) through his job, his role in the association and through his self-reliance and sense of responsibility:

...je demande rien à personne, j'essaie de m'en sortir tout seul comme ça, plus tard quand je m'en suis sorti je me dirai, je m'en suis sorti tout seul, je dois rien à personne, c'est mieux comme ça ...Faut pas devenir un assisté, parce que les gens, c'est trop des assistés dans la vie. Moi je vais pas devenir un assisté.[69]

However, as we saw in Chapter 4 (4.1), this sense of responsibility can be seen to be a double-edged sword because it means that Mansour does not articulate any demands for recognition. He also expresses his subjectivity in terms of a personalised approach to Islam, through a sense of religious practice which departs from that of his family. However, his subjectivity becomes fragmented when he becomes despondent about his wrecked childhood aspirations and his sense of ascribed ethnicity. Indeed, it may be his experience of school, which he left before obtaining a *BEP* or baccalaureate that makes it difficult for Mansour to engage in the subjectivity process. He also seems to have internalised a very negative and chaotic image of the *banlieue* as an environment which necessarily hinders the achievements of its young inhabitants: "*Ils ont créé, ce qu'ils ont créés, [...] c'est des ghettos, les cités c'est des ghettos.*"[70]

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[68] Ibid. Robert Gibb writes about the interplay between external categorisation and internal identification in a book review of Michel Wieviorka's *La Différence* (Paris: Balland, 2001) in *Ethnic and Racial Studies,*. 25. 1, (2002), 151-152, (p.152).

[69] Many of the young men who were interviewed as part of the field-study tended to perceive of themselves as 'old' and the notion of growing up very fast compared to their French or Parisian counterparts is prevalent. Many male interviewees thus seem to be trapped in a discourse where they claim that they are mature and need to start earning a living yet they are frustrated because they cannot fully assume these responsibilities due to unemployment or the *galère* situation they find themselves in (short-term contracts, precarious jobs etc.). Age and maturity in the *banlieue* context is therefore a central theme, particularly amongst the young men. It is interesting that Mansour argues that young people are forced to grow older in the *banlieues*: "*...dans les banlieues tu vieillis plus que n'importe où, déjà quand t'arrives à 18 ans ben t'en as, à penser comme un mec de 23 ans, 24 ans ...*".

[70] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.

Fouad

To recapitulate, Fouad is a thirty-year-old unemployed volunteer at a neighbourhood/North African origin association. He was born in France to Algerian parents and holds dual Algerian-French nationality. He knows little about the exact circumstances of his father's emigration to France except that his father was in France during the Algerian war of independence. He brought Fouad's mother over to France after independence. Fouad's father, who is now dead, was formerly employed as a warehouse operative and his mother has never worked. Fouad is the youngest but one of nine children (all his siblings were born in France). He left school with a *BEP* in foundry skills and describes his school education in terms of a *"parcours chaotique"*. After leaving school he worked in a department store for ten years and after resigning, found employment in a record production company. However, six months after Fouad joined the company, the director disappeared with all the company funds, leaving Fouad in search of work once more. He has been unemployed for the last year and it is during this period that he has become increasingly involved in the association, which is situated in the housing estate where he lives in Aubervilliers.

It is his involvement in the association which prompts the observer to claim that Fouad can be described as a social actor. Like Mansour, he is aware that he plays a positive role on the housing estate and it seems to have been a way for him to maintain his self-esteem during a period of long-term unemployment. This belief is expressed by Fouad in the following manner: "... *il y avait un besoin d'acteurs dans le quartier pour cette association, pour l'aide scolaire. Petit à petit je gangrenais l'association et je viens à plein temps maintenant [...] ça aide beaucoup dans le quartier*."[70] Fouad has also set up two rap music associations so as to provide facilities for young people living on the housing estate who would like to write lyrics and develop their creativity. However, Fouad does not view his two associations as purely being of an artistic value but as being of social 'utility' as well: "... *c'était de structurer les groupes de la cité pour qu'ils puissent s'en sortir ...*"[71]

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[70] Interview with 'Fouad' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01.
[71] Ibid.

Fouad also shows himself to be a social actor due to his rejection of what he describes as the passivity of his father's generation:

> ...moi, personnellement, ma génération, on en a marre de raser les murs. Mon père, je l'ai vu travailler en tant que manutentionnaire toute sa vie sans rien du tout, 'travaille et tais-toi et l'augmentation il est au Français, il est pas à toi', donc moi personnellement j'en ai ras le bol...j'ai une grande gueule et je vais me défendre.[72]

His attitude towards his parents and more specifically, his reaction to their lifestyle and choices forms another facet of Fouad's subjectivity because it allows him to contrast his own values to theirs. Indeed, he is able to articulate a multiple sense of identity rather lucidly. For example, he alludes to his father's attempt to take the family back to Algeria and the tensions that this caused:

> ...je me souviens que mon père a acheté un appartement à Oran dans les années quatre-vingt et il nous a dit bon les enfants on retourne au pays, moi et mes frères on a dit 'oui mais notre pays', c'est pas que c'est la France, c'est vrai, je suis algérien dans l'esprit, dans tout mais je me vois pas débarquer là-bas, perdre tout ce que j'ai ici quoi. J'étais en pleines études donc on comptait pas retourner d'où on n'était pas venu. On nous disait on retourne au pays mais non, on vient pas de là-bas nous. C'est pas qu'on aime ce pays [France], c'est que [...] petit à petit nous avons travaillé, nous sommes ici, nos enfants seront ici et voilà.[73]

This incident, which highlighted the contending elements of Fouad's identity, nevertheless enabled him to clarify his own relationship with France and Algeria. However, Fouad's position is not without ambiguity since he *does* express a desire to live in Algeria, to set up his own music business there but although he insists that his 'heart is in Algeria', he does point out that he would most likely divide his time between France and Algeria, that is, his claim that he sees his future in Algeria rather than in France does not amount to an outright rejection of his lifestyle in France:

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[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.

...je dis je repartirais là-bas mais avec quelque chose en poche, avec un projet en poche [...] dans ma tête c'est plus du six mois ici, six mois là-bas, un pied ici, un pied là-bas. J'ai un fond d'identité non pas français dans le sens républicain et laïque, plus dans le sens du sol, des amitiés, j'ai un pied ici, ça c'est sans problème mais j'ai l'autre pied, plus mon cœur plus mon cerveau qui est en Algérie.[74]

Fouad's apparent lucidity in terms of his relationship with his parents, the duality of his identity as well as his social actor potential do not reflect a "gestion harmonieuse" of his multiple identities. In fact, Fouad's subjectivity is fragmented in a number of ways and for a number of reasons. For example, in a similar manner to Mansour, he seems to have interiorised a very negative and stigmatised image of his immediate surroundings. When I ask his colleague Yacine about his role and his motivations to apply for the *animateur* post at the association, Fouad interjects, revealing a rather bleak outlook: *"Parce qu'en banlieue tous les jeunes sont animateurs ...c'est le seul diplôme qu'on arrive à avoir!"*[75]

This negatively-assigned self-image is perhaps unsurprising if we consider the way in which Fouad describes himself as the losing party in a power relationship with French 'mainstream' society:

Personnellement, si j'ai des revendications, ça serait en tant qu'Algérien vivant en France, pas en tant que jeune tout court parce qu'eux-mêmes, ils nous mettent la barrière de jeune immigré donc je fais ça pareil, je suis un immigré même [si] je suis né en France [...] première revendication, c'est carrément de me casser c'est tout [...] ça fait trente ans que nous sommes écartés. Au bout d'un moment j'ai envie de leur dire bon ben OK, vous avez gagné, au revoir, on est pas voulu, on se casse. Je veux pas me battre toute ma vie, chercher du travail, dire non, vous êtes pas français, c'est pas possible...[76]

His experience of racial discrimination (detailed in Chapter 5) and his despondency in the face of it, seem to contradict his apparent potential for social action as a volunteer at the

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.

association de quartier, as founder of the two music associations and when he announces that he will not be as passive as his father's generation was (forced to be). [77]

Fouad also reveals himself as incapable of recognising other people's subjectivity or rather their potential ability to become 'subjects'. He is extremely critical of his parents, particularly of his mother. For example, when asked to talk about his brothers and sisters he makes a rather self-conscious joke about the large size of his family:

> *J'ai neuf frères et sept sœurs, non je rigole! Non j'ai six frères et deux sœurs. Je suis l'avant dernier, je suis né en soixante et onze, mon petit frère est né en soixante-douze donc on a neuf, dix mois d'écart donc c'est l'usine Renault à la maison, c'est tous les neuf mois, un bébé.*[78]

He is also very critical of those who choose to fast during Ramadan. He claims that the young people in the *cité* who fast, only do so to 'follow the crowd'. (See Chapters 4 and 5).

On the one hand, Fouad's age and wider experience seems to facilitate a greater degree of subjectivity. Yet his incessant criticism of his parents who, like for so many other interviewees recede into insignificance, in addition to his very assigned sense of identity and his refusal to recognise subjectivity in his peers (who fast), means that Fouad is a contradictory 'subject'. His 'instability' may be linked to his sentiment of exclusion (he has been unemployed for a year), his experience of discrimination in his former job as well as his *"parcours scolaire chaotique"*.

So it would seem that there is a causal link between how 'well' interviewees are doing academically/professionally and their ability to engage in a process of subjectivity and construct their own experience. However, it would perhaps be inaccurate to cite this as the only link since the next section features the analyses of two interviewees who could be described as expressing very little, if any subjectivity, and yet they have very

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[77] For further discussion of disillusionment amongst minority-origin youth, see Danièle Joly, 'Ethnicité et violence chez les jeunes antillais: une intervention sociologique à Birmingham', *Cahiers internationaux de Sociologie*, 105 (1998), 383-413.
[78] Interview with 'Fouad' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01.

different 'profiles'. This suggests that there are other reasons for thwarted subjectivity apart from the more obvious and common one of social exclusion or educational 'relegation'.[79]

6. 4 Thwarted Subjectivity

Mahmoud

As mentioned in previous chapters, Mahmoud is nineteen years old and is studying for his *baccalauréat professionnel* in automobile mechanics at Aubervilliers's *Lycée Van Gogh*. He was born in France, as were both his parents, who are of Algerian origin (his mother is half French-half Algerian). Thus Mahmoud is one of a minority of interviewees who can be described as 'third generation' for want of a better term. He holds dual nationality. Mahmoud's father, who is now deceased, formerly worked as a municipal gardener. His mother works as an elderly persons' assistant at the local town hall (*mairie*). Mahmoud is the eldest of three siblings.

Mahmoud can be described as failing to express subjectivity in a number of ways. The three 'axes' of the ideal-type version or model of subjectivity serve once more as an analytical tool. In terms of the first of these 'axes', (i.e. circulation around the different poles of the triangle of identity), Mahmoud tends to hover incessantly over the *communautaire* pole and this despite his apparent attempts to position himself on the individual-universalist pole at varying points during the interview. For example, at the start of the interview Mahmoud wants to emphasise his 'third generation' status and he therefore highlights his family's long-standing relationship with France. Later, he argues that it is important to participate in electoral politics so as to be able to combat racism, despite the fact that he does not himself vote although he is on the electoral register: "*On devrait voter. Pourquoi? Pour faire reculer le racisme. Si tous les Arabes votaient ça serait bien.*" When Fayçal points out that he would much rather vote in Tunisia (despite also being from a 'third generation' background), Mahmoud attempts to convince Fayçal why he should vote in France instead:

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[79] François Dubet and Danilo Martuccelli use the term "filières de relégation" in François Dubet, Danilo Martuccelli, *À L'École : sociologie de l'expérience scolaire* (Paris: Seuil, 1996), p. 243.

Tu vas voter là-bas alors que t'habites ici, ça sert à rien [...] pour l'instant, ton avenir est ici. Ben pourquoi tu vas élire là? Un maire, tu vas élire, je sais pas un président, il va te servir à rien ... faut voter toujours ici. Faut voter ici. C'est ici que tu votes. C'est ici qu'il faut que tu enlèves les voix Le Pen. [...] Attends, tu vas voter en Tunisie mais en Tunisie, t'y est jamais. Tu habites en France. [...] Tu restes un mois en Tunisie dans l'année.[80]

However, although he seems at both these points of the interview to be subscribing to the individual-universalist pole of the triangle as well as to a logic of social action, because he argues that he would make his *revendications* as a *'jeune' and* as *'maghrébin'*, the overall picture that one obtains of Mahmoud is that of a young man who feels stigmatised by dominant group negative discourse and stereotypes. Although he does seem to highlight his 'third generation' status at the start of the interview, it soon becomes clear that Mahmoud's sense of identity is, to a certain extent, ascribed to him by 'white' French society. For example, as briefly touched upon in Chapter 5, when asked how he sees himself, Mahmoud's response reveals a rather passive and despondent stance: "*Je me vois par rapport à comment on me juge, comme un Arabe, je me vois comme un Arabe. On me jugerait comme un Français, je me verrais comme un Français.*"[81] Furthermore, despite his initial social actor stance with regards to electoral politics, he then is 'beaten into submission' by his peer and fellow interviewee, Fayçal and changes his position: "*Le jour où je voterais, c'est quand? C'est quand j'aurais besoin d'un logement. On m'a dit quand tu votes c'est bien pour un logement, chercher un logement. Faut voter et tout. Là peut-être je voterais mais sinon, non ça m'intéresse pas et ici c'est pas mon pays.*"[82] This statement is entirely contradictory with his earlier criticisms of Fayçal's refusal to vote in France and would appear to be the result of peer pressure exerted by Fayçal.

Since Mahmoud oscillates between the individual-universalist and the collective-community poles, this has an effect on his ability to be creative in terms of his own identity. For example, although he was born in Paris and has lived in the Seine Saint-

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[80] Both quotations are drawn from the interview with 'Fayçal', Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.

[81] Interview with 'Fayçal', Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.

[82] Ibid.

Denis *département* all his life, he unquestioningly reproduces his parents' or rather his grand-parents' residential pattern and he thus argues that he would like to retire to Algeria since as he puts it " *c'est le rêve de tous les immigrés ça.*"[83] (See Chapter 5). When I challenge this casual reference to his desire to 'return' to Algeria and build a house there as his permanent retirement residence, his answer reveals a certain despondency: *"La France, c'est pas notre pays. Ça, quand on voit ici comment les gens nous regardent dans le métro..."*[84]

Furthermore, although Mahmoud displays some subjectivity in terms of how Touraine defines social action (or '*du* mouvement social'), by advocating the benefits of political participation in elections to reduce racism, and thereby envisaging *"les Arabes"* as a collective actor, this is eclipsed by Fayçal's pressure and his rather pessimistic outlook with regards to racial discrimination and his chances of finding employment (see Chapter 5 for further details). Discrimination is a recurrent theme during the interview with Mahmoud and when asked about the political claims he would make, racism is central in the formulation of his demands. However, the articulation of these demands reveals a rather passive stance and forces us to question Mahmoud's ability to become a social actor: *"Si vous donnez des choses aux jeunes, ils traînent pas dans la rue. Va leur donner du travail, ils traîneront pas dans la rue..."*[85] This passivity is most likely born out of his own disillusionment which is reflected in his near certainty that his 'French-origin' counterparts find work more easily than someone of his background would. However, Mahmoud's disillusionment, although dominant throughout the interview, is not all-consuming. Indeed, his attitude seems to be rather contradictory because on the one hand, he claims that it is nearly impossible for him to obtain a work placement or employment yet on the other hand, he seems fairly confident of his chances of finding a job since he claims that he would prefer to abandon his further education plans and find work immediately:

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.

Moi je vais essayer le BTS [...] Si ça me plaît, si c'est pas trop dur, je vais continuer [...] je vais tenter, je vais essayer. Si ça me plaît, je continue et si ça m'énerve trop j'arrête, trouver un travail... dans ce domaine... je sais que j'ai pas de problèmes pour trouver un travail.[86]

In addition to his contradictory statements and rather passive stances, Mahmoud also seems to have internalised the negative stereotypes about young men of North African origin. When we discuss the issue of discrimination, he alludes to tensions between young and elderly residents on his housing estate yet he argues that elderly people are entitled to be suspicious of young men of non-European descent:

Les racistes, faut les comprendre aussi. Faut les comprendre. Quand tu vois les Arabes, ils arrachent les sacs à main des vieilles [...] ils ont pas tort d'être raciste des fois un petit peu quand même... [...] Les Français quand ils sont en bas de chez eux... ils voient pas Mohamed et Karim et Mamadou en bas. Ils voient pas Jean-Luc et Jean-Claude. Ils voient que les Arabes qui foutent la merde. Ils ont pas tort aussi.[87]

Mahmoud's thwarted subjectivity is emphasised even more if we compare him to Razak, his fellow interviewee's response: "*Et alors? Pourquoi ils volent aussi?... C'est vrai que c'est pas un moyen, c'est pas une raison de voler... mais quand même il y a pas que des Arabes et des Noirs, je suis désolé.*"[88]

So it would be inaccurate to describe Mahmoud as engaging extensively in a process of subjectivation. Although he does try to circulate around the triangle of identity, his efforts tend to reflect a frustrated oscillation between individual and community identity rather than a subjective creativity with regards to his experience. He situates himself most clearly on the community-collective pole, identifying mostly with a '*nous les Arabes*'/ '*nous les jeunes*' paradigm. Although he shows signs of wanting to become a social (or socio-cultural) actor with regards to electoral politics he is swiftly 'put back in his place' by his fellow interviewee and peer, Fayçal. This 'thwarted subjectivity' is most likely the result of a number of factors including his internalisation

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[86] Interview with 'Fayçal', Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.

of certain negative images about his origins and his school (*"c'était un lycée dépotoir"*[89]) which has led to a certain lack of confidence in himself, in his surrounding environment and in wider French society. In addition, as we have seen, he comes under a significant amount of pressure from Fayçal to project a certain image to the outsider/researcher.

Nabila

Nabila is a seventeen-year-old pupil in *première ES* at Aubervilliers' *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in France to Moroccan parents and she holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. Her father is an employee at Charles de Gaulle airport and her mother does not work. Nabila was interviewed with four other young women (her classmates), three of whom are of North African origin and one who is from a Guinean/French background. Nabila's thwarted subjectivity is expressed mostly in terms of an absence of creativity (*bricolage identitaire*) and an unquestioning reproduction of certain roles or models of behaviour. Her attitude towards the use of Arabic also takes on a more demonstrative nature. This becomes apparent through her interactions with peers who are also of North African origin. When asked whether she understands or speaks Arabic, she is keen to demonstrate her linguistic abilities to the other young women who are more hesitant about the issue of language and their levels of fluency. Nabila interrupts my question about language use: *"Ouais couramment. L'arabe à la maison, tout le temps avec mes parents et mes frères et sœurs."* Fellow interviewee, Salikha comments on Nabila's remark: *"C'est bizarre je trouve. Chez moi c'est mélangé"*, thus revealing her surprise.[90] Nabila's stance reflects her opinion that speaking one's parents' language fluently and using it with one's siblings is an *évidence*, to be expected. Of course, many North African families *do* use Arabic or Berber at home, especially when the parents' knowledge of French is limited. However, it is Nabila's demonstrative approach which suggests that she is trying to impose some sort of unity on the group (that is, the other interviewees).

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[89] Interview with 'Fayçal', Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.
[90] Both quotations are drawn from the interview with 'Bintou', 'Karine', Nabila', 'Nour' and 'Salikha', 19/10/00.

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Her attitude with regards to religion and religious observance also reflects her apparent belief that these matters are an 'évidence'. I begin to formulate a question about religious beliefs ("*Par rapport à la religion....*") and Nabila pre-empts the nature of the question, thus finishing off the question: "*Si on pratique la religion de nos parents c'est ça?*" Her focus on the notion of practice as opposed to beliefs as well the centrality of her parents in the equation, reveals a rather unquestioning and inherited approach to Islam as does her rapid and simple response to the question she herself formulates: "*Ben ouais!*"[91]

Nabila's stance seems to be further confirmed by her reaction to Bintou's comments about North African families giving their children North African names as contrasted with Asian (Cambodian/Vietnamese) families who often give their children French names. Nabila resists her argument and although Bintou's comments could be regarded as rather reactionary since she claims that by giving their children French names, Asian parents are giving their children a 'better start' in life, Nabila's reaction remains limited to the notion of roles and rules: "*Mais les Arabes et les musulmans, c'est la religion qui l'interdit.*"[92] Nabila talks about her experiences in a manner which suggests that she sees herself and wants to be seen as a practising Muslim, as well as authentically loyal to her 'origins' by her fellow interviewees and peers. Her attitude to language and religion is similar to her relationship with Morocco. Once again she anticipates the question:

> N.K: *Et vous rentrez pour les vacances?*
> Nabila : *Ouais! Ben on va au bled quoi!*

Nabila's eagerness to reply to such questions suggests that she is telling me what she thinks I, as the researcher, would like to hear. On the other hand, her reactions do also seem to point to an inability or perhaps an unwillingness to make any changes to the roles she is playing.

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[91] Quotations from interview with 'Bintou', 'Karine', 'Nabila', 'Nour', 'Salikha', 19/10/00.
[92] Ibid.

The demonstrative nature of Nabila's statements means that she hovers over the collective-community pole above all. It is also interesting to analyse her 'position' within the discussion group for it would seem that her demonstrative approach reflects her position as a 'leader' who tries to enforce group unity. She often replies or attempts to reply on behalf of her classmates and uses the collective impersonal pronoun, '*on*' as though the five young women were somehow a homogenous group with identical relationships to their family backgrounds. So whilst Nabila can be described as a group unity enforcer, Mahmoud is someone who is ultimately subjected to group unity enforcement.

Why does Nabila present her experiences as simply part and parcel of a set of practices and norms? This could be due to her relatively young age. She is not at risk of becoming socially excluded since she is on course to obtain her baccalaureate and is confident that she will be accepted to study law at university. So, unlike many of the interviewees whose subjectivity can be described as fragmented or thwarted, in Nabila's case, social exclusion or fear of social exclusion cannot be cited as an explanation. However, the group interview situation may be a factor since it would seem that Nabila tries to present herself as more 'authentic' than her peers. Her condemnation of other pupils' approach to Islam is an example of this: "*En fait il y a des gens qui se disent musulman mais qui ne respecte pas forcément la religion [...] une fois qu'il y a pas une chose qui les arrange ben ils oublient... ils prennent ce qui les arrangent.*"[93] So it would appear that Nabila's subjectivity is minimal but it would perhaps be erroneous to entirely dismiss her in this way since the group interview context and the limited number of topics under discussion only gives us a partial insight into her experience.

6.5 Concluding Remarks

It would not have been possible nor desirable to discuss in detail all of the forty-four interviewees whose experiences have been analysed in the last three chapters. Four portraits were drawn of interviewees who achieve an advanced degree of subjectivity (Myriam, Hala, Djamel and Touran) and likewise this chapter detailed four interviewees

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[93] Interview with 'Bintou', 'Karine', 'Nabila', 'Nour', 'Salikha', 19/10/00

whose subjectivity is more fragmented in nature (Leila, Aicha, Mansour and Fouad). It would have been possible to add more interviewees to each category. Those who seemed to be unable to become part of a process of subjectivation (see 6.4) were in a minority (only four individuals out of forty-four) but the young men did outweigh the young women by three to one. Furthermore, although the portraits in sections 6.2 and 6.3 suggest that gender was not a tangible variable (in both sections, two men and two women were discussed), the female interviewees who achieved extensive degrees of subjectivity and fragmented subjectivity were in fact more numerous than their male counterparts. All in all, the most common type of subjectivity amongst the interviewees was the more fragmented one. Those who expressed very little subjectivity expressed their experiences in terms of a collective-community dynamic, that is if they were restricted (*enfermé*) on one pole, it was consistently the community pole as opposed to the individual-universalist pole.

As detailed in the introduction and throughout this chapter, subjectivity can be understood in three ways or according to three registers: 1. circulation around the triangular model of identity/ethnicity (outlined by Michel Wieviórka); 2. creativity and reinterpretation - *le bricolage identitaire* (drawing on the *sociologie du bricolage* as outlined notably by Roger Bastide, and Lapeyronnie's notion of *construction de soi*) and; 3. the capacity to become an actor (social or cultural) or to be part of a collective movement - the collective or social movement *par excellence* being historically incarnated by the workers' movement of the industrial age.

In terms of circulation around the triangle of identity, most of those interviewees discussed in this chapter have demonstrated their ability to articulate more than one aspect of their identity.

In relation to the idea of the reinterpretation of a system of values, in many cases, the interviewees' experiences represent a subjective or creative approach to the notion of roles, whether these are collective-community or individual-universalist/Republican codes. These original and unprecedented choices may govern interviewees' attitudes to

marriage; their (parents') country of 'origin'; their immediate family and certain aspects of their family's lifestyle; in terms of how they define themselves but most of all, with regards to Islam. The young women in particular are *bricoleuses religieuses* and can be described as articulating an 'original' or personalised approach to Islam.[95] The men are less likely than their female counterparts to be part of a process of subjectivation where Islam is concerned and they tend rather to focus on the notion of rules and rites to be observed, that is on religion rather than religiosity, to borrow Simmel's analysis once more.[96]

The third register of subjectivation, individual social/cultural action or the possible formation of a collective social/cultural (socio-cultural) movement, proves to be more problematic. On the basis of the data collected during the field research, I would argue that it is difficult to refer to young people of North African origin living in a socially-deprived *banlieue* context as forming any sort of social or cultural movement. Their experiences are fragmented and heterogeneous and although racial discrimination, unemployment or employment instability is a phenomenon which links many interviewees, this does not become a potential platform for conflictualised action which articulates cultural and social claims.[97] If they *do* try to make demands from the local political actors, such as the *mairie*, an institution from which they (especially the young men) tend to expect a lot, these demands are rather sporadic in character and can descend into violence due to frustration.[98] Very few interviewees are registered to vote and even fewer actually vote or take an interest in political issues (six out of fourteen eligible

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[95] This is the case of those already mentioned in this chapter in addition to Fawzia, Nacira, Malika, Idaya, Samira and Salima.

[96] Male interviewees who fall into this category include: Abdel Majid, Ahmed, Majdi, Yasser, Tayeb, Abdel, Mahmoud and Fayçal.

[97] For example, Mansour, Touran and Abdel Majid all complain about having experienced racial discrimination to a certain extent, yet they all fail to make social or political claims based on their social *and* cultural specificities. Indeed, all three argue that they would make *revendications* or demands as young people or as individuals with no reference to their North African origins. It is almost as though they are afraid that if they make *revendications* as young people of North African origin in the public space, this will attract negative attention and thus lead to further discrimination. (See Chapter 4 - 4.1).

[98] Aziz and Yasser talk about how they had made an appointment with their mayor in order to request more facilities for young people etc. but how their initial eagerness turned to frustration and violence, finally culminating in their participation in an assault on the local *commissariat*. Sara, an *animatrice* at a local *maison de jeunes* also talks about an episode when several youths burnt down their own *maison de jeunes* in an attempt to show that leisure activities, baby-foot and a ping-pong table were not the solution to their problems.

interviewees vote in elections – see Chapter 4 (4.2) for more detailed information about political participation).

The only possible suggestion of a collective engagement amongst young people of North African origin from the *banlieue* can be found in associations. Several interviewees are, or have been, involved as either employees or volunteers in associations. Touran, Mansour, Fouad, Leila to name but a few, have been or are currently involved in *associations de quartier* for example. The main focus of these associations is to provide homework clubs, sporting and leisure activities, or language lessons (Arabic and Berber) for the younger adolescents. For older age groups, associations can provide help and advice in their job searches. First generation *primo-arrivant* women also use local associations and the literacy classes they sometimes offer. Many interviewees have at one point been involved in such associations as 'service users' as well. There seems to be a widely held belief amongst the interviewees that these types of associations serve a purpose. Indeed, it would seem that these associations allow the interviewees to become involved in ameliorating the cultural, social and educational context many young people of North African origin in a socially deprived *banlieue* setting find themselves in. The 'service users' benefit, as do the *animateurs/trices* for whom involvement in an *association de quartier*, for example, provides a first job or an end to a period of unemployment. So it would seem that associations and the *associatifs* in Aubervilliers play a significant role. However, can we describe this '*paysage associatif*' and the involvement of interviewees in terms of a socio-cultural movement or collective conscience? This question will be addressed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7

Associations in Aubervilliers: Birth of a Social Movement or Pragmatic Antidote to *la Galère?*

Introduction

At the end of the last chapter it was shown that one of the 'specificities' linking the interviewees who participated in the field research was that many of them are in some way involved in associations, either as volunteers, employees or as 'users' of the services associations may provide.[1] The high proportion of interviewees (twenty-nine – seventeen young women and twelve young men) who are, or have at some point, been involved in associations either as *animateurs* or as 'users' means that an evaluation of their relationship with associations is a pertinent area of investigation, thus prompting the following three questions: 1. What does this involvement say about the context of the *banlieue*? 2. Is it possible to understand this high level of involvement in associations as the development of a socio-cultural movement? 3. Is it also feasible to interpret the involvement of young people of North African origin in associations of all types, as a redefinition of citizenship or participation *à la chose publique?*[2]

These three questions will be the framework of this chapter. Following a brief overview of the historical development of associations (7.1), this chapter will examine the involvement of interviewees in associations both in Aubervilliers and in their respective neighbouring towns (7.2). Can the interviewees concerned be described

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[1] I shall mostly use the term 'association' user as opposed to member since it conveys better the notion that in many cases, the associations which concern the interviewees can be seen as providing certain 'services' e.g. homework clubs, careers advice etc. In addition, the term 'member' implies a more extensive degree of commitment.

[2] Out of the entire sample of twenty-two young women, three have never been involved in associations. They are Myriam, Nabila and Idaya. Out of the entire sample of twenty-two young men, three have never been involved in associations. They are Abdel Majid, Ahmed and Hicham. If we discount Sara, Arwa, Mansour, Yacine, Fouad, Djamel, Touran, Nasser and Waleed from the original sample of forty-four interviewees as they were all contacted or introduced to myself at an association, then this leaves with us a reduced sample of thirty-five, twenty-nine of whom (seventeen young women and twelve young men) are or have been involved in associations.

primarily as '*usagers*' or as '*associatifs*'? What types of association do they tend to become involved in, and for how long? We should see the relatively high level of associational involvement as a phenomenon which is of course linked to a particular socio-cultural/economic/political context and although not all of the interviewees whose cases will be discussed, are linked to associations in Aubervilliers, they are all from Seine-Saint-Denis and thus reside in social, political and economic contexts which resemble that of Aubervilliers.[3] The third section (7.3) will focus on the question of context, through an analysis of the '*paysage associatif*' (associational 'landscape') in Aubervilliers. This section will concentrate on the general discourse on associations in Aubervilliers, paying special attention to the municipality's stance where associations are concerned. In addition, it will provide an overview or typology of the sorts of association which exist in Aubervilliers (the aim not being to provide a monograph of *all* associations). Whereas sections 7.2 and 7.3 will serve as a sort of *mise en scène* of both the interviewees' involvement in associations and of the general associational 'landscape' in Aubervilliers, 7.4 will be an evaluation of these two factors. In other words, whereas the first part of the present chapter will focus on the discourses surrounding associations, the latter half will be an assessment of the *realities* of the associational movement, in an attempt to ascertain whether the involvement of many young people of North African origin in (mainly) neighbourhood associations amounts to the formation of a social or socio-cultural movement as well as a redefinition of citizenship through alternative modes of participation in the public sphere. *La vie associative* can thus be seen as another (fourth) 'layer' of analysis or discourse relating to immigrant-origin youth in stigmatised suburban settings. Do the respondents' experiences of associational life correspond to the discourses of the municipality and the association leaders? Before proceeding to an examination of the nature of the interviewees' involvement in associations and more generally, the *offre associative* in Aubervilliers, it is first of all necessary to provide a working definition of associations.

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[3] See Chapter 3 for a general 'profile' of Aubervilliers as according to various statistical observations and data drawn from the 1990 and 1999 censuses.

7.1 Definitions and Brief Overview of the Historical Development of Associations

In her extensive study of the development of associations, Martine Barthélemy refers to the early sociological definitions of associations. For example, she cites Max Weber, for whom the association could be understood as a:

> type pur de 'sociation', c'est a dire une forme de relation sociale dans laquelle l'activité des hommes est motivée par la raison, rationnelle en finalité ou en valeur, et non par le respect de la tradition [...] (relation qualifiée à l'inverse de 'communalisation').[4]

This distinction between *community* and *social* (rational) relationships between actors, highlighted by Barthélemy, means that associations should be understood as a feature of modernity.

Barthélemy traces the historical development of associations from their *"préhistoire"* in the eighteenth century up until the passing of the famous 1901 law, which legalised the right to associate. She argues that what we call associations today have been intrinsically linked with the workers' movement, syndicalism and the transformations in political organisation which accompanied the development of socialist ideas. Barthélemy's historical overview of associations reveals that thinkers and sociologists such as Durkheim understood associations as a sort of remedy to an excess of individualisation and as a means by which communication between the individual and the collective could be achieved:

> ....le fait associatif [...] apparaît comme un moyen [...] de réaliser un équilibre, toujours fragile, entre l' épanouissement de l'individu dans sa singularité et l'appartenance au corps social fondé sur l'égalité des hommes, un moyen aussi d'engager la transition de la charité individuelle [...] vers l'action collective en faveur de la justice sociale.[5]

Barthélemy also shows that the recognition of the notion of a 'social' citizenship as opposed to the more classic 'political' citizenship which historically excluded many

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[4] Martine Barthélemy, *Associations: un nouvel âge de participation ?* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 2000) cites Max Weber, *Économie et Société*, tome 1, (Paris: Pocket, 1995), p. 20.

[5] Ibid., p. 52.

groups such as women and still excludes extra-European Union nationals, can be seen as the background to the legal recognition of the right of individuals to associate. In July 1901, the right to form an association was legalised. Barthélemy cites Jean-Paul Martin who argues that from the outset, "good" associations were seen to be those that would become [des] "écoles[s] de la démocratie" and work in tandem with the State in the general interest.[6] Barthélemy shows that associations are generally viewed in two ways. On the one hand, some would argue that associations are: "... le prolongement des pouvoirs institutionnels, notamment l'Église, l'État et les collectivités locales, qui régulent et favorisent leur action dans le but d'assurer l'adaptation et l'intégration sociales des individus: la vitalité associative s'inscrit alors dans une stratégie de contrôle social."[7] On the other hand, associations are envisaged as civil society's constant check or counter-balance to government and the State, thus amounting to "... une expression de l'autonomie de la société civile."[8]

Another law, this time passed on 9 October 1981 by the new socialist government ended the restrictions on foreign nationals who wished to set up their own association in France. The rescinding of the 1939 law whereby foreign nationals had had to declare their association to the Ministry of the Interior prior to setting it up meant that immigrant associations would now be governed by the 1901 legislation as well. This new law, coupled with decentralisation and the general clamouring for 'new citizenship' and participative democracy led to an explosion of associations in the 1980s.[9] As our problematic is concerned with immigrant-organised associations or more precisely with 'associations issues de l'immigration' (and thus including French-born individuals of North African origin in their membership/leadership), it is useful to consider the chronological development of these types of association. As we saw in Chapter 2, in their study of associations issues de l'immigration maghrébine, Catherine Wihtol de Wenden

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[6] Ibid., p. 56, Barthélemy cites Jean-Paul Martin, 'À la recherche d'un modèle associatif laïc', La Revue de l'économie sociale, (April 1988), p.137.
[7] Ibid. p. 59.
[8] Ibid. p. 59.
[9] Barthélemy (2000), p.92 points out that on 9 July, 1981, just some months before the promulgation of the October law, the then Prime Minister, Pierre Mauroy called for new citizenship before the National Assembly, a call which was repeated some years later in 1988 by Michel Rocard who declared that it was necessary to " 'réconcilier l'action politique et la vie quotidienne, l'État et la société civile'."

and Rémy Leveau write about three "générations associatives". They argue that the first generation of associations and their leaders which emerged in the 1970s can be seen as strongly linked to the trade union and migrant worker movement. The second generation is described as being very much a part of the '*beur*' movement of the 1980s. The third generation emerged during the 1990s, in the wake of the failed "*passage au politique*" of certain individuals who were part of the *marche des beurs* movement. It is described as being much more apolitical and more focused on the *quartier*. These immigrant-origin associations are also described as representing "du partenariat des politiques d'intégration des années 1990". Indeed, de Wenden and Leveau write about the "professionnalisation et municipalisation des leaders" in a context where government found itself inadequately equipped to deal with the issues that arose in the *banlieues and quartiers populaires*, thus relying increasingly on associations in these *quartiers* to provide certain services, such as literacy classes, homework clubs, leisure activities etc. [10]

Certain researchers are keen to expose some of the ambiguities which are otherwise hidden by a celebratory discourse about new citizenship and the involvement of the inhabitants of the *quartiers populaires* in the political process through associational involvement. For example, Barthélemy writes about how associations have been used in many cases simply to replace what should otherwise be provided for by local government: "L'argent public manque de plus en plus pour faire face à l''urgence sociale' et, dans certains domaines, les associations sont en passe de devenir des solutions de remplacement des services publics de l'État ou des collectivités locales."[11] In a similar manner, Adil Jazouli questions whether the financing of certain associations by companies such as the *RATP* or the *Carrefour* group is not slowly replacing the public financing of social policy in the *banlieues*.[12] Barthélemy also questions whether the trajectory of associations and their relationship with the authorities is inevitably one which starts as 'conflictual' but which gradually becomes

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[10] See Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau, *La Beurgeoisie : les trois âges de la vie associative issue de l'immigration* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2001), p. 128.
[11] Barthélemy (2000), pp.118-119.
[12] See Adil Jazouli, *Une saison en banlieue : courants et prospectives dans les quartiers populaires* (Paris : Plon, 1995), pp. 116-117. *RATP – Régie autonome des transports parisiens* – Parisian public transport system.

institutionalised. However, it is perhaps Abdelhafid Hammouche and Marie Poinsot who provide the most incisive criticism of what they separately argue is the instrumentalisation of associations by central and local government. Hammouche sees this as a clear development:

> En effet, les objectifs affichés par la plupart de ces associations paraissent, pour l'essentiel, se référer aux axes d'intervention énoncés dans les programmes d'action définis par les politiques publiques (l'aide aux "jeunes", les activités socioculturelles, la participation à "l'insertion"...), et laissent entrevoir un processus d'instrumentalisation des associations.[13]

Poinsot argues that it is possible to describe the State as trying to save money by avoiding investment in the appropriate expertise and that by getting the associations to do the groundwork as opposed to adapting public services, this ultimately results in the delegation of important tasks to individuals (such as *adultes relais*). Whilst these individuals may be from the *quartier* or 'community' in question, they may not have the skills required to fulfil certain tasks.[14] (See below for de Wenden and Leveau's criticism of the instrumentalisation of associations).

Despite the critical observations made by these researchers, it is still tempting to ask whether it is fair to see these associations as simple manipulations by the municipality. Is there no degree of *militantisme* involved? In order to attempt to answer this question, it is necessary to look at the cases of young people who are, or have been, involved in associations. So as to be able to evaluate the nature of the relationship between young people of North African origin and associations, interviewees were asked if they were, or had been, involved in associations. Thus the main objective of this aspect of the field research was to 'chart' the associational landscape in Aubervilliers and the surrounding towns on the basis of the interviewees' responses. That is, I did not want to pre-select certain associations and then verify whether young people were involved in them. Rather, I wanted the young people to 'lead' me to the associations and not *vice*

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[13] AbdelHafid Hammouche, 'Des amicales d'hier aux associations de quartier d'aujourd'hui : un essai de typologie.', *Hommes et migrations*, 1229 (2001), 41-53 (pp. 49-50).
[14] Marie Poinsot, 'Le Mouvement associatif, un instrument au service des politiques publiques d'intégration ?', *Hommes et migrations*, 1229 (2001), 64-75, p. 72.

versa. This explains why associations of a religious nature barely feature in this chapter since the young people who were interviewed represent a rather secular sample (i.e. their religious practice tended to be confined to the private sphere) and they were not involved in Islamic associations, although a minority (two young men and two young women) did attend mosques, conferences, *fêtes religieuses*, albeit on an intermittent basis.[15]

7.2 The Involvement of Young People of North African Origin in Associations

In order to understand the relationship between young people of North African origin and associations, interviewees were asked the following question: "*Est-ce que vous êtes membre, vous participez à/vous fréquentez des associations?*" It was not always necessary to formulate such a question since in some cases the interviewees' involvement in an association became apparent before the relevant question was asked. It is striking that the vast majority of interviewees are, or have at some point, been involved in associations either in their local area or in Paris. 85% of young women (seventeen interviewees out of twenty) and 80% of young men (twelve interviewees out of fifteen) in the reduced total sample of thirty-five have either been volunteers or 'users' of associations at some point in their lives.[16] What sorts of association are concerned? Are they 'users'/members of associations or volunteers/employees? What are the factors which seem to affect association choice?

Young Men and Associations: Leisure and Insertion Professionnelle

The young men who took part in the field research were overwhelmingly involved in associations which provide leisure and sporting activities as well as professional and

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[15] This is the case of Fayçal, Mahmoud, Leila and Malika.

[16] These proportions are calculated on the basis that if we discount 'Sara', otherwise present in the analysis in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, because she is a salaried *animatrice* whom I met through an association, and Arwa (present in prevsious chapters), who was contacted *through* an association, in addition to Myriam, Idaya and Nabila who have never participated in associations, this leaves us with seventeen women out of twenty (i.e. minus Sara and Arwa) who can be described as having some involvement in associations. These five women are all part of the original twenty-two female sample. Similarly, for the young men, if we discount Mansour, Yacine, Fouad, Djamel, Touran, Nasser and Waleed, because they either worked in, or were contacted *through*, associations, in addition to Ahmed, Abdel Majid and Hicham because they have never participated in associations, then this leaves us with twelve men out a sample of fifteen (i.e. original twenty-two male sample minus Mansour, Yacine, Fouad, Djamel, Touran, Nasser and Waleed).

careers advice. In fact, all twelve young men can be described as being linked to a sports, leisure or educational association.

The leisure category groups together the largest number of interviewees, with most young men revealing that their understanding and experience of associations is often limited to leisure activities. Ten out of the twelve young men concerned, are or have been involved in terms of the organisation of, and participation in, leisure activities, excursions and subsidised youth holidays in France or abroad. Only Tayeb, referred to his past involvement in associations in terms of *soutien scolaire* alone. Those who reside in Aubervilliers often refer to their participation in *sorties* (excursions), *soutien scolaire* (homework clubs) and *séjours* (trips) organised the by the *OMJA* (*Office municipal de la jeunesse d'Aubervilliers*). This type of involvement generally no longer concerns the vast majority of young men who, being aged sixteen and above, claim that they used to take part in these sorts of activity when they were younger. However, some interviewees are still linked to the *OMJA*, despite being aged sixteen to eighteen, because they re-appropriate the space at their local *maison de jeunes* (the numerous *maisons de jeunes* in Aubervilliers are part of the *OMJA*).

So, as young adults, the young men solicit associations in a different manner. That is some young male interviewees claim that they use associations as service providers, particularly where careers advice and professional orientation are involved. Ibrahim, Fayçal and Mahmoud all present their experience of associations as being one whereby the association provides help with the writing of curriculum vitae and job applications in addition to offering careers advice. When asked whether he is linked to any associations, Mahmoud replies: *"C'est bien les associations... Oui, ça m'a déjà concerné moi. [...] Je partais en vacances avec eux...partir en vacances, les activités...faire des CVs, des lettres de motivation, ils m'ont aidé...c'est accessible ..."*[17] His fellow interviewee, Fayçal also replies : *"Pareil. Partir en vacances ...pour trouver du boulot au niveau orientations et tout."*[18] Nasser, who volunteers at one of the *OMJA maison de jeunes*

[17] Interview with 'Fayçal', Mahmoud' and 'Razak', 13/09/01.
[18] Ibid.

claims that he has become involved so as to be able to help younger youths succeed or as he puts it, "*s'en sortir*".[19]

Only one young man is involved in a culturally oriented association. As discussed in Chapter 4, Waleed has taken Berber lessons in an association.[20] However, he insists that his motivations for doing so are so as to gain extra baccalaureate points, thus resisting any 'going back to the roots' explanation. Only two male interviewees (Fayçal and Mahmoud) are involved in an association of a religious nature, i.e. they both refer to their attendance of the local mosque.[21] However, they do not allude to this involvement when I ask about associations in general, which would suggest that they do not identify mosques with associations.

Young Women and Associations: the Predominance of Culture

One difference between the young men and women interviewees is that young women are proportionally less involved in associations which provide leisure activities and educational support than their male counter-parts. Only eleven out of the seventeen young women concerned are or have been involved in this category of association (as opposed to all twelve young men). Seven of these women were primarily involved in the organisation, of or participation in, leisure activities. For example, *aides éducatrices* Lamia and Salima were formerly *animatrices* in two separate *associations de quartier* (neighbourhood associations). Lamia explains that she became a volunteer within the association when she was unemployed and Salima reveals that she established her own

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[19] Interview with 'Nasser', 06/03/01.

[20] Waleed is discounted from the calculation of the proportion of youth involvement in associations because he was contacted through the *OMJA*. However, he is mentioned here because we are discussing his involvement in another association.

[21] In France, religious associations (*associations cultuelles*) are regulated by the 1905 law, relative to the separation of the Church and the State. 1905 associations cannot receive funding from municipalities since they are legally required to be no more than a place of worship. Muslim associations have therefore often been formed of two groupings, one 1905 association for the mosque and a 1901 association for more cultural or socio-educational activities. Being a 1901 association allows the association leaders to apply for funding as an *association culturelle* as opposed to as an *association cultuelle*. (Sources: www.gallican.org; www.mosquée-salam.com - "le site de la mosquée de Bondy"; www.asso04.org). It will be interesting to evaluate the implications of the recent Nainville-les-Roches Accords (19-20 December 2002) signed between the various representatives of Islam in France and the Ministry of the Interior (*Bureau des cultes*) in relation to the status of Islam and Islamic associations in France, once the resulting *Conseil français du culte musulman* is set up. (See: www.mosquée-de-paris.com).

association with friends so as to obtain some practical experience after obtaining her *BAFA (Brevet d'aptitude aux fonctions d'animateurs)*:

> ...*je travaillais dans une association [...] je faisais de l'animation avec les jeunes, les jeunes du quartier [...] on organisait des sorties, des animations,...des ateliers, des choses comme ça [...] on a fait ça avec des amis. On a créé cette association, on a créé l'association, on a tout géré, il y avait un trésorier et tout ça et puis on a fait ça pendant un an...*[22]

The remaining young women are all high-school pupils and they tend to become involved in associations in a rather sporadic manner, for example when a *fête de quartier* is organised (Fawzia) or when there are free *soirées* (Salikha) or excursions to the seaside for example (Fatima). A fairly common response amongst the young women is that they used to take part in trips organised by the *OMJA* but that they no longer have the time to pursue these activities (Amira).

Some of the interviewees have participated in associational activities through homework clubs or *soutien scolaire*. This is the case of Samira, Lamia, Mona and Nadia. This type of activity normally takes place in a local neighbourhood association. None of the female interviewees indicated that they took part in any sporting activity within an association framework except for Fatima who is a member of a local dance association.

The young women respondents tended to be more involved in associations with a cultural dimension than their male counterparts. The most common reason for attending a cultural association amongst the young women was to learn either Arabic or Berber and this is the case of Nacira, Malika, Hala (Arabic) and Nadia and Khadija (Berber). Amira is a member of an association which, at the time of interview had recently been set up by her elder sister with the aim of providing Arabic lessons for children living in her *cité*. Young women who are, or have been, involved with cultural associations for non-linguistic motivations are Aicha (who joined the *Association de culture berbère* and was a member for a number of years) and both Karine and Mona, who help in their parents' associations when they organise cultural events for example. Karine's family set up their

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[22] Salima in interview with 'Lamia' and 'Salima', 14/11/00.

own Latin American-themed association and Mona's mother is the current president of a North African cultural association. Only two female interviewees are members of a religious association. Malika was a member of a women's association based in Rennes. Malika now lives in Seine-Saint-Denis so no longer frequents this association where she used to take part in debates about women in Islam, amongst other issues. Instead, she now attends meetings and conferences organised by the *Jeunes musulmans de France* (*JMF*). Leila volunteers as an *animatrice* in a Muslim association based in Saint-Denis (called *À votre service*).

'Users' or 'Providers'?

Now that an overview of the types of association which concern the interviewees has been established, it would be useful to examine the capacity in which the interviewees are involved in the various associations. In other words, do they tend to benefit from the services certain associations provide? Or do they on the other hand, tend to be involved as association leaders, employees or volunteers? Do they become involved in associations on a long-term, short-term or sporadic basis? Within the sample, it is possible to identify some trends according to variables such as age, occupation and gender. For example, the older the young men are, the less likely they are to be involved with associations as service 'users' and the more likely they are to be involved as *animateurs*. Two out of four further/higher education students are involved as *animateurs* (Abdel and Amir) yet no *lycée*-age male pupils claim to play the role of an *associatif* within an association.[23]

The young women further/higher education students are less involved than their male counter-parts as *animatrices*, with only one out of five (20%) of them describing their relationship to associations in these terms. However, more female *lycée* pupils are, or have been, involved as *animatrices* than their male counterparts (four as opposed to none).

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[23] This of course excludes the Nasser, who has recently 'dropped out' of his *lycée* and who has been 'discounted' as he was contacted through an association anyway.

Those interviewees who are involved in associations as *animateurs/-trices*, do this either on a voluntary basis, for instance, during a fairly protracted period of unemployment or as a part-time employee (*vacataire*). Their employment as an *animateur/-trice* allows them to obtain professional experience and money so as to help finance their studies, for instance.

Thus it could be argued that there is a degree of *militantisme* or activism amongst the interviewees. For example Abdel talks about his motivations for becoming an *animateur* in his local *association de quartier*: "*C'était des jeunes de chez nous, c'était des jeunes de chez nous, des jeunes du quartier. Fallait les faire sortir. On faisait des activités intéressantes [...] c'était une très belle expérience.*"[24]

Although Samira points out that her involvement in associations is occasional, she nevertheless discusses her experience as an intermittent volunteer in a local association in a manner which reveals a certain degree of engagement: "*...j'ai fait de l'aide aux devoirs comme ci comme ça tu vois enfin [...] c'est l'histoire de les aider tu vois, [...] il m'arrive de prendre des gamins, et [de] partir... aides aux devoirs, pour les aider un petit peu à faire leurs devoirs...*"[25] This sort of stance, that is, the notion of helping others and thus having a certain 'mission' is also present in Lamia's experience as a volunteer in a local women's association, which provided literacy classes and excursions for 'first generation' migrant women living in her area. Like Abdel and Samira, Lamia presents her motivations for donating a large part of her time to the association in terms of charitable work: "*Moi, j'étais dans une association de quartier en tant que bénévole. Je faisais les aides aux devoirs et l'alphabétisation pour les femmes maghrébines, africaines...j'étais au chômage donc j'avais le temps. J'ai fait ça un peu plus qu'un an dans cette association.*" When asked why she decided to become involved she replies: "*Le fait de vouloir aider les autres aussi.*"[26]

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[24] Interview with 'Abdel' and 'Samira', 16/11/00.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Interview with 'Lamia' and 'Salima', 14/11/00.

It is also possible to observe a similar degree of *'militantisme'* or activism amongst some of the interviewees of high-school age. For example, Leila reveals a committed attitude with regards to her albeit intermittent involvement in an Islamic association:

> *...je suis plutôt sur Saint-Denis moi et il y a des associations de type 'À votre service' aussi, qui organisent par exemple pour les fêtes de l'Aïd, une fête pour les enfants donc on loue un endroit et tout et puis je fais partie un peu de ça, [...] enfin, je prends un stand [...] enfin je participe avec les enfants [...] chaque fois qu'il y a l'Aïd, on essaie de le faire sentir aux enfants, c'est quoi la fête [...]et puis je voudrais vraiment m'investir dans les trucs comme ça plus tard. C'est quelque chose qui m'attire, le travail avec les jeunes [...] surtout dans un quartier qui est pas trop valorisé...*[27]

Amira's eagerness to give Arabic lessons to the children living in her *cité* on a voluntary basis, and alongside her studies, also reveals a certain degree of activism and engagement in the local community which is thus defined in both cultural (linguistic) and spatial terms (the importance of providing a service to the *quartier/cité*).

It is thus possible to argue that to a certain extent, the young people of North African origin who were interviewed are *militants associatifs* in the sense that they engage with the some of the issues which arise in their immediate surroundings, such as the need to provide support to children and adolescents in terms of education and leisure. However, in order to obtain a more complete impression of the nature of the relationship between the interviewees and associations, it is also necessary to ask how we situate their apparent, and in some cases sporadic, activism in relation to the wider associational landscape. Furthermore, how do we situate the relationship between the young people of North African origin and associations with regard to municipal discourse on associations? The next section will therefore consider the following issues: What is the municipality's general stance with regards to associations? What is on offer in terms of associations? What roles do these associations play in the municipal context?

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[27] Interview with 'Leila', 15/05/01. Where appropriate and in order to protect the identities of the interviewees who could otherwise be traced, the names of some of the associations being discussed in this chapter have been changed. This excludes the *OMJA* and the *UTIT*.

7.3 The Local Associational Landscape: Municipal Discourse, Local Associations and Young People of North African Origin[28]

In order to evaluate the nature of the relationship between the interviewees and 1: the municipality's discourse on youth, associations etc. and 2: the local *offre associative*, this section will concentrate on an analysis of the following data: the municipality's stance regarding associations as reflected in the municipal local newspaper, *Aubermensuel*; the views and approach of municipal employees and councillors active in the association domain; the significance attached to associations and their leaders during the municipal and cantonal elections held in March 2001. Central to our analysis, is the following question: can the relationship between interviewees (and thus North African origin youth in general, if we regard our sample as representative to a certain extent) and associations be characterised by disjunction or proximity?

A. Municipal Discourse on Associations: Disjunction?

As mentioned at the end of Chapter 2 (see *Profile of Aubervilliers*), one of Aubervilliers' specificities is that it is a town which is conscious of itself, its *banlieue rouge* heritage and its status as a *banlieue populaire*. The PCF (Communist) mayor, Jacques Ralite plays an important role in this proud sense of municipal identity and has a visible presence in the town. The specificity of Aubervilliers as a *banlieue populaire* but also as a relatively integrated town may be one of the reasons why the notion of *la vie associative* is very visible in the municipal agenda. This visibility becomes apparent if one reads *Aubermensuel*, which the municipally-employed editors describe as *"le magazine municipal d'informations locales"*. *Aubermensuel* is available at a wide range of outlets in the town, ranging from the town hall, in schools, associations and various municipal buildings. If one peruses the pages of a number of editions of this monthly publication, there does seem to be a certain disjunction between the tone and approach adopted in its articles, and the experiences and ideas expressed by the interviewees regarding

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[28] As pointed out earlier, several respondents do not actually live in Aubervilliers. However, it would have been impossible to carry out a study of all the towns concerned. Therefore our analysis concentrates solely on the municipal discourse in Aubervilliers.

associations. For example, the April 2001 edition of *Aubermensuel* features a special section entitled *Vie des Quartiers*, within which appears an article about a new *régie de quartier*, created in a bid to improve the quality of life for the residents of two neighbourhoods. This local committee is described by the author of the article as follows: "Animée par une association loi 1901, qui regroupe les habitants intéressés, et par un conseil d'administration auquel participent des partenaires institutionnels (Ville, OPHLM etc.), la régie développe différentes prestations de proximité."[29]Although the article goes on to add that the committee aims to reactivate "une dynamique citoyenne" by involving young people as well, it should be pointed out that young people are to be involved through the creation of posts within the association itself. Thus the young people of Aubervilliers are encouraged into associational life through the promise of employment. Indeed, as 'Löic', a *coordinateur de quartier* suggests, the *régie de quartier* phenomenon tends to attract the retired and elderly European-origin residents, rather than young adults and those of non-European origin.

Another important publication produced by the Aubervilliers municipality is the annual *Guide des associations*.[30] In the 1997 *Guide des associations*, there is an editorial by the communist (*PCF*) mayor (who remains mayor until this day) which reveals something of the celebratory approach the municipality adopts with regards to associations: "Elles [les associations] témoignent de la volonté et de la diversité d'engagement de nos concitoyens. Récréer du lien social, s'écouter mutuellement, débattre et faire face ensemble aux difficultés tout en respectant nos différences sont plus que jamais à l'ordre du jour." The editorial then goes on to link associations in the town with the '*Démarche Quartier*' initiative (launched in 1997, resulting in the creation of twelve *comités de quartier*) by claiming that this has made it possible to create "un nouvel espace de démocratie à investir où les associations et leurs animateurs ont toute

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[29] *Aubermensuel*, no. 105, April 2001, p. 5.
[30] The *Guide des associations, 2000-2001* did not become available whilst I was conducting the fieldwork and so I was obliged to use a guide which had been published in June 1997, the *Guide des associations 1997* (Aubervilliers: Ville d'Aubervilliers et Carrefour pour l'information et la communication à Aubervilliers, 1997). This, I used in conjunction with the 1999 *Guide de A à Z* (Auberviliers: Ville d'Aubervilliers, 1999) and *Le Guide de la rentrée 2000/2001* (Aubervilliers: La Ville d'Aubervilliers, 2000) which both included a section dedicated to associations in the town.

leur place..."[31] The editorial is encouraging and would indicate that there is a sense of local participative democracy within the municipal and *comité de quartiers* framework. However, it is a discourse which is far removed from that of the interviewees who, on the whole, do not envisage associations as "un nouvel espace de démocratie" nor as a means of conflictualising their relationship with the local authorities since as we have seen, their involvement, although widespread, can only be understood as 'espaces de démocratie' in the sense that 'anyone' can become involved in the largely leisure/socio-educational activities (either as 'user' or volunteer).

Municipal and cantonal elections were held in France in March 2001 and coincided with the period of field interviews.[32] The various campaign literature in Aubervilliers provided an insight into the relationship between local political groupings and associations. The question of associations did appear on several of the main candidate lists presented in the municipal elections. However, this was generally done in an attempt to promote the notion of local participative democracy within the *existing* frameworks of the *comités de quartier* or the *Démarche Quartier*. For example, the manifesto distributed by the *"Liste 100% à gauche"*, a list associated with the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire*, claims that *"La vie associative est en panne"* and proposes the following solution: direct and participative democracy in "de véritables assemblées de quartiers qui auront le droit d'élire leurs représentants..." Whilst the reference to the 'veritable' neighbourhood assemblies is of course well-intentioned and aims to be more inclusive than current arrangements, the List does not appear to take into account the fact that the *young* people in these *quartiers* are unlikely to become involved in any formal neighbourhood committee and that this type of elective arrangement requires a minimum of political *savoir-faire*. The main rival to the incumbent *Gauche Plurielle Liste*, the *Liste 'faire mieux à Gauche'* is perhaps the list with the most associational credentials. Indeed, twenty out of the forty-nine people featured on the list are described in addition to their other functions, as being a "militant(e) associatif". However, the types of association concerned are generally parent-teacher and residents' associations. Although there are a

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[31] *Guide des associations, 1997* (Aubervilliers: Ville d'Aubervilliers et Carrefour pour l'information et la communication à Aubervilliers, 1997).

[32] First round of voting: 11th March; second round: 18th March.

number of personalities of North African origin, for instance, the president of a local Tunisian association, it should be pointed out that this association is much more focused on issues which concern the first generation of North African immigrants, as opposed to young or French-born people of North African origin, such as those who took part in the field study. This disjunction between candidates and interviewees' concerns was also a feature of the partial cantonal elections, held simultaneously.

In addition to official municipal 'discourse', some association leaders themselves are also critical of an apparent disjunction between the municipality and the young people of Aubervilliers. Indeed, one of the *responsables* (i.e. a person in charge) of a locally-based association, set up in the 1980s by a group of young men and women of predominantly Algerian origin, claims that the municipality is rather out of touch with the needs and expectations of young people in Aubervilliers. This *responsable*, who is called 'Hassan', argues that this became particularly apparent when the municipality organised an annual *fête de quartier* in the neighbourhood, an event, which according to him, has often gone awry. Indeed, in past years there have been incidents between the youths and the organisers, with the event becoming a forum for the stirring up and over-spilling of tensions between young people and certain institutions. Hassan cites the main reason for the *mairie*'s abandonment of the event three years ago as being linked to their insensitivity regarding the concerns of young people. For example, the municipality allegedly invited representatives of the *RATP* and the *Secours Populaire* to set up stands in the neighbourhood as part of the activities. Hassan argues that this revealed a lack of understanding on the municipality's behalf since most of the young people are said to 'despise' the *RATP*, and inviting the *Secours Populaire*, a Catholic-oriented solidarity association, was seen as patronising.[33] Only pre-adolescents aged between twelve and fourteen were invited, and without their parents, which according to Hassan aggravated matters, since without parental supervision, the youngsters were more likely to want to 'cause trouble'.[34]

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[33] Interview with 'Hassan', *Association de la nouvelle génération immigrée (ANGI)*, 21/06/01.
[34] Ibid.

Or Proximity?

Despite an element of disjunction or *décalage* between the municipal stance regarding associations and youth in Aubervilliers, there is, paradoxically, also an element of proximity between the two dimensions. This proximity or mirroring may, however, prove to be 'unhealthy', especially if one hopes to define associations as '*organismes contestataires*' rather than an extension of government power. Indeed, it would seem that this paradox is part of the associational dilemma, Adil Jazouli summing up their predicament as follows: "Contestant l'ordre établi tout en revendiquant d'y être intégré..."[35]

Indeed, many of the articles on associations which appear in *Aubermensuel*, do seem to reflect the interviewees' experiences of associations to a significant extent. For example, the June 2001 edition features articles about associations which offer sports activities, especially those which offer martial arts. There is also a focus on the notion of the *quartier*, the micro-territory, hence the celebratory feature about a recent *fête de quartier* which took place in Aubervilliers. Also high on the agenda is the idea that associations are the focus of voluntary work, where the main ethic is as the paper puts it, "être utile aux autres."[36] Likewise, in the April 2001 edition of the newspaper, there are a number of articles about a local sports association with a focus on how its leaders aim to combine football with more educational activities such as homework clubs. Homework clubs and literacy classes are also in the spotlight in the October 2000 edition which runs a special feature on the annual *Rendez-vous des associations* (similar to an open day or *salon* forum). The *OMJA*, i.e. the main local leisure and youth association is very visible in most editions of the newspaper and when the interviewees are asked about their involvement in associations, the *OMJA* (*Office municipal de la jeunesse d'Aubervilliers*) is generally the first association to be cited.

A number of comments can be made about these articles. First of all, they seem to imply that associations are primarily a means of offering services, whether this is in the

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[35] Adil Jazouli (1995), p. 263.
[36] *Aubermensuel*, No. 107, June 2001, p. 11.

form of sport/leisure or in more social and educational terms. This is undeniably a good cause, yet this sort of discourse, in addition to the fact that the young interviewees do not seem to conceive of associations in any other manner, seems to be an obstacle to the prospect of associations and youth of North African origin forming any sort of social or cultural movement. We shall turn our attention more fully to this question in the following section.

B. The Relationship between Associations and Young People in Aubervilliers

In the same manner as the municipal discourse with regard to associations and youth, the *association* stance with regard to youth, and more specifically, French-born youth of North African origin, is also a paradoxical mixture of disjunction and mirroring. An employee of the *Service municipal de la vie associative* points out that it is difficult to estimate the exact number of associations in Aubervilliers since, although associations are legally obliged to declare their establishment in the *Journal officiel*, they do not have to declare the cessation of activity. He nevertheless estimates that there are approximately between four hundred and four hundred and fifty associations in Aubervilliers. The aim of this chapter is not to provide a monographic study of all these associations. Instead, a basic typology of a limited number of associations has been established. There are three main categories: the neighbourhood association; the leisure or sports association and the cultural association.

Disjunction?

(i) Neighbourhood Associations (associations de quartier/d'insertion professionnelle)

The visibility of neighbourhood associations in Aubervilliers is variable and it would seem that those which are officially described in municipal publications such as the *Guide de A à Z* or the *Guide de la rentrée* often reflect the associational activities of adults, property-owners, tenants and retired residents rather than the interests of young people. When interviewed, the president of one neighbourhood association (called '*Le Landy*') lamented about the difficulties in the relationship between the association and young people also living in the area.[37] Although the president points out that from the

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[37] '*Le Landy*' is a pseudonym.

start, when the association was set up in 1990, the goal has been to be more than an *amicale des locataires*, it would seem that the socio-professional gulf between the association's mainly middle-class members and the other local residents has grown wider. The president of the association in question is a teacher, and elected municipal deputy, and the membership body tends to be composed of teachers and people from other traditionally middle-class professions who began to settle in the neighbourhood (also called *Le Landy*) just as the accommodation and general area was undergoing a process of '*embourgeoisement*'. Their late arrival (1986 onwards) in a *quartier* which is historically one where migrant workers came to live, their age, in addition to their socio-professional status, which separates them from many of the other inhabitants, has aggravated relations with the young people living in the area. The "*violence des jeunes*" as the president refers to it, has apparently destroyed what the association had set out to achieve in the neighbourhood.

Judging by the experience of *Le Landy*, one might assume that a neighbourhood association run by young people of North African origin would be more 'in tune' with the concerns of the local residents, especially if the area is predominantly inhabited by immigrant and immigrant-origin families. However, if we consider the association where Mansour is one of the leading members (*Les Potes de Vandrezanne*), it becomes clear that this is not necessarily the case. He reveals how the idea of setting up an association was somehow the prerequisite stick and an apartment (*local*), the carrot:

> ...*en fin de compte, nous, ce qu'on voulait, c'était, on demandait un appartement, qu'ils nous donnent un appartement [...] parce qu'avant c'était le bordel dans cette cité...c'est à dire il y avait tous le temps des vols, des feux, des cambriolages, tout ça alors on a demandé un appartement pour qu'on puisse se fixer quelque part entre amis et pour, et donc, [pour qu'] on arrête de faire des bêtises, des conneries... et puis après ils ont vu qu'on est devenu calme, bon ça nous arrangeait même plus rien, ils ont proposé de nous donner un appartement et ils ont dit 'est-ce que vous voulez faire une association?' Bon, ben je connaissais pas, un peu, j'ai demandé à Saïd, on a dit c'est mieux d'ouvrir une association... voilà c'est parti de ça quoi. Nous, on a proposé, on voulait juste un*

appartement ensemble. [...] c'était partie d'un lieu de rencontre.[38] (The association had existed for one year when I met Mansour).

The young men who, like Mansour are the 'leaders' of the association, are expected to organise certain activities within the *cité* such as football tournaments, rap workshops; provide advice regarding curriculum vitae-writing and job applications as well as help young people to find work. It is clear that this was not the initial aim of the group of young men behind the association, and they seem to receive 'directives' from the municipality and more precisely from the *coordinateur de quartier*. It was possible to observe this tutelage during a meeting between the municipally-employed *coordinateur de quartier*, ('Loïc') and Mansour. Also present at the meeting, which was convened by Loïc, was 'Saïd', an *OMJA* employee and 'Corentin', an *éducateur de rue* who works for an association specialised in *la prévention*. Saïd seemed to be the 'liaison officer', that is, he 'escorted' Mansour from the association premises to the meeting which took place at the *quartier*'s *maison de jeunes*. The object of the meeting was, according to Loïc, to present Mansour with some feedback on the association.

Loïc opened the meeting by giving Mansour the negative feedback first, that is, by letting him know that some elderly residents had complained about the noise generated by a recent rap workshop; their claims that they had noticed a lot of strangers 'hanging around' the apartment and the lack of general cleanliness in and around the premises. Mansour became angered by this: *"Laisse les gens se faire des films ... s'ils se réveillent tous les matins en pensant à moi, laisse-les!"* When Mansour did not engage further, Loïc proceeded to the next item for discussion, the association's annual general meeting. He gently encouraged Mansour to organise the meeting, to which Mansour responded positively but only after some persuasion. Loïc then suggested that the association organise a barbecue for the *cité* in the early summer, to which the *éducateur*, Corentin added that the group should ask residents to bring along *"leur spécialité* [culinaire]"*. Loïc argued that the barbecue would hopefully allow everyone to "*vivre des*

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[38] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01. Saïd is an *OMJA* employee who is responsible for the area of Aubervilliers where Mansour's association is located, i.e. the *'Vandrezanne cité'* (pseudonym).

moments conviviaux" and that perhaps Mansour might like to invite some *"personnalités"* from the municipality. Corentin also encouraged Mansour to do this by suggesting that he mention his name when inviting the various 'personalities'. Loïc then returned to the negative feedback, mentioning that residents had informed him that the association had recently appeared to be shut. Mansour's once again angry and exasperated reply that he and his friends have got jobs now and other matters to attend to, suggests that for him, the association has simply become a burden: *"On a nos vies maintenant!"*[39]

Observation of the meeting between Mansour, Loïc, Corentin and Saïd, revealed a split dynamic in the running of *Les Potes de Vandrezanne*. On the surface, it is a youth-led association and so would appear to be serving the interests of this age group. Although the *coordinateur de quartier* and *éducateur* do seem to be gently 'dictating' the activities of the association, it is still possible to argue that ultimately, they are on the side of the young people since they are suggesting ways in which Mansour and his peers can rectify their 'bad image' by organising a barbecue and inviting certain municipal personalities, for instance. However, the sort of relationship which Loïc and Corentin seem to be encouraging through their suggestions begs the question as to whether they are simply giving more power and legitimacy to the municipality and authorities, rather than encouraging a true sense of local and participative democracy where the young people themselves produce their own ideas and demands, rather than being gently led to them by municipally-employed go-betweens.[40] In addition, neither Corentin nor Loïc live in the neighbourhood and although their jobs mean they work there on a daily basis, both the young people in the association and those living on the housing estate ultimately view them as outsiders.

(ii) Leisure Associations (associations de loisir, socioculturels)
Whilst the *OMJA (Office municipal de la jeunesse d'Aubervilliers)* is a popular association in the sense that many of the interviewees claim to have experience of it, often citing it as the only association they have any knowledge of, it has had some

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[39] Meeting between 'Loïc', 'Corentin', 'Mansour' and 'Saïd', 29/03/1.
[40] Here, Loïc can be seen as the municipally employed 'go-between'.

difficulties in attracting large numbers of young people and maintaining their interest over a durable length of time. The association, which is often described as 'para-municipal', was set up in 1947 and is one of the largest in Aubervilliers (thirty-two full-time salaried posts; approximately thirty part-time posts and fifteen homework club volunteers).[41] The main objective of the association is to provide educational leisure for the thirteen to twenty-five age group.

In terms of success in recent years (1994-1999), 'Jalil', one of the association's employees, speaks of a *"bilan mitigé"*, although he adds that the situation is improving.[42] Indeed, the association, which is divided into four *maison de jeunes* spread around the town and two music and production studios, has increased its membership over the last couple of years (member figures jumped from forty to one hundred and fifty in one *maison de jeunes* within a year, once the team of *animateurs* became stable). However, both Jalil and colleague Saïd highlight the difficulty the association has had in attracting young women.[43] In addition, although the *maison de jeunes* may prove popular as a meeting place for young men in particular, Jalil points out that as far as more cultural activities are concerned, the association has more difficulty motivating its members to participate. He claims that this is because the young people concerned are less used to taking part in cultural activities than sporting activities. He therefore sees this as one of the main reasons for the failure of the recent Berber singing workshop despite being very well advertised, with flyers distributed all over the town. [44] Hassan, at the *Association de la nouvelle generation immigrée (ANGI)*, suggested that its failure certainly lay in the insensitivity of the flyer design which featured Arabic calligraphy, thus demonstrating a non-acknowledgement of the recent events in Kabylia and the Kabyle population in Aubervilliers who could have been offended by such an oversight.[45] Hassan also claims

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[41] The *OMJA* is a 1901 association in its own right and when asked if it was 'para-municipal', Jalil, an *OMJA* employee was keen to assert its full associational status. However, the *OMJA* receives over eighty percent of its 9.5 million FF budget (2000/2001) from the municipality and its president is the *maire-adjoint à la jeunesse*. Interview with 'Jalil', *OMJA*, 17/07/01.
[42] Interview with 'Jalil', *OMJA*, 17/07/01.
[43] Interview with Saïd, *OMJA*, 30/01/01.
[44] Interview with 'Jalil', *OMJA*, 17/07/01.
[45] Interview with 'Hassan', *Association de la nouvelle génération immigrée* (ANGI), 21/06/01. Hassan is referring to *"le printemps de la kabylie"* revolt of the Algerian Berber population, their demands for the

that he is often solicited by *OMJA* employees who ask him for advice on how to attract more young members, which reveals an element of disjunction between this para-municipal association and young people in Aubervilliers, where cultural activities are concerned.

(iii) Cultural Associations (associations culturelles)

The element of disjunction between some leisure and neighbourhood associations and young people is also observable as regards associations which are described in the *Guide des associations* as "*communautaires*".[46] For example, the association *La Médina* which mainly groups together Aubervilliers residents of Algerian origin, organises events and parties to celebrate the *Aïd* or concerts where North African singers are invited to perform. Very few young people of North African origin are involved in this association. Present at the association's annual general meeting (AGM) in June 2001 were people aged between thirty-five and fifty on average, and the one interviewee who is involved in this association, Mona, tends to participate from time to time because her mother is currently one of the *responsables*. Although, it would seem that the concerts and events that *La Médina* organises attract a substantial degree of attention, even amongst young 'second/third generation' people, it does seem that this attention is sporadic. When asked whether they attended these sorts of North African cultural events, a minority of interviewees replied positively and it was the young women who tended to be more interested than the young men. So once again, this type of associational activity does seem to be somewhat removed from the concerns of young people of North African origin as expressed amongst the majority of interviewees. (For further details on these 'concerns', see Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Another association which is described as "*communautaire*", this time in the *Aubervilliers de A à Z* guide is the *Union des travailleurs immigrés tunisiens*. This association, which existed as a collective in the 1970s, before foreign nationals obtained

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recognition of their language and cultural rights being at the centre of this violently suppressed uprising, which took place in 2001.

[46] See the *Guide des associations 1997* (Aubervilliers: Ville d'Aubervilliers et Carrefour pour l'information et la communication à Aubervilliers, 1997).

the right to freely associate in 1981, is linked with the migrant worker's movement and can therefore be seen as having a communist heritage. (It became a 1901 association in 1985). It was set up by a first wave of Tunisian immigrants in order to secure their rights as workers in France. Over time, the association has developed and diversified and now provides homework clubs, IT workshops, "socio-cultural activities"[47]; a *permanence* for women (including literacy classes, information, cookery and sewing lessons) and a *permanence juridique* (legal advice clinic). Given this wide range of activities, it would seem that the *Union* has been trying to change its image as an association exclusively for the 'first generation' and thus diversify its membership. Indeed, as its brochure explains: "Elle [l'association] s'adresse à la population issue de l'immigration, vivant en Ile-de-France en vue de défendre ses droits, de lutter contre toutes les formes de discrimination et d'œuvrer à son insertion notamment par l'école, le travail, la formation, le logement, l'information et la culture."[48] This does seem to be a very broad mission statement and although there are a number of young people (i.e. French-born adolescents of North African origin) who attend the music and educational activities, none of the interviewees who took part in the study had heard of this association and having attended the AGM and other meetings organised by the *Union*, it is clear that this association generally attracts people in their forties upwards, or those who arrived in France as adults. Members' children may come along with them sporadically or to attend the homework clubs up until the age of fourteen (at which point the association can no longer apply for funding from the *FAS*) but young adults aged sixteen upwards are only marginally involved in this association.[49] The fact that the association brochure is written in Arabic and French and a substantial part of the AGM was conducted in Arabic (the association leaders tend to communicate with one another in Arabic as well) demonstrates that despite is attempts to 'update' its missions and projects, this association remains part of

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[47] These activities include debates, conferences, music lessons, excursions to museums and parks in France and in other European countries, the celebration of Christmas, Aïd, end of school years, new year etc., AIDS and STD awareness campaigns.

[48] *UTIT* brochure, 2000-2001

[49] FAS stands for *Fonds d'action sociale pour les travailleurs immigrés et leurs familles*, a public institution set up in 1958 to deal with and fund operations concerning the integration of migrant populations in France. More specifically, its sphere of competence includes 'social action', housing, education and cultural issues. The FAS comes under the tutelage of the Ministry of Social Affairs on the one hand and the Ministry of the Interior on the other. For more details, see Philippe Dewitte ed., *Immigration et intégration : l 'état des savoirs* (Paris : La Découverte, 1999), p. 444.

what de Wenden and Leveau refer to as the 'première génération associative'.[50] Indeed, one of its main missions, along with the *FTCR* (*Fédération des Tunisiens pour une citoyenneté de deux rives*), is to campaign for the right of non-national residents to vote in local elections, a campaign more typically associated with the interviewees' parents' or grandparents' generation.

Or Proximity?

Despite a certain element of disjunction, demonstrated in the above typology of these three 'types' of association, there is also an element of mirroring between young people's expectations of associations and the local *offre associative*. This mirroring becomes evident if we consider the types of association which most concern the interviewees. The interviewees tend to be 'users' of certain 'services' provided by associations. These services are mostly educational, leisure and sports-oriented, or geared towards careers advice. These three areas also reflect three of the main types of association on offer in Aubervilliers. So the impression given is that of a paradoxical and simultaneous mixture of both disjunction and mirroring between young people's experience of associations and the municipality's expectations and 'designs' for associational life and youth. So to return to the original questions posed in the introduction to this chapter as to whether the involvement of young people of North African origin in associations can be assimilated to a nascent social or socio-cultural movement or a redefinition of citizenship, it would seem that this is not the case. This is not the case because on the one hand there is a disjunction between 1: the municipality's stance on the notion of participative democracy and young people and 2: the *offre associative* and young people. Yet on the other hand, there is an element of unhealthy proximity between what the municipality encourages through the funding of certain 1901 associations (these tend to become 'para-municipal' associations providing *soutien scolaire, loisir* and *insertion professionnelle*) and the interviewees' own associational involvement. The net result is that the interviewees obtain a rather limited experience of associations and what they might offer in terms of the '*passage de l'individu à la conscience collective*'. Indeed, if we examine the nature of the involvement of our interviewees with a more critical eye, it becomes clear that the

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[50] Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau (2001).

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vast majority are not engaging in a collective movement, nor in a redefinition of citizenship but that, rather, they are simultaneously 'victims' and 'accomplices' of a professionnalisation and instrumentalisation of associations.

7.4 'Les jeunes': 'victims' and 'accomplices' of an instrumentalisation of _la vie associative_[51]

(i) Victims?

It is possible to describe the young people who participated in the field research as subject to an instrumentalisation of associations by the Aubervilliers municipality in a number of ways. 'Georges', an employee of the local _Service municipal de la vie associative_, criticises what he sees as the current over-focus on the _quartier_ in associational activities. He challenges the widely accepted notion that young people's experience of associations will more often than not be limited to their immediate surroundings, their _quartier_ or _cité_. He hints that encouraging young people to form neighbourhood associations is a worrying trend:

> ...[c'est] toujours la même recette. Avec du football et du soutien scolaire [...] et je trouve de réduire, ou proposer comme modèle à des jeunes d'organiser une association de quartier, c'est déjà les couper du monde...la citoyenneté de proximité, le machin de proximité, on est pas des arbres ! [...] Leurs parents, pour la plupart ont fait deux mille, trois mille kilomètres pour venir jusqu'ici. Ils sont pas restés dans le bled, à regarder par terre, à tourner en rond [...] ça, c'est important à rappeler à ces jeunes là [...] je n'ai jamais poussé les jeunes à créer des associations de quartier, pour regarder le quartier [...] ils ont toute leur vie devant eux, faut qu'ils se forment, il faut qu'ils regardent le monde entier, faut qu'ils bougent leurs fesses, faut qu'ils fassent comme leurs parents [...] et avec un discours de contrôle social, de proximité, de cocoonage, de protection, et cetera, on est en train de faire des êtres atrophiés, et moi je veux pas être complice de ça [...] j'ai rien contre les associations de quartier. C'est pas la question, c'est à quelle hauteur on met la barre [...] les jeunes d'Aubervilliers doivent avoir autant d'ambition, sinon plus, parce qu'ils viennent de plus bas [...] pour avoir une place égale ou à leur hauteur mais digne quoi.[52]

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[51] It should be pointed out that the terms 'victim' and 'accomplice' are used metaphorically and for want of better terms. I do not argue that they are victims or accomplices in any real or absolute sense but rather, that they can simultaneously be seen to suffer and gain from the instrumentalisation of associations.

[52] Interview with 'Georges', _Service municipal de la vie associative_, 14/03/01.

Georges then goes on to criticise what he calls a *"délégation des responsabilités"* with regards to the phenomenon of calling on young adults to 'look after' the younger adolescents and children: *"Où sont les parents? C'est pas les grands frères ou grandes sœurs [...] on demande aux jeunes de s'occuper de la société. Mais c'est pas vrai ! [...] Ça va pas !"*[53] The reactions of this municipal employee would seem to suggest a disjunction between his own personal opinions and certain aspects of the municipal stance on associations, as detailed in the examination of *Aubermensuel* and the experience of Mansour and his association above (7.3)

I ask Georges whether he thinks a delegation of municipal responsibility has taken place as far as Mansour's neighbourhood association is concerned. He denies this and instead argues that the experiment has proved to be a positive experience:

> *C'est très bien... ils se sont bien organisés... ça a permis à quelques-uns qui étaient mal vus dans leur quartier de montrer un autre visage, un visage positif [...] il y a quelques-uns de ces jeunes qui ont pu par le biais de cette association, montrer leurs autres visages [...]alors c'est bien.*[54]

However, as was observable during the meeting between Mansour and Loïc, the *coordinateur de quartier*, there does seem to be an element of the municipality handing down 'directives' in the form of suggestions to Mansour and his associates as how to improve certain aspects of daily life in the *Vandrezanne cité*. The enthusiasm of the association members, including Mansour, is at best questionable. Mansour makes this clear: *"... l'association, arrivée à ce stade où on est aujourd'hui, moi, elle est dispensable, normalement, je reste là, je peux pas abandonner les autres [...] ce que je veux, c'est lâcher l'association et puis trouver une autre personne responsable qui connaît..."*[55] In addition to the 'suggestions' that the association receives from the municipality, Mansour also points out that as an association they have been advised *not* to request funding or *subventions*: *"... si on demande des subventions, ils vont commencer*

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.

à prendre la tête ... nous, on a pas demandé des subventions parce que nous, les gens ils ont une image de nous en tant que jeunes."[56]

Both these factors would suggest that the independence of the association is questionable. Indeed, Mansour claims that during the municipal elections (held in March 2001), the incumbent mayor asked if he could add Mansour's name to his electoral list of supporters. This relationship between local politicians and associations is also highlighted by 'Kader', a local *animateur* who wants to set up his own sport and *soutien scolaire* association:

> *À l'approche des élections, ils veulent charmer les gens [...] moi j'ai eu la chance parce que j'ai contribué à ce que le maire [...] soit réélu, pas que la ville passe à droite. Je suis allé chercher des jeunes qui iraient pas voter, des parents de jeunes, que je connais [...] alors moi, avec d'autres éducateurs, on a réussi. Le maire est passé avec deux cent et quelques voix, ce qui est très très peu et donc ça a été fait grâce au travail qu'on a fait avec différents éducateurs qui sont sur la ville [...] et moi, j'ai eu la chance que le maire m'a reçu après les élections [...] il m'a dit 'OK, je vais t'appeler pour ton projet [...] donc je regrette pas de l'avoir fait.*[57]

Another factor which would seem to suggest that to a certain extent, young people, (i.e. some of the interviewees) are the 'victims' of an instrumentalisation of the associational landscape, is the fact that many of the 1901 associations in Aubervilliers and the surrounding towns where some of the interviewees live, provide services which would otherwise be provided by the State, or more precisely, the municipality. This 'delegation' of responsibility in terms of staff rather than in terms of finances is not much cause for concern if it is a trend restricted to sport and leisure. However, some observers argue that it is cause for concern when the 1901 associations are expected to deliver the bulk of social/educational support services in a town. Indeed, most of the interviewees who have participated in *soutien scolaire* did so within an association; those who have had experience of literacy classes have done so within a 1901 association and many link careers and training advice with 1901 associations. In addition, sports associations are now encouraged to partake in more pedagogical and social work. Former *haut*

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Interview with 'Kader', local sports *animateur* and *éducateur*, 18/06/01.

fonctionnaire, Jean Faber signals some of the possible limitations and implications of such a state of affairs: "L'association est prête à réaliser un service, le gouvernement ne finance nullement les projets politiques [...] on ne finance pratiquement que des structures (en prétendant financer un projet) et jamais les actions qu'elles disent conduire."[58] Faber argues that by financing associations so that they deal with the 'integration' of immigrants through literacy classes, homework clubs etc., the State is depending on an underpaid and a voluntary workforce who may not have the appropriate skills required:

> Ainsi, l'intégration, si largement confiée aux associations, est l'œuvre – comme l'action caritative – de milliers et de milliers de bénévoles, armée anonyme ne comptant ni son temps, ni sa peine. [...] les salariés des associations oeuvrant pour l'intégration dans les quartiers sont en général des immigrés issus de ces quartiers. Chacun chez soi et les immigrés seront bien intégrés – entre eux.[59]

Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau argue that there is an element of "*faire faire*" within the *tissu associatif*, that is a colonial model at work whereby the State diverts a minimum amount of funding through schemes such as *la politique de la Ville* to the volunteers and *emplois jeunes* in the *quartiers*, thus leaving them to 'their own devices'.[60] This translates into the assumption that if one is a young person of North African origin living in a stigmatised *banlieue*, then one automatically possesses the expertise to deal with the social issues which can arise there. One *animatrice* who works at the *OMJA*, alludes to this when she complains that she is often expected to provide more than *l'animation socioculturelle*, as was the case when she and her colleagues were enlisted by the *mairie* to help resolve an on-going and violent conflict between young people in two neighbouring housing estates:

> *...je sais pas si on est vraiment reconnu pour le travail qu'on fait ou si on est juste là pour apaiser les esprits et puis manger des coups derrière, une fois que le travail est bien fait ben je sais pas s'il y a une réelle reconnaissance, si au-dessus, on est en train de se dire 'oh on a bien travaillé, les petits Maghrébins, ils se*

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[58] Jean Faber, *Les indésirables : l'intégration à la française* (Paris : Grasset & Fasquelle, 2000), p. 129 and p. 132.
[59] Jean Faber (2000), p. 134 and p. 140.
[60] See de Wenden and Leveau (2001), pp. 121-124.

débrouillent entre eux, on leur donne une petite maison de jeunes, on leur donne trente mille francs par mois et puis voilà, ils nous foutent la paix.'[61]

So if we take into account these factors which seem to transform young people into the 'victims' of an instrumentalisation of associations, it is possible to draw two conclusions: that the municipality is abandoning certain responsibilities and that there can be little room for a 'conflictualisation' of relations between the young people living in Aubervilliers or surrounding *banlieues* and the municipality. Even where those associations which may engage in more politicised issues are concerned, for example the *UTIT* (and its campaign for non French-national voting and eligibility rights), it should be pointed out that this association backed the alternative left-wing list during the municipal elections, a political grouping which makes no statement about the voting rights of immigrants. In addition, as mentioned above, none of the young interviewees living in Aubervilliers, where the association is based, had heard of the *UTIT*.

(ii) Or Accomplices?

Yet nevertheless, just as the relationship between Aubervilliers youth and associations is a paradoxical mixture of proximity and distance, one gets the impression, that young people are not just the 'victims' of an instrumentalisation of associations. They are 'accomplices' as well. That is, they are, to a certain extent, the beneficiaries of the instrumentalisation of associations by the State. For example, many young people tend to see associations as an alternative employment market, or at least as a factor which will allow them to gain work experience and then proceed to employment with a more impressive curriculum vitae. Amir explains that he became an *animateur* in his local *association de quartier* by accident but that it served him well since a part-time job allowed him to gain some financial independence whilst still a student. Salima points out that she set up her own association so as to be able to gain some practical *animation* experience after obtaining her *BAFA* and that as soon as she found employment, she abandoned her voluntary activities (*soutien scolaire*, excursions etc.). Sara, like Amir claims to have 'fallen' into *animation* by accident, because it was suggested to her by people she already knew. Her comments reveal something about the way in which young

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[61] Interview with *OMJA animatrice*, 09/03/01.

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people themselves participate in the transformation of associations into organisations which offer career paths:

> ...je côtoyais des animateurs et moi, je suis rentrée dans l'animation mais vraiment par hasard [...] l'association, c'est particulier, c'est que tout le monde connaît tout le monde et on a tous grandi ensemble. Ça fait que même mon responsable, il me connaît depuis que j'ai dix-sept ans. Tous les directeurs, on a tous grandi ensemble et puis ceux qui sont rentrés avant, ils ont fait profiter tout le monde. Ils ont rentré leurs petites sœurs des grands frères donc moi, je voulais juste faire un séjour et puis on m'a proposé de partir en tant qu'animatrice – au-pair [...] c'est parti de ça, ça m'a plu.[62]

This tendency to see associations as an alternative employment market should be seen in the context of the unemployment crisis which has particularly affected young people in France over the last decade. Indeed, as Faber points out, between a third and a half of the posts within associations are what are known as *contrats aidés* (*contrats emploi solidarité, emploi jeune, contrat emploi consolidé*), that is, they are co-financed (between 50% and 80%) by the State.[63] Thus many young people in Aubervilliers see the *nouveaux métiers du secteur associatif*, i.e. *animateurs, médiateurs culturels* etc. as a chance to '*s'en sortir*'. This is the case, for instance, of Yacine who was recruited to work on an *emploi jeune* basis at the locally based 'immigrant-origin' association, where Hassan works (see above).

There are other social and financial incentives for young people to become involved in associations. Indeed, Georges, of the *Service municipal de la vie associative*, complains about a trend whereby young people contact him for advice about their hastily set-up association. They invariably ask the following question: "*À quoi j'ai droit?*"[64] This common occurrence reflects a rather widely held belief that if one creates an association, one automatically gains access to *subventions* (funding) and/or *locaux* (premises). Indeed, this sort of approach to associations does seem to exist amongst some of the interviewees such as Mansour, Fouad and Abdel. Mansour admits that being a *responsable* of a local

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[62] Interview with 'Sara', 06/03/01.
[63] Faber (2000), pp. 136-139.
[64] Interview with 'Georges', *Service municipal de la vie associative*, 14/03/01.

association provides possible 'pay-offs': "...*maintenant si je fais une demande d'appartement, ils me donnent aussitôt...*"[65] Although, Fouad has taken the initiative to set up two rap music associations for young people in his neighbourhood, this should also be seen as part of his own career aspirations to become a producer in the music industry. So he sees the 1901 association structure as a way of obtaining funds: "...*pour pouvoir s'en sortir, faut se monter en association, pour pouvoir essayer d'avoir des fonds et payer les heures de studios, essayer de faire une petite maquette pour présenter au public.*"[66] Abdel also points out that he and a group of friends who simply wanted to play football in the local indoor gymnasium were strongly advised to declare themselves a 1901 association so as to be able to benefit from insurance policies against injury etc., which shows that they did not get together and decide to set up a 1901 association, but were encouraged to do so because of the nature of the activity. Only then did they think of organising activities for local adolescents.

As Hassan, at the *ANGI* points out, it is not really possible to refer to young people as "*adhérents dans le sens classique du terme*". He argues that they should rather be seen as "*bénéficiaires*".[67] Indeed, as we have seen, this is how most of the interviewees can be described, since the vast majority's experience of 1901 associations involves leisure and sports activities, homework clubs, reduced-cost holidays and group excursions.

Two main conclusions can be made about the fact that many young people are accomplices of the increasing instrumentalisation of associations. First of all, it is not possible to describe the interviewees as being involved in any extensive '*actions citoyènnes*' and secondly, there is little evidence of participative or *contestataire* democracy.

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[65] Interview with 'Mansour', 29/03/01.
[66] Interview with 'Fouad' and 'Yacine', 05/07/01.
[67] Interview with 'Hassan', *Association de la nouvelle génération immigrée (ANGI)*, 21/06/01.

7.5 Concluding Remarks

So it is not really possible to talk about the interviewees, nor the range of associations discussed in this chapter as forming a coherent social or socio-cultural movement since there is no real evidence of a 'conflictualisation' of relations with the municipality and/or the State through association membership and there would appear to be little or no ideological anchorage amongst the young people concerned. There are no obvious leaders either since there would appear to be no real commonly expressed goal uniting the interviewees except for their desire to 'get on' or 's'en sortir' through increased employment opportunities and reduced racial discrimination. Although this *revendication* concerns many of the interviewees, it remains non-formalised and unarticulated in an associational context. Indeed, it would seem that the associations the interviewees tend to become involved in, are of a rather 'a-political' nature since despite often being linked to 'self-advancement' (*soutien scolaire, insertion professionnelle*), there seems to be little open acknowledgement amongst the *associatifs* (the exception being the *OMJA animatrice* above – pp.318-319) that these 'service-associations' often exist and receive funding due to a questionable 'delegation of State responsibilities' regarding adequate socio-cultural and educational facilities in the *banlieue*.

Furthermore, there does not seem to be a renewal of citizenship or participation, which much of the celebratory and historical discourse about associations focuses on (see 7.1). It would seem that where young people are involved in associations, it is either for rather instrumental reasons, such as obtaining a *local* or some means of enhancing their employment prospects in a context of precarious job opportunities and other obstacles to employment, such as racial discrimination. Some would argue that young people who are involved in mosques, i.e. in religious associations, cannot be seen as instrumentalising associations. This chapter has not focused on mosques and other Islamic associations since it was decided that the interviewees' own experiences would lead me to the types of associations which concerned them, rather than pre-select associations and interview the

young people involved in them. The vast majority of interviewees who participated in the field study did not have any experience of Muslim associations.[68]

Thus, it would seem that we need to interpret the involvement of young people of North African origin in associations in an alternative manner. Their involvement is not ideological, nor can it be described in social/socio-cultural movement terms. Rather, it is a pragmatic way in which they deal with the fear of social exclusion or as Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Yves Sintomer call it, "*la désaffiliation*", regarding access to employment, education and leisure.[69] In this sense then, the interviewees can be seen to be part of a generalised context of increased political apathy and as part of a wider 'a-political' generation since associations, as representative 'units' of civil society, could potentially be alternative sites of politicised or socio-cultural conflict, because they are exterior to the increasingly challenged mainstream party political process.

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[68] The exceptions here are Mahmoud who attends a local mosque in St. Ouen and Fayçal who attends a *salle de prière* in the basement of his apartment block in St. Denis. Both point out that their mosque attendance is very sporadic and tends to take place during Ramadan. Both young men argue that "les frères musulmans" visit them and their fiends whilst they are 'hanging around' the housing estate, thus encouraging them to attend the mosque. In addition, between the ages of eleven and twelve, Mahmoud's parents enrolled him in Koran lessons in an association in Clichy, but he left because as he puts it: "j'ai arrêté parce qu'il me frappait le monsieur... pour des bêtises quoi. ...Quand on discutait avec notre camarade, on se faisait engueuler." Other exceptions are Leila who has been involved with an association which, amongst other things, regulates *halal* meat and organises events during the *Aïd* and Malika, who was formerly involved in a Muslim women's association in Rennes and attends meetings organised by the *Jeunes musulmans de France*. There are seven 'mosques' or rather *salles de prière* in Aubervilliers itself, but as none of the interviewees indicated that they attended them, I did not concentrate on these types of associations. (For addresses of mosques in Aubervilliers, see '*Guide des mosquées*', http://www.mosquée.fr.)

[69] Maire-Hélène Bacqué and Yves Sintomer refer to the term used by Robert Castel in *Métamorphoses de la question sociale* (Paris : Fayard, 1995) in 'Affiliations et désaffiliations en banlieue : réflexions à partir des exemples de Saint-Denis et d'Aubervilliers', *Revue française de Sociologie*, 42.2 (2001), 217-249.

CONCLUSION

The idea, which has informed the direction of this thesis from its outset, has been the hypothesis that there exists a disjunction between the discourses surrounding populations of immigrant-origin and their actual experiences. Thus, the discourses, or rather the political and academic debates about North African immigrants and their French-born descendants, as detailed in Chapters 1 and 2, can be seen as informing the backdrop to the empirical objectives of the thesis. The analysis provided in Chapter 1 of the various political discourses revealed that the *public* debates of the 1980s and 90s led us to conceptualise young people of North African origin in terms of a 'measurement' of their cultural integration. The rise of the *Front National*, the various debates about the reform of the Nationality Code and establishment of the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration*, can thus be seen as reflecting a widespread view that the French-born descendants of North Africans remained culturally 'Other' and therefore 'inassimilable'.

In Chapter 2, the *academic* debates about immigrants and their descendants in the 1990s have been shown to be partially out of step with the experiences on the ground. This results from a tendency to focus on either a philosophical/macro approach to cultural difference *or* on the more social question of '*la jeunesse des banlieues*', with North African-origin youth being subsequently conceptualised in purely socio-economic terms, or as being 'in the same boat' as their 'French-origin' counterparts from stigmatised *banlieues*. Chapter 2 thus revealed a lack of interchange between the various academic debates which were divided into three main categories: the ideological or philosophical debates centring on cultural difference; research on associations and research relating to youth in stigmatised urban (or rather suburban) settings. Chapters 1 and 2 also demonstrated that the focus on cultural difference in both the political and academic debates has often become the site for ideologically driven polemics relating to the 'Republic' (universalism) versus 'Anglo-Saxon' multiculturalism. This, in turn, has led to the caricatured conceptualisation of young people of North African origin either in terms of individual assimilation or *communautarisme*.

The field research was therefore undertaken in an attempt to escape the limits of both the public and academic debates. That is, the primary objectives were as follows: 1. to move from the register of top-down discourse to experience. 2. To adopt an approach which would allow for the re-articulation of the cultural and the social, or in other words, an approach which would conceptualise young people of North African origin in relation to their cultural *and* socio-economic specificities, rather than focusing on one or the other. Such an approach was also designed to re-establish an empirical link between the cultural difference-type analyses, the *'jeunesse des banlieues'* analyses and research carried out on immigrant-origin associations (*associations issues de l'immigration*), which were shown to be sometimes in disjunction with one another. 3. To escape those ideological elements of the public and intellectual debates which have defined young people of North African origin either in terms of individual assimilation or *communautarisme*.

A re-articulation of both the cultural and social registers as well as a distancing from the ideological dichotomies present in some of the public and academic debates can therefore be seen as the starting points of the empirical research, which centred on the notion of subjectivity. By focusing on the concept of subjectivity (introduced in Chapter 3) and thus drawing on Wieviorka's triangle of identity, Dubet's notion of social experience, Bastide's *sociologie du bricolage*, Lapeyronnie's *construction de soi* and above all, Touraine's notion of the Subject or subjectivation, it has been possible to approach the question of young people of North African origin from a 'bottom-up' perspective and allow the actors concerned to construct their own 'discourses' regarding their experiences and identities. Placing the young people at the centre of our analysis enables us to avoid discussing them as either a static 'cultural group' or as a static 'socio-economic group'.

Chapters 4, 5, 6 demonstrated the tensions, contradictions and heterogeneity of the young men and women's experiences, which can, to a certain extent, be characterised by what Robert Gibb refers to as the contrast and interplay between "the processes of

external categorisation and internal identification" in relation to difference.[1] Indeed, Chapters 4, 5, 6 can be seen as integrating a social, political and cultural analysis of young people of North African origin because of the focus on issues such as relationships to the *banlieue*; social and political demands, attitudes towards political participation; and relationships to the '*culture d'origine*' (through an investigation into language use, religious practice, marriage, relationships to the parents' country of origin, self-perception etc.).

In Chapter 6, which focused more closely on the 'subjective pole' of identity, three 'axes' of subjectivity were identified: 'circulation' in the triangle of identity, *bricolage identitaire* (or identity creativity) and the capacity for collective social-cultural action. The relevance of the first two axes in relation to the interviewees, who as we saw, were able to combine varying registers of identity as well as create new or emergent ones, would suggest that the hypothesis of disjunction is to a significant extent, accurate. Indeed, the interviewees' capacity to circulate around the triangle of identity and thus combine (albeit with greater difficulty for some interviewees than for others) an individualist and more *communautaire* sense of identity in an original and creative manner, suggests that the discourses discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, which often ideologically oppose individual (modern/rational) values to differentialist (traditional) values, are out of step with the experiences of young people of North African origin.

So as regards the first two axes of subjectivity, that is, at the level of the individual, it is possible to observe a process of *subjectivation* at work. The subjective construction of a sense of identity not only reveals what Dubet calls "une certaine connaissance de soi" but also enables some interviewees to interact and negotiate with their family, peers, or on a wider basis, with French society.[2] For example, with regard to her choice of future marriage partner, Myriam can be described as what Nacira Guénif

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[1] Robert Gibb, review of Michel Wieviorka's *La Différence* (Paris: Balland, 2001), *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25.1 (2002), 151-152, (p. 152).
[2] François Dubet, 'Sociologie du sujet et sociologie de l'expérience' in *Penser le Sujet : autour d'Alain Touraine* ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris: Fayard, 1995), pp.103-121, (p. 119).

Souilamas would call 'une artisane d'une liberté tempérée'.[3] That is, she will make her own choice of partner within a pre-existing set of boundaries, set by her family. In a similar manner, although Hala and her family practice as a unit, she herself chose when to start praying five times a day. Djamel's efforts to combine his Algerian and French identities allow him to negotiate what he refers to as *"une promotion sociale"*. His subjectivity also allows him to reject racial/cultural discrimination and social exclusion, in a similar manner to Touran. The constant effort to circulate around the *espace identitaire* and the reference to multiple registers of identity and experience (individual and community) depending on the issue, the context and the interlocutors present, also allows some of the interviewees to negotiate a certain position or 'authentic' image within their peer group. This became evident in group interview situations and particularly when discussing Islam and self-definition in relation to family heritage. The subjectivity of certain interviewees also meant that they were able to 'cross or alter certain boundaries' such as the one set by the Republican principle of *laïcité* (secularism). This is the case of Leila, who despite her headscarf is determined to fight her way into the *Éducation Nationale* system and become a teacher, regardless of the regulations concerning the wearing of ostentatious religious symbols in the classroom. Leila's stance would seem to reflect Wieviorka's claim that subjectivity can be understood as "une capacité [...] de se comporter de façon plus ou moins originale par rapport aux normes de ces sociétés."[sociétés française et britannique].[4]

As far as the third axis of subjectivity is concerned (the capacity for collective socio-cultural action), it is also possible to conceptualise matters in terms of disjunction since, in several ways, both the municipal discourse about associations as *des espaces de démocratie*, and the local *offre associative* in Aubervilliers, were shown in Chapter 7, to not correspond with the experiences of the interviewees. If it can be argued that the *'passage aux associations'* eludes the interviewees, then *'le passage au politique'*, defined by Wihtol de Wenden as "une série d'actions tenant au contrôle du politique dans

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[3] Nacria Guénif Souilamas, *Des "beurettes" aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains* (Paris : Grasset & Fasquelle, 2000). See *Conclusion générale*, p. 345.
[4] Michel Wieviorka, *La Démocratie à l'épreuve: nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris : La Découverte, 1993), pp. 132-133. Here, Wieviorka makes this comment in relation to French and British society.

la vie quotidienne [...] et posant la question de l'accès légitime au politique, 'par le bas' ..." appears to elude them further still.[5]

If we proceed to a synthesis of these fieldwork findings, that is, that the first two axes of subjectivity seem to be more prevalent that the third one, then it is possible to argue that young people of North African origin in the *banlieue* (if we maintain that the interviewees are at least a qualitatively, if not a quantitatively, representative sample), can be described as actors on a micro or individual level, because of their capacity to combine and 'create' new and multiple registers of identity as well as resist exclusion and discrimination. On an individual level, the interviewees' ability to articulate individual and community identity should also be seen in terms of their capacity to articulate the social and cultural registers of experience since they sometimes emphasise their *banlieue* identity and at other times, they emphasise the North African elements of their identity. Which register dominates depends on the context and on their interlocutor. This ever-changing notion of identity was reflected in the numerous contradictions and paradoxical stances of the interviewees.

However, on a more macro or collective level the capacity for social or cultural action and an articulation of social and cultural specificities is limited. Indeed, at the level of the 'group', it appears that the subjectivity of the young men and women who participated in the field research is more precarious. As was shown in Chapters 6 and 7, the notion of describing the interviewees as forming a socio-cultural movement would be inaccurate. Although there is a common *revendication* amongst the young men and women which expresses a condemnation of discrimination and exclusion, the resigned anticipation of these phenomena suggests that in some cases, the interviewees are observers of their 'fate' and, whilst others are less passive, it is still not possible to argue that this condemnation is transformed into a formally articulated demand. Indeed, Dubet points out that subjectivity or the capacity for social action becomes most visible in a context of *"rapports de domination"* yet this does not seem to be the case for many of the

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[5] Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, *Les Immigrés et la politique : cent cinquante ans d'évolution* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1988), p. 350.

interviewees, who do not appear to be able to conflictualise their 'revendications' for more equal opportunities.[6] For example, we saw in Chapter 7 how some interviewees are simultaneously the 'victims' and 'accomplices' in a process of association instrumentalisation, whereby associations become alternative and sometimes questionable 'ratrappage' outfits in the spheres of education and employment. It is therefore not possible to refer to a North-African-origin youth-centred movement. Whilst demands for recognition are relevant to our sample on an individual level, it is possible to argue, as does Didier Lapeyronnie, that the failure of the young people to articulate their social demands (greater employment opportunities for example) with reference to a cultural specificity in the public space, means that ultimately the *passage de l'individu à la collectivité* fails.[7] This is the case of Mansour, Touran or Abdel Majid who all complain about racial discrimination but when it comes to the issue of social or political demands, they present themselves as individuals, as though fearful that if they draw attention to their cultural specificities in the public space, they could be subject to even further discrimination. (See 4.1).

The problematic *passage de l'individu à la collectivité* means that it is possible to refer to a thwarted 'macro-subjectivity' since, despite a generalised anticipation of exclusion or *désaffiliation*[8], there is an equally widespread lack of expectation with regard to political parties and associations. Indeed, associational life in Aubervilliers does not seem to correspond to the definition of associations as: "...une expression de l'autonomie de la société civile."[9] The generalised disinterest in politics in its widest sense also suggests that a hypothesis which describes the interviewees as collectively partaking in a redefinition of the Republican paradigm of citizenship, through demands for recognition as a specific community, would be erroneous.

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[6] Dubet, in Dubet and Wieviorka eds, (1995), p. 118.

[7] See Didier Lapeyronnie, 'Assimilation, mobilisation et action collective chez les jeunes de la seconde génération de l'immigration maghrébine', *Revue française de Sociologie*, 28 (1987), 287-318. Lapeyronnie refers to this as "*L'impossible passage au politique*". (p. 309).

[8] Robert Castel, *Métamorphoses de la question sociale* (Paris: Fayard, 1995), cited by Maire-Hélène Bacqué and Yves Sintomer in 'Affiliations et désaffiliations en banlieue : réflexions à partir des exemples de Saint-Denis et d'Aubervilliers', *Revue française de Sociologie*, 42.2 (2001), 217-249.

[9] Martine Barthélemy, *Associations: un nouvel âge de participation ?* (Paris : Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 2000), p. 59.

However, it would be inaccurate and unfair to dismiss the young people who were interviewed as observers of their fate simply because they are not personally involved in any formal conflictualisation of social, political and cultural relations between themselves (the 'periphery') and the authorities (the 'centre').[10] After all, although the associational milieu has been shown to be flawed in many ways, the widespread involvement of young people of North African origin in *soutien scolaire* projects reveals a strong desire to succeed for those who are the beneficiaries, and the beginnings of a constructive collective consciousness amongst those who are the volunteers and *animateurs/-trices*. The expression '*s'en sortir*' is perhaps one of the most commonly used ones amongst the male interviewees and although both the men and women may view their possibilities of 'getting on' or of 'upward mobility' with varying degrees of optimism, there is a general desire to build a better future. Although the prospect of formalised demands for social and cultural recognition is largely absent from our problematic, the interviewees have proved that they *are* subjective actors and *bricoleur/-euses* of their own pasts and futures, albeit on an individual level. In this sense then, the absence of a socio-cultural collective movement amongst young people of North African origin in France reflects the wider political apathy of youth in general. However, the consequences are most likely more serious for those of non-European origin. Thus the *passage de l'individu à la collectivité* remains one of the most significant challenges of the future.

Borrowing Daniel Bell's notion of crisis and change as taking place on three registers, three registers, which according to him, define modernity - the cultural, the political/institutional and the social - it is feasible to enquire into the possible future trajectories of our sample and young people of North African origin from a *banlieue* context in general.[11] On the cultural level, future trajectories and therefore future research could focus on the continuing process of emergent identities amongst these populations,

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[10] The notion of a centre and a periphery is discussed in the works of Alain Touraine. See in particular, Alain Touraine, 'La Formation du sujet' in *Penser le Sujet : autour d'Alain Touraine* ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris: Fayard, 1995), pp.21-45 (p.30).
[11] Daniel Bell, *Les Contradictions culturelles du capitalisme* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1979), cited by Michel Wieviorka, 'Faut-il-en finir avec la notion d'intégration?', *Les Cahiers de la sécurité intérieure*, 45.3 (2001), 9-20, p. 11.

as a reflection of wider cultural change within the French 'mainstream'. In addition, the continuing process of identity innovation or creativity could also be seen in a context where the French-born descendants of North African immigrants can no longer be seen as '*un groupe à part*' but as part of the cultural and socio-economic fabric of France. Such a development would not signal the triumph of an assimilationist perspective but rather the advent of what the Aubervilliers-based *Association de la nouvelle génération immigrée* sets out as a goal in its mission statement: that young people of North African (or non-European) origin will have become "des citoyens normaux, ordinaires, dont la présence serait normale et sans mystère."[12] Indeed, this notion of young people of North African origin becoming 'ordinary' citizens and members of French society, could pave the way for comparative research about young people of North African origin and their European or '*français de souche*' counterparts who also live in a stigmatised *banlieue* setting. On the other hand, a far more negative but equally, if not more interesting starting point, could be to investigate the effects of the post-'9/11' context on the formation of identities amongst young people of North African origin, who have subsequently been cast under further suspicion as a result of the 'war on terror'. Indeed, it could perhaps be argued that the re-launching of the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* by Prime Minister Raffarin in October 2002 (inactive since November 2001), whilst taking into account the fight against discrimination in its brief, is, through its other major aim to "ressusciter la volonté d'adhésion à la République", part of a post-'9/11' context of renewed suspicion with regard to '*la jeunesse issue de l'immigration maghrébine*'.[13]

In political or institutional terms, the increasingly amplified debate surrounding the absence of significant numbers of North African-origin political representatives in the French party political system, could signal an important '*prise de conscience*'. Will this *prise de conscience* lead to real change? In addition, the establishment of the CODAC (*Commissions départementales d'accès à la citoyenneté*) in January 1999; the establishment of the '114' *numéro vert* help line (March 2000) and the transformation of the GED (*Groupe d'étude des discriminations*) into the GELD (*Groupe d'étude et de*

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[12] Cited from the *Association de la nouvelle génération immigrée* 1999 mission statement.
[13] Source: Speech delivered by Jean-Pierre Raffarin, PM at opening ceremony of new *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration*, 24/10/02. Sited on www.le114.com website.

lutte contre les discriminations), reflect an increased recognition of racial discrimination. These various 'instances' or bodies, whilst not without their flaws, can be seen as significant institutional developments.[14] Furthermore, the Nainville-les-Roche Accords, concluded between the various Islamic representatives in France and the Ministry of the Interior's *Bureau des cultes* in December 2002, will lead to the establishment of a *Conseil français du culte musulman (CFCM)*. This also signals another site for change at the institutional level and the tracking of this development as well as the anti-discrimination measures could therefore constitute another future area of research.[15]

In social terms or rather, in socio-economic terms, it should be acknowledged that the French economic climate is not what it was in the 1980s and early 1990s. Whilst the employment market remains precarious for many, especially those young people of North African origin, who remain on the 'frontline' of racial and cultural discrimination, an improved economic climate can be seen as a site for change or a motor for generational upward mobility, thus requiring the attention of future researchers.

These three sites for change (and future research topics) should not however, be seen as linear or logical developments. Rather, they represent possible sites for challenges to domination, through the incorporation of a principle of a re-conflictualisation of relations between the 'established' and the 'outsiders', or in other words, between the 'centre' and the 'periphery'.[16]

This thesis has shown that for young people of North African origin living in Seine-Saint-Denis, the *passage de l'individu à la collectivité*, where the collectivity is defined by some sort of social and cultural specificity, is, in many ways, problematic. Will this always be the case? Does this signal the continuing relevance of the Republican

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[14] The CODAC, the 114 and the GELD which now manages the 114 help line are all public institutions, under the tutelage of the *Ministère de l'emploi et de la solidarité* but also involve other ministries such as the *intérieur, justice, éducation nationale, jeunesse et sports, ville*. See www.social.gouv.fr - Ministry of Employment and Solidarity website.

[15] See www.mosquée-de-paris.com website for some Muslim reactions to the Accords.

[16] See Norbert Elias and J. L. Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders: A Sociological Enquiry into Community Problems* (London: Frank Cass, 1965). See also Alain Touraine in *Penser le Sujet: autour d'Alain Touraine*, ed. by François Dubet and Michel Wieviorka (Paris: Fayard, 1995), pp.21-45 (p.30).

'model' with regard to citizenship being the relationship between the non-specific, i.e. universal *individual* and the State? Or does it rather, merely reflect the political immaturity of today's young adults and their resulting failure to articulate and conflictualise their social and cultural grievances into concrete collective demands? If the latter is true, and if the threat of exclusion through racial/cultural discrimination persists, a political 'coming of age' of certain representatives of the current sixteen to thirty generation could signal the greatest challenge that the Republic has had to face so far.

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APPENDIX 1: SUMMARISED INTERVIEWEE BIOGRAPHIES

- The 'biographies' which follow, concern the forty-four interviewees discussed throughout Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. They are purely summaries and should be treated as such.

- The author accepts that those individuals who agreed to participate in an interview were, to a certain extent, self-selected and so from this point of view, the interviewees cannot be seen as representing youth of North African and *banlieue* origin in its entirety.

- The *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*, (which includes the *Collège Pablo Picasso*, and the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*) and the *Lycée d'enseignement professionnel Van Gogh* are based in Aubervilliers and are pseudonyms. The *Collège Pablo Picasso* is a ZEP (*Zone d'éducation prioritaire*) and the *Lycée Van Gogh* is a ZEP and until recently was also classified as a *Zone de violence*.

- Unless otherwise stated, the interviewees live with their families.

- With regard to dual nationality, Weil points out that France, like Britain does not ask French nationals to give up their original nationality. Only in extremely exceptional circumstances can the State take away a naturalised person's French nationality.[1]

'Aicha'

Aicha is twenty-eight years old. She is a trainee care-auxiliary, training at the *Centre de formation Louise Couvé*, based in Aubervilliers. She was born in Algeria and brought to France at the age of two. Both her parents are Algerian. She is of Algerian nationality and of *kabyle* origin. Her father is a retired worker who emigrated to France in 1962 and her mother was formerly a nanny. She is the third-born of six children (she has two older married brothers, two younger sisters and a younger brother). Aicha lives in le Blanc-Mesnil (*Seine-Saint-Denis*).

'Amira'

Amira is sixteen years old. She is a pupil in *première littéraire* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso* in Aubervilliers.[2] She was born in France. Both her parents are Tunisian. Her father in an unemployed electrician and her mother does not work. She is one of seven

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[1] Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution.* (Paris : Grasset& Fasquelle, 2002).

[2] *Terminale* is equivalent to Year 13; *Première* is equivalent to Year 12; *Seconde* is equivalent to Year 11 in the English and Welsh education system. *Littéraire* refers to a baccalaureate programme which places an emphasis on literatures, Philosophy and languages. *ES* refers to a baccalaureate programme which is more specialised in Economics and social sciences subjects. *Scientifique* refers to a baccalaureate programme which places an emphasis on Mathematics and science subjects.

children. She has lived in Aubervilliers all her life and had just recently moved to neighbouring La Courneuve (*Seine-Saint-Denis*) at the time of interview.

'Arwa'

Arwa is eighteen years old. She is an Accountancy *BEP* pupil in a *lycée d'enseignement professionnel* in Drancy. She was born in France (Paris). Both her parents are Moroccan. She holds Moroccan nationality and will imminently acquire French nationality. Her father, who grew up in France, no longer works due to an industrial accident. He had previously worked as a mechanic and held other various jobs. Arwa's mother is a child-minder. Arwa is one of seven children (she has two older brothers, two younger brothers and two younger sisters – one of her brothers is a half-brother). She has lived with her family in Aubervilliers for six years. Before that, she lived with her family in the Auvergne region.

'Fatima'

Fatima is eighteen years old. She is a pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Aubervilliers. Both her parents are Tunisian. (Her parents are divorced and she lives with her mother). Her mother is a cleaner. Fatima has one younger sister who is at *collège*. She has always lived in Aubervilliers.

'Fawzia'

Fawzia is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *première* ES at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in France (Paris 18e) and both her parents are of Algerian *kabyle* origin. (Her father, who died four years ago, was born in Paris). Fawzia has dual Algerian-French nationality. Her mother joined her father in France at the age of eighteen. Her father was a worker and her mother works as a home help. Fawzia is the eldest of three children (she has two younger sisters; one is thirteen, the other one is ten). Fawzia has lived in the *Landy* area of Aubervilliers since 1991 and before that had lived in the *Quatre chemins quartier* of the town.

'Hala'

Hala is eighteen years old. She is a pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Aubervilliers and both her parents are Tunisian. Hala holds dual French-Tunisian nationality. Her father emigrated to France in 1974 and her mother joined him in 1979. Hala's father initially worked as a warehouse operative and then became a company employee. Her mother does not work. Hala has four sisters and one brother. One sister is studying for a *licence* in Mathematics and her brother is studying for a *licence* in Physics. Both are at the *Université de Paris VII*.[3] Hala lives in the *Quatre chemins quartier* of Aubervilliers.

'Idaya'

Idaya is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *première ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Aubervilliers. Both her parents are Moroccan and she holds dual French-

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[3] A *licence* is the degree which is awarded after successful completion of three years of study at University in France. A *maîtrise* is awarded after four years and a *D.E.U.G.* (Diplôme d'études universitaires générales) is awarded after two years.

Moroccan nationality. Idaya believes that her father came to France in the mid-1960s or early 70s. He no longer works, but was a joiner. Her mother works as a child-minder. Idaya is the youngest of four children. Her eldest sister works, although Idaya does not know what she does, and her two brothers are university students. One studies Architecture and the other one studies Economics. Idaya has lived in Aubervilliers all her life.

'Karine'

Karine is a pupil in *première ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Paris. Her father is Algerian and her mother is South American. Her father is a psychologist and her mother is an assistant radiologist. Karine lives with her mother and has only recently moved to Aubervilliers. Before that, she lived in Paris and Antony (*Hauts-de-Seine*).

'Khadija'

Khadija is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Morocco and came to France at the age of three. Both her parents are Moroccan (Berber – from Agadir). She holds Moroccan nationality only but at the time of interview was expecting to obtain French nationality imminently. Khadija's father is not working due to illness but used to work as a cleaner. Her mother does not work. Khaadija is the eldest of five children. She lives in the *Maladrerie quartier* of Aubervilliers.

'Lamia'

Lamia is twenty-five years old. She works as an *aide-éducatrice* (assistant youth worker) at the *Collège Pablo Picasso* on an *emploi jeune* basis. She was born in France and both her parents are Moroccan. Lamia holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. Her father is deceased and her mother lives between France and Morocco. Lamia is the youngest of five children. She has two sisters and two brothers. Her eldest sister is an accountant; the second sister is a secretary; one of her brothers work in I.T. and one works at the Charles de Gaulle airport. Lamia lives in Villeneuve-La-Garenne (*Hauts-de-Seine*).

'Leila'

Leila is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *première littéraire* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Aubervilliers and both her parents are Algerian. She holds dual Algerian-French nationality. Leila's father emigrated to France as a single man, when he was eighteen and then brought his wife and his first three children over to France. He has worked for twenty years as a cleaning inspector at the *Gare de l'Est*. Leila's mother does not work. Leila is the fourth-born of seven children (four girls and three boys). Her eldest sister is married and has returned to live in Algeria. The other two older siblings (one brother, one sister) are also married but live in Saint-Denis and Paris. Her married sister is studying for a *maîtrise*; one brother is studying for a *licence* in Mathematics; one brother owns his own transport company and another one has left school and works at the Charles de Gaulle airport. Her youngest brother is at *collège*. Leila lives in the *Sadi Carnot* area of Aubervilliers.

'Malika'

Malika is twenty-five years old. She is a trainee nurse, studying at the *Centre de formation Louise Couvé*, based in Aubervilliers. She was born in France and both her parents are Moroccan. She holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. Malika's father came to France in 1966 and in 1969, her mother joined him. Her father was worker and is about to retire. Malika's mother used to work in a factory and after bringing up the children returned to work as a cleaner. Malika is the third-born of five children. Her eldest sister works in catering. The second eldest sister, with whom Malika lives, is married and works in a bank. The third sister works in business and her youngest sibling, is a sixteen year-old boy. Malika's family lives in Rennes but she has moved to live in Fontenay-sous-bois (*Val-de-Marne*) so as to pursue her studies in Aubervilliers.

'Mona'

Mona is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *seconde ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in France and both her parents are of Algerian origin (*kabyle*). She has dual French-Algerian nationality. Mona's father came to France at the age of seventeen. He is currently not working but has worked as a mechanic and as a computer technician amongst other things. Mona's mother, who was born in France, is a secretary. Mona is one of three children. Her older brother is nineteen and is studying for his baccalaureate and her younger brother is thirteen and in *quatrième* (Year 9). Mona lives in the *Maladrerie* area of Aubervilliers and has always lived in the town. She is friends with Hala.

'Myriam'

Myriam is twenty-four years old. She is a student nurse, training at the *Centre de formation Louise Couvé*, in Aubervilliers. She was born in Paris and is of Algerian (*kabyle*) origin. She has dual French-Algerian nationality. Myriam's father, who is now deceased, emigrated to France from Algeria in the 1960s and had worked as a *chef de rang* in a restaurant. Her mother, also from Algeria, joined her father in 1972 and worked as a nursing auxiliary until recently. Myriam has one older brother (twenty-seven years old) who is a computer technician and a younger brother (twenty-one years old) who is studying information technology. Myriam has always lived in Paris' 11th arrondissement, until she and her mother moved to the 19th arrondissement two years ago.

'Nabila'

Nabila is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *première ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in France and her parents are both Moroccan. She holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. Nabila's father is employed at the Charles de Gaulle airport and her mother does not work. She lives in nearby Dugny (*Seine-Saint-Denis*).

'Nacira'

Nacira is twenty-six years old. She is a student nurse, training at the *Centre de formation Louise Couvé* in Aubervilliers. She was born in Algeria and was brought to France at the age of one. She holds dual Algerian-French nationality. Nacira's father came to France in the 1970s as a tourist, before marrying her mother, and found work through family

contacts as a painter and decorator. He has always worked as a painter. Her mother does not work. Nacira has two sisters and two brothers. She is the eldest. One of her sisters is a tri-lingual secretary; the other is studying for a *licence* in Mathematics. Her brothers are both at *collège* and *lycée*. Nacira is married and has been living in neighbouring Bobigny (*Seine-Saint-Denis*) for the last two years.

'Nadia'

Nadia is eighteen years old. She is a pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Aubervilliers and both her parents are Moroccan (Berbers from Agadir). She holds dual Algerian-Moroccan nationality. Her father emigrated from Agadir in 1975 and worked at the Rungis market depot during the day and at the Citroën factory at night. Nadia's mother joined him in France 1981. Her father was made redundant and thereafter has worked in a restaurant and most recently, as a maintenance employee in a cleaning company. Nadia's mother works as a child-minder. Nadia is one of five children. She is the sister of 'Waleed' and 'Mohamed' (see young men's biographies) and the second eldest in the family. She lives in the *Hemet quartier* of Aubervilliers. She is Khadija's friend.

'Salikha'

Salika is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *première ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She is of Moroccan origin. She is not sure what her father does for a living except that he 'works for a company'. Her mother does not work. Sadia lives in the *Maladrerie quartier* of Aubervilliers.

'Salima'

Salima is twenty-six years old. She is employed as an *aide-éducatrice* (assistant youth worker) at the *Collège Pablo Picasso* on an *emploi jeune* basis. She was born in France and is of Algerian origin. Salima holds French nationality. Her father works as a stock controller and her mother does not work. Salima has four brothers, one who is older than her and works as a security guard, one who is at university, one at high school and one at *collège*. Salima is married and is a mother of a six-month-old boy. Her husband is of Algerian origin. They live in Drancy (*Seine-Saint-Denis*). She is Lamia's colleague.

'Samira'

Samira is twenty-four years old. She has a *licence* in History from the *Université de Paris XIII* and works as a *surveillante* (school supervisor) at the *Collège Pablo Picasso*. She was·born in France and both her parents are Algerian (*kabyle*). She holds dual Algerian-French nationality. Samira's father came to France with his brother around 1974, and then sent for his family later. He is retired but owns his own shop. Samira is one of eleven children. She has five sisters and four brothers. The oldest sibling is forty-four years old. Samira lives in Saint-Denis (*Seine-Saint-Denis*). She works with Lamia and Salima.

'Sara'

Sara is twenty-six years old. She works as a full-time *animatrice* (socio-cultural youth activities coordinator) at the *maison de jeunes* in the *Vandrezanne cité*. She was born in

Algeria but both her parents are Moroccan. She came to France at the age of six. She holds Moroccan nationality only. Her father came to Paris with his three brothers at the age of twenty. He found work in a printing factory and has worked there all his life. Her mother has recently started to work as a child-minder. Sara is the third-born of four children. She has two brothers and one sister. Sara lives in La Courneuve (*Seine-Saint-Denis*), which borders Aubervilliers.

'Zina'

Zina is seventeen years old. She is a pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. She was born in Paris and both her parents are Algerian (*kabyle*). Her father owns his own shop and her mother does not work. Zina is one of seven children. She has two brothers and four sisters (one of whom lives in Algeria). Zina lives in Aubervilliers. She is Fatima's classmate.

'Abdel'

Abdel is twenty-six years old. He is a *maîtrise* student in Education at the *Université de Paris VII* and he works as a *surveillant* (school supervisor) at the *Collège Pablo Picasso*. He was born in France and is of Algerian (*kabyle*) origin. Abdel's father came to France shortly after the Algerian War when he was sixteen years old. He works in the food processing industry and his mother does not work. Abdel is one of ten children, the eldest of whom is thirty years old. He lives in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine (*Seine-Saint-Denis*). He works with Lamia, Salima and Samira.

'Abdel Majid'

Abdel Majid is twenty years old. He is a *BTS* Accountancy student at the *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*. He is in his first year. He was born in France and both his parents are Algerian. He holds dual Algerian-French nationality. Abdel Majid's parents came to Algeria together. His father initially worked as a painter and decorator but is now a foreman. His mother used to work as a seamstress but no longer works. Abdel Majid has two brothers and a younger sister. Both his younger brother and sister are doing an Accountancy *BTS* as well. Abdel Majid lives in Bobigny (*Seine-Saint-Denis*), which borders on Aubervilliers.

'Ahmed'

Ahmed is twenty-two years old. He is a *BTS* Accountancy student at the *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*. He is in his first year. He is Abdel Majid's classmate. Ahmed was born in France and both his parents are Tunisian. He holds Tunisian nationality only. At the age of four, Ahmed and his family moved back to Tunisia, where Ahmed stayed until the age of fifteen, when the family returned to France. Ahmed explains that the motivation for moving back to Tunisia was that his father wanted his children to learn Arabic. Ahmed's father first emigrated to France in 1976 and then brought his family over later. He is a truck driver at the Charles de Gaulle airport. Ahmed's mother does not work. Ahmed has

five sisters, one of whom is married, one who is also a *BTS* student and the others are at *collège*. Ahmed lives in La Courneuve (*Seine-Saint-Denis*), which borders on Aubervilliers.

'Amir'

Amir is twenty-two years old. He is a trainee care auxiliary and studies at the *Centre de formation Louise Couvé*, which is based in Aubervilliers. He was born in France and is of Algerian origin. Abdel's parents came over from Tlemcen, Algeria together. His father is retired now but worked as a railway layer and as a labourer. His mother is also retired but once the children began to leave home, had started work as a child-minder. Amir is one of ten children (five brothers, five sisters). The eldest is forty and the youngest is seventeen. Abdel lives in le Blanc Mesnil. His parents live in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine (both in *Seine-Saint-Denis*).

'Aziz'

Aziz is nineteen years old. He is currently not in education but is hoping to join the *Lycée professionnel Van Gogh*, so that he can start a baccalaureate in *Carrosserie*. He was born in France and is of Algerian origin. His mother came to France in 1978 and works informally as a carer. Aziz has several half brothers but he does not know any of them. He has never been to Algeria but plans to go visit the country for the first time in June of the following year (Aziz was interviewed in September 2001). He lives in le Pré-Saint-Gervais (*Seine-Saint-Denis*).

'Djamel'

Djamel is thirty-one years old. He has a *maîtrise* in History from the *Université de Paris III* and works as a *conseiller principal d'éducation* (chief school supervisor) in a *lycée* in *Seine-Saint-Denis*. He was born in France (le Blanc-Mesnil). Both his father and mother are Algerian. Djamel's father fought for France in the Second World War and then returned to Algeria (near Constantine) after the War. He returned to France in 1954 and worked as a railway layer for the *SNCF* unil his retirement in the 1980s. Djamel's mother (who is now deceased) came to France in 1955 with her sister and brother-in-law and married Djamel's father in 1965. She had worked as a cleaner. Djamel has no siblings. He grew up in le Blanc Mesnil (*Seine-Saint-Denis*). Djamel is very involved with a football association in Aubervilliers so has strong links with the town.

'Fayçal'

Fayçal is nineteen years old. He is a pupil in *terminale bac pro mécanique-auto* at the *Lycée Van Gogh*.[4] Both his parents are Tunisian. Fayçal has French nationality and a Tunisian passport but no Tunisian national identity card. Fayçal's maternal grandfather emigrated to France and his mother was partially educated in France but then returned to Tunisia at the age of sixteen. Fayçal's father emigrated to France in 1970. His parents are currently separated. His father is a baker and his mother is a cleaner. Fayçal has a younger sister and an older sister (who is studying for a *BTS*). He lives in Saint-Denis (*Seine-Saint-Denis*).

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[4] *Bac pro* i.e. *baccalauréat professionnel* – a baccalaureate programme with a more vocational emphasis.

'Fouad'

Fouad is thirty years old. He is an unemployed volunteer at a North-African origin association based in Aubervilliers. He has been a volunteer there for just over a year. He has a *BEP* qualification in foundry skills. He was born in France. Both his parents are Algerian and came from the Sétif region of Algeria. He has dual Algerian-French nationality. His father emigrated to France shortly after Algeria became independent and worked as a porter. He is now deceased. Fouad's mother does not work. Fouad has six brothers and two sisters. He is the youngest but one. He lives in Aubervilliers.

'Hicham'

Hicham is eighteen years old. He is a pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. He was born in France (Ile-de-France). His father in Algerian (*kabyle*) and his mother is French. He has been to Algeria once. His father works for the Army and his mother is an accountant. Hicham has one younger brother who is seven years old. Hicham and his family have always lived in La Courneuve (*Seine-Saint-Denis*), which borders on Aubervilliers.

'Ibrahim'

Ibrahim is nineteen years old. He is a student studying for a *BTS* in Accountancy at the *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*. (He is in his first year). He was born in Nanterre. Both his parents are Algerian. Ibrahim has not been back to Algeria for the last four years, as he does not want to be called up to do military service there. Ibrahim is not sure when his parents arrived in France. He thinks that his mother emigrated to France after the Algerian War. His father is dead and his parents had been divorced. His mother is a cleaner. Ibrahim has one brother who is married and lives in Algeria and seven sisters (five of whom are married, work and no longer live at home). Ibrahim lives in Bobigny (*Seine-Saint-Denis*) with his mother and two of his sisters.

'Larbi'

Larbi is twenty-two years old. He is a student studying for a *BTS* in Accountancy at the *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*. He is in his first year and is Ibrahim's classmate. He was born in Algeria (Algiers) and came to France (Pierrefitte-sur-Seine) at the age of four. Both his parents are Algerian. He has dual Algerian-French nationality. He has just acquired French nationality. Larbi's father emigrated to France shortly after the end of the Algerian War and then brought his family over later. His father is currently unemployed but did formerly own his own café. Larbi has five brothers and two sisters. One brother and one sister live in Algeria and are married. The rest are either all in further or secondary education in France. He has lived in Aubervilliers for fifteen years and before that lived in Paris (11e *arrondissement*).

'Mahmoud'

Mahmoud is nineteen years old. He is a pupil in *terminale bac pro mécanique-auto* at the *Lycée Van Gogh*. He was born in Paris. His father is Algerian and his mother is described as 'French-Algerian'. Mahmoud has French nationality, an Algerian passport but no Algerian national identity card. Mahmoud's maternal grandfather emigrated from Algeria to France. His father is now deceased but both his parents lived in France all their lives.

His father was a municipal gardener. His mother works as an elderly persons' assistant at the local town hall (*mairie*). Mahmoud has a younger sister (ten) and a brother who is three. Mahmoud lives in Saint-Ouen (*Seine-Saint-Denis*), which is very close to Aubervilliers. He is Fayçal's classmate.

'Majdi'
Majdi is nineteen years old. He is a pupil in *terminale BEP Carrosserie* at the *Lycée Van Gogh*.[5] Majdi was born in Tlemcen, Algeria and was brought to France at the age of six. He holds dual Algerian-French nationality. Majdi lives with his mother, who was, herself, in France from a young age. Majdi's mother does not work as she is registered disabled due to severe asthma. Majdi has one older brother who works as a security guard and two younger brothers, one of whom is at *collège* and one who is at primary school. He lives in La Courneuve (*Seine-Saint-Denis*), which borders on Aubervilliers.

'Mansour'
Mansour is twenty-two years old. He has worked for the Aubervilliers municipality as a mediator on an *emploi jeune* basis for the last three years. He is also a leading member of a local association called *Les Potes de Vandrezanne*.[6] He was born in France. Both his parents are Moroccan. He holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. His father, a retired factory worker and mechanic, emigrated to France from Agadir. His mother formerly worked as a child-minder. Mansour is the youngest but one in a family of ten children. (He has four brothers and five sisters). He lives with his parents in Aubervilliers, where he grew up.

'Mohamed'
Mohamed is sixteen years old. He is a pupil in *première ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. He was born in France. Both his parents are Moroccan (Berbers from Agadir). He holds dual French-Moroccan nationality. He is the younger brother of 'Nadia' and 'Waleed'. See summarised biography of *'Nadia'* above for further details about parents and siblings. Mohamed lives in the *Hemet quartier* of Aubervilliers.

'Mouloud'
Mouloud is seventeen years old. He is a pupil in *terminale ES* at the *Lycée Pablo Picasso*. He was born in Algeria and brought to Aubervilliers at the age of three. He has never returned. Both his parents are Algerian (*kabyle*). His father works as a stock controller and his mother does not work. Mouloud has two brothers (one in *collège*, one in the first year at University) and three sisters (one who is at *collège*, one who's in her second year at university and one who works and has left the family home). Mouloud lives the *Landy* area of Aubervilliers. Mouloud is Hicahm's classmate.

'Nasser'
Nasser is eighteen years old. He had been following a *baccalauréat professionnel* programme which would have given him a qualification as an electrician. However, he dropped out of school four months before being interviewed and volunteers as an

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[5] *BEP – Brevet d'études professionnelles* – pre-baccalaureate vocational qualification.
[6] This association name is a pseudonym.

animateur at the *Vandrezanne cité's maison de jeunes*. Nasser was born in Algeria and has been in France since the age of one. Both his parents are Algerian and live in Algeria. His father first arrived in France in the 1960s. Nasser has three older sisters who are all married and work (accountant, teacher, nanny). He also has a younger brother (thirteen) and an older brother who does not work. Nasser lives with his brothers in Aubervilliers.

'Tayeb'

Tayeb is twenty-two years old. He is a *BTS* Accountancy student at the *Cité scolaire Pablo Picasso*. He was born in Algeria and he has been in France since the age of nine. Both his parents are Algerian (*kabyle*). Tayeb holds Algerian nationality only but has recently requested naturalisation. Tayeb's father owns a transport company and his mother is a cleaner. He has two brothers (one is unemployed, one works) and two sisters (one is married and lives in Algeria and one is unemployed). Tayeb lives in Aubervilliers. He is Larbi's and Ibrahim's classmate.

'Touran'

Touran is twenty-one years old. He is a sports science *D.E.U.G.* student at the *Université de Paris XIII* (first year). He was born Algeria (Kabylia) and brought to France at the age of eight. His mother is from Kabylia and his father is from Algiers. He is of Algerian nationality. Touran's father has worked as a foreman at the *Clairefontaine* paper factory for twenty years. His mother does not work. Touran has five younger sisters and one younger brother. He has always lived in Aubervilliers.

'Waleed'

Waleed is nineteen years old. He is a first year *D.E.UG.* student in Geography at the *Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne*. He was born in France. Both his parents are Moroccan (Berbers from Agadir). He holds French nationality. He is the older brother of Nadia and Mohamed. See Nadia's summarised biography for further details about his parents and siblings. Waleed lives in the *Hemet quartier* of Aubervilliers.

'Yacine'

Yacine is nineteen years old. He obtained his baccalaureate last year and for the last six months, has been working as an *animateur* on an *emploi jeune* basis at a North African origin association based in Aubervilliers. He was born in France. Both his parents are from Algeria but Yacine has only visited Algeria once. He has French nationality. Yacine's father came to France in the 1960s and returned to Algeria in 1969 to marry Yacine's mother. He has worked as a painter and decorator, a taxi driver and a barman. Yacine's mother works as a child-minder. Yacine lives with his French girlfriend in Aubervilliers. Yacine works with Fouad, who is a volunteer at the association.

'Yasser'

Yasser is eighteen years old. He is a pupil in *terminale BEP Carrosserie* at the *Lycée Van Gogh*. He was born in Algeria and was brought to France at the age of ten. Both his parents are Algerian. He holds Algerian nationality only but is planning to request French nationality. Yasser's father works as a delivery man and his mother is a cleaner. He has

an older brother who works with his father and a younger sister at *collège*. Yasser lives in le Pré-Saint-Gervais (*Seine-Saint-Denis*). He is Aziz's and Majdi's classmate.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEWER – INTERVIEWEE RELATIONSHIPS

Throughout the thesis, much attention has been paid to the notion of the group dynamic, that is, the relationships between peers and friends. Indeed, the group interview provided a very interesting forum for the study of the interactions between peers. However, it is also important to focus on the notion of interviewer-interviewee relationships. In this appendix, I will take into consideration a number of factors and the effect they can be seen to have had on my relationship with the interviewees. These factors are: my own background or 'origins', my age and my gender.

Much has been written about hierarchical and non-hierarchical interview situations. Indeed, Ning Tang refers to Ann Oakley's claim that interviews between women are 'non-hierarchical' because both interviewer and interviewee have, as women, suffered the same gender subordination.[1] This idea, although relating more specifically to feminist research, is useful because it introduces the idea of power dynamics.

With regard to my own research, it could be argued that a middle-class '*Bac + 5*' university student, interviewing young people from working-class backgrounds, whose parents have rarely been school educated, is a hierarchical research situation. In many ways, the difference between my own socio-economic/educational background and those of the interviewees *did* mean that this was the case. As a result, this created certain barriers and meant that some interviewees were reticent about granting me an interview. I was also conscious that the manner in which I presented the research to potential interviewees was sensitive. I generally presented my research in as broad a framework as possible. I therefore described it as a doctoral project on young people of North African origin in France, questions of identity and their relationship to *la vie associative*. However, despite the socio-economic and educational differences between myself and many of the interviewees, the fact that I was a researcher of mixed English-Egyptian background meant that in some ways, certain interviewees regarded me as a 'peer'. I did not present myself as such, and generally introduced myself as *'anglaise'*. However, the interviewees, especially the *lycéens*, often challenged my self-presentation by asking me the following question: *'Mais Madame, vous êtes de quelle origine?'* The fact that my name and my appearance do not match up to the stereotypical image the interviewees generally have of *'une anglaise'*, threw up these sorts of questions. It is therefore possible to argue that my background, which generally became known to the interviewees at an early stage (often before the interview had taken place), counter-balanced the fact that I had a different socio-economic profile to the interviewees. It could be seen as re-introducing a non-hierarchical element into the interviewer-interviewee relationship. One possible advantage that my visible *'origines'* entailed was that interviewees were, as a result, more willing to grant me an interview. My background may also have been an advantage in the sense that interviewees felt that they could be more 'open' about some

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[1] Ning Tang, 'Interviewer and Interviewee Relationships Between Women', *Sociology* 36.3 (2002), 703-721 (p. 703). Tang cites Ann Oakley, 'Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms', in *Doing Feminist Research* ed. By H. Roberts (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp.31-61.

of their ideas and opinions, for example, regarding their relationships with '*les Français*' as they often referred to them.

However, the interviewee's awareness of my family background can be seen as having its disadvantages as well. For example, the fact that some of the interviewees, many of whom were younger than me, may have regarded me as a peer meant that they could have felt under pressure to present a certain 'image' of themselves to me, for fear of being judged negatively. This may have been the case with regards to religion for example or choice of future marriage partners. Inversely, sometimes interviewees attempted to question *me*, or at least gauge what my own opinions on these issues were.

Although my mixed English-Egyptian background meant that in some ways, I was an 'insider' in the research situation, the fact that I was a foreign student from England, who was only temporarily based in France, meant that I was simultaneously an 'outsider'. Once again, such a status brought both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, my 'outsider' profile as a student from a British context (the interviewees did not generally regard the fact that I was simultaneously registered at a British and a French institution as significant), meant that the interviewees were more open to taking part in an interview. This could perhaps be because my non-French background reduced the hierarchical element in the relationship. In other words, perhaps if I had been a Parisian coming to 'study' immigrant-origin youth in the *banlieue*, my research aims may have been misconstrued as condescending by some individuals. Yet, on the other hand, the fact that I was seen as a researcher from England and therefore as an 'outsider', guarded against 'complicity' between myself and the interviewees, which could have perhaps developed more easily if I had been of North African and French origin or of North African origin and living in France (i.e. of French nationality). Indeed, the fact that my mother tongue was not French, but English, meant that sometimes, the interviewees may have felt more 'powerful' than they might have if French had been my mother tongue.

In terms of age, my older age with regard to the *lycéens* meant that the interview situations were in this respect, hierarchical and some high school pupils clearly regarded me as a teacher figure and addressed me as *Madame*. However, on the whole, there was not too much of an age barrier and the *lycéens* generally felt reasonably comfortable expressing themselves. Of course, in those interviews with individuals who were older than myself, the 'power dynamics' became inverted and at times hindered my ability to broach all subjects in a satisfactory manner. Another problem linked to age was that sometimes the younger high school pupils did not attend pre-arranged interviews and were reluctant to participate in an individual interview. The result was that many of the interviews with the *lycéens* were group interviews, which meant that the question of group dynamics became central to the analysis and evaluation of data once the fieldwork period was completed. One possible disadvantage of the group interview was that those individuals who were less 'imposing' characters could sometimes be eclipsed by more dominant peers in a group situation. It should, however, be pointed out that what I refer to as group interviews normally included no more than two interviewees and myself. (Indeed, seven of the interviews with the young men were individual, three were with two interviewees and four were with three interviewees. As for the young women, seven of

the interviews were individual, seven were with two interviewees and one was with five interviewees).

In terms of gender, the fact that I was a woman researcher often created a facility regarding access to the female interviewees. However, at the same time, some female interviewees may have been increasingly reticent about discussing aspects of their personal lives to someone who they may have regarded as a potentially judgemental peer. Obtaining interviews with young men was sometimes more problematic with those of high school-age since they were generally less keen than their female classmates to take part in an interview, and some regarded the interview as a homework-type *obligation*.

It was interesting to note that generally the interviewees who were contacted in the *lycée* context seemed to regard me and treat me as a '*prof*'. This was most likely re-enforced because the interviews with the many of the *lycéens* took place on the *lycée* premises, such as in the *centre de documentation*, when empty, or in an empty classroom or office. However, those interviewees who were contacted and interviewed outside of the *lycée* context, such as at the *maison de jeunes* or within an associational context, tended to regard me as more of an equal. It is possible to argue that to a certain extent, I was met with slightly greater hostility in the *maison de jeunes* environment where as a stranger to the town and the *cité*, I stood out more than I did within the *lycée* context. This may have made access more difficult initially, but meant that the interview situation was less 'hierarchical' because I was not seen as a '*prof*' figure as much as when I was introduced to the pupils by their teacher or the *conseiller d'éducation principal*, but instead, by their *animateur* or by a friend.

Gaining access to individuals and interviewing them can therefore be seen as a complex social and cultural interaction where many different factors are involved.[2] In my case, researching 'down', (as Ting refers to it), in a *foreign* context meant that the power relationship was altered somewhat and the fact that I was a British researcher balanced out the research context and rendered what could have otherwise been a hierarchical situation, slightly less so.

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[2] See Tang (2002), p. 719. Tang cites J. Ribbens, 'Interviewing – An "Unnatural Situation?", *Women's Studies International Forum*, 12.6 (1989), 579-592 and R. Edwards, 'An Education in Interviewing', in *Researching Sensitive Topics*, ed. by C.M. Renzetti and R.M. Lee (London: Sage, 1993), pp.181-196.

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following questions formed a general interview guide, which was used during the fieldwork interviews with the *lycée* pupils, the further education students and all the other young people who make up the sample of the forty-four interviewees. The categories of questions were generally addressed in this order, although there will have been some slight variation from interview to interview.

Origines, famille etc.
- Veuillez vous présenter – prénom, âge etc. (This was a rather open-ended question to get the interviewees to introduce themselves, and to see how they presented *themselves* when not being asked specific details).
- **N.B. The following three questions were asked if the interviewee had not brought this up in their preliminary self-presentation.**
- Que faites-vous/fais-tu dans la vie ?
- Où êtes-vous/est-tu né ?
- Nationalité ?
- Cela fait combien de temps que vous habitez/tu habites Aubervilliers ? (Ou bien – Où habitez-vous/habites-tu?) Vous habitez/Tu habites quel quartier d'Aubervilliers ?
- Famille – vos/tes parents sont venus en France pour travailler ? Quand sont-ils arrivés ? Qu'est-ce qu'ils font dans la vie ? Est-ce qu'ils ont toujours fait ce travail ? Niveau d'études/scolarisation des parents ?
- Frères/sœurs ? Combien ? Leurs âges ? Que font-ils dans la vie ? Où habitent-ils ?

La langue
- Parlez-vous/parles-tu l'arabe/le berbère/'le kabyle' ? Ton niveau ? Vous le parlez/tu le parles avec qui ? Quand ?

Relation avec les pays 'd'origine' (des parents)
- Vos/tes parents viennent de quelle région d'Algérie/du Maroc/de Tunisie ?
- Vous rentrez/tu rentres de temps en temps en Algérie/au Maroc/en Tunisie ? Combien de fois par an ? Pourquoi ? Comment est-ce que ça se passe ? Partez-vous en famille ? Où restez-vous, et pour combien de temps ?

Parcours scolaire/universitaire/professionnel
- Est-ce que ça se passe bien au lycée/à la fac/au centre de formation/au travail ?
- Ton parcours scolaire/professionnel?
- Motivations – pourquoi as-tu choisi cette filière/cette formation/ce métier ?
- Comment avez-vous/as-tu accédé à ce poste ? Votre/ton rôle ?
- Projets professionnels ? Projets futurs?

La vie à Aubervilliers
- Est-ce que ça se passe bien dans votre/ta ville ou dans votre/ton quartier ? Est-ce que ça se passe bien pour les jeunes ?

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- Est-ce que vous changeriez/tu changerais quelque chose ? Que changeriez-vous ?/ Que changerais-tu ?
- Que faites-vous/fais-tu dans votre/ton temps libre ?
- Qui sont vos/tes amis ? Des camarades au lycée/à la fac/au centre de formation ? Les habitants de la ville/du quartier ?

Les associations
- Une partie de mes recherches porte sur la vie associative et les jeunes; c'est-à-dire, si les jeunes s'impliquent dans les associations. Est-ce que les associations vous/te concernent ? Êtes-vous/es-tu membre d'une association ?
- Si oui, laquelle/lesquelles ?
- Depuis quand ?
- Quelles sont les activités proposées par cette association ?
- Est-ce que vous connaissez/tu connais des associations franco-maghrébines ? Qu'en pensez-vous/penses-tu ?
- Est-ce que vous fréquentez/tu fréquentes des concerts de musiques arabes/berbères ? Souvent ? Avec qui ? En famille ? Avec des amis ? Vous aimez/tu aimes quel type de musique ?
- Si vous pouviez/tu pouvais créer votre/ta propre association, que feriez-vous/que ferais-tu ?

For those who attended a *maison de jeunes* or the *OMJA* (*Office municipal de la jeunesse d'Aubervilliers*):
- Est-ce que vous venez/tu viens souvent à la maison de jeunes?
- Pourquoi venez-vous/viens-tu ?
- Qu'est-ce que la maison de jeunes apporte à la cité ? Est-ce qu'elle apporte quelque chose ?
- Les animateurs – qu'est-ce qu'ils apportent aux jeunes ? Pourquoi est-ce que ça marche entre les animateurs et les jeunes ?

For the salaried *animateurs/animatrices* at the OMJA:
- Les activités organisées à la maison de jeunes ?
- Votre/ton rôle par rapport aux jeunes? Envers les jeunes filles ?
- Qu'est ce que les jeunes attendent de la maison de jeunes ? Est-ce que les attentes des jeunes femmes diffèrent beaucoup de celles des jeunes hommes ?
- Qu'est ce que l'OMJA/la maison de jeunes apportent aux jeunes d'ici à votre/ton avis ?
- Est-ce que ces jeunes-là participent à d'autres associations ? Quels types d'association ?

La religion
- Vous êtes/tu es de quelle religion ?
- Est-ce que vous êtes/tu es croyant(e) ?
- Est-ce que vous êtes/tu es pratiquant(e) ?
- Qu'est-ce que cela veut dire pour vous/toi, 'pratiquer' ?
- Comment êtes-vous/es-tu venu à pratiquer ?

- La pratique dans votre/ta famille ? La pratique religieuse des parents ?
- Le ramadan.
- Fréquentation d'une mosquée ?

Choix de conjoint(e)
- Existe-t-il des critères importants pour vous/toi ? Pour vos/tes parents ? Pour votre/ta famille ?
- Vous vous voyez vous marier/vous installer avec qui ? /Tu te vois te marier/t'installer avec qui ?
- Si l'interviewé(e) indique que le conjoint/la conjointe serait, de préférence, d'origine 'maghrébine', est-il important que la personne soit née en France ?
- Est-ce que l'origine/la religion de la personne représente un facteur important ?

Les revendications
- Est-ce que vous avez/tu as des revendications à faire en tant que jeune d'origine 'maghrébine' en France, ou juste en tant que jeune ? Est-ce que vos/tes revendications intègrent ces deux registres ? (If the interviewees asked for further clarification, I suggested that these demands or *revendications* might be articulated, for instance, in relation to the municipality, politicians or 'society' in general).
- Vous vous voyez/vous vous définissez comment ? (Tu te vois/tu te définis comment ?)
- (**N.B. À retenir** : Est-ce que cette auto-définition correspond à une définition éventuellement assignée par la 'société' au sens le plus large? Autrement dit, est-ce que l'interviewé(e) croit que son identité lui est assignée par la 'société' au sens le plus large ?)
- Sur le plan des revendications, est-il possible de distinguer entre les jeunes d'origine maghrébine qui habitent Aubervilliers/la banlieue, et leurs homologues 'franco-français' ou d'origine européenne? Et sur le plan des problèmes auxquels ils doivent faire face, est-il possible de distinguer entre les jeunes d'origine nord-africaine et leurs homologues 'franco-français'/d'origine européenne?

La vie politique
- Êtes-vous/es-tu inscrit(e) ?
- Est-ce que vous votez/tu votes régulièrement ? Dans quelles élections ?
- Vous votez/tu votes pour quel type de parti en général ?
- Qu'est-ce qui vous aide/t'aide à choisir un candidat/une liste/un parti?

APPENDIX 4: GLOSSARY OF *VERLAN* AND SLANG

The following glossary is non-exhaustive but it includes some of the terms and words commonly used by the interviewees and is based on observations during the fieldwork and a 'Dictionary' of slang provided by Boris Seguin and Frédéric Teillard in *Les Céfrans parlent aux Français: chronique de la langue des cités*.[1]

Auch   (adj.) *Verlanised* form of the word *chaud*. Often used to refer to '*un quartier chaud*' for example.

Beur   (masc./fem. noun) An Arab. Generally a 'second generation' North African.

Black   (masc./fem noun) Refers to someone who is Black (of African origin).

Bled   (masc. noun - from the Arabic *Belad*) Referring to country of origin (generally in North Africa): "Je comprends pas, avec la vie ici, pourquoi ils veulent rentrer au bled ? " or " Je vais rentrer au bled pour les vacances." It can also refer to a small far-flung town in a non-Arab context: "Mais il m'a amené dans un bled paumé!")

Caillera   (fem. noun) *Verlanised* form of *racaille* referring to the *banlieue* equivalent of 'home-boys'/'home-girls'. Also defined by Boris Seguin and Frédéric Teillard as 'Voyou ou personne qui fait partie d'une bande. Mais la racaille c'est d'abord un look...''[2]

Calculer   (tr. verb) Only employed in the negative form. To not look at someone: "À Paris, les gens se calculent même pas."

Céfran   (masc./fem. noun; adjective) This is the *verlanised* form of *Français*.

Galère   (fem. noun) Boredom; great difficulties. ("Je trouve pas de boulot, c'est la galère.")

Galérer   (intr. verb) To be bored; to experience difficulties. ("Dans ma cité, il y a rien à faire. On galère.")

Galérien (ne)   (masc./fem. noun) Somebody who is bored all the time or who does not do much. The example give by Seguin and Teillard is "Magid, en cours, j'te jure, c'est un galérien, il opère sa gomme."[3]

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[1] Boris Seguin, Frédéric Teillard, *Les Céfrans parlent aux Français : chronique de la langue des cités* (Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 1996). Abbreviations: tr. verb - transitive verb; intr. verb - intransitive verb.
[2] Ibid., p.209.
[3] Ibid., p. 196.

Keumé	(masc. noun) A *verlanised* form of *mec*, meaning boy, 'bloke', man. *Keum* also possible.
Kiffer	(tr. verb) To like something a lot. ("Je kiffe moi quand il y a plein de monde de différentes religions et tout.")
Meuf	(fem. noun) *Verlanised* form of *femme*.
Mortel	(adj.) Brilliant, excellent.
Ouallah	(phrase from the Arabic). Literally meaning 'By God' and used to mean 'I swear'. The example given by Seguin and Teillard is:" Ouallah, si j't'attrape, j'te tue!"[4]
Rebeu	(masc./fem. noun; adj.) *Verlanised* form of *beur*: "Le prof, c'est un rebeu". Plural noun form - *rebeux* : "C'est les rebeux, c'est comme ça, l'homme, tout l'homme, si ton père est algérien, toi t'es algérienne si ton père est français, toi t'es française c'est comme ça chez les rebeux." Possible feminine form of *rebeu* is *rebeuse*.
Relou	(adj.) *Verlanised* form of *lourd*, referring to someone who is annoying or *chiant*: "Mais t'as vu, Kader, il es trop relou!" (*reloue* also possible).
Renoi	(masc./fem. noun; adj.) *Verlanised* form of *noir*. The example given by Seguin and Teillard is: "Moi, j'suis métis, moitié renoi, moitié bronzé." (*Renoix* also possible).[5]
Saper (se)	(intr. verb) To dress: "Même quand j'arrive en boîte bien sapé et tout, les videurs me laissent pas rentrer."
Shleh	(masc./fem. noun; adj.) Moroccan Berbers: "Nous, on est des shlehs. "
Squatter	(tr. verb) To hang around or take over a place for long periods of time : "On voulait juste un local, ils voulaient pas nous en donner, alors on squattait les halls et les cages d'escalier."
Tebé	(adj.) *Verlanised* form of *bête* meaning silly or stupid.
Téci	(fem. noun) *Verlanised* from of *cité* (housing estate).
Teuf	(fem. noun) *Verlanised* form of *fête* (party).
Zarbi	(adj.) *Verlanised* form of *bizarre* (strange, weird).

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[4] Ibid., p. 205.
[5] Ibid., p. 211.

APPENDIX 5: Other Interviews Not Directly Cited in Thesis

Associations

- *MRAP - Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples* (Paris 10e): interview with Mouloud Aounit, General Secretary (20/10/99).

- FTCR - *Fédération des Tunisiens pour une citoyenneté de deux rives* (Bagnolet): interview with General Secretary and an employee (21/10/99; 18/05/00).

- *Les Nanas beurs*: interview with senior employee (27/10/99).

- UTIT - *Union des travailleurs immigrés tunisiens* (Aubervilliers): interview with four leading members (23/05/00; 21/07/00).

- *À Travers la Ville* (Aubervilliers): interview with two *éducateurs de rue* (specialised youth workers), and president (09/03/01; 21/06/01).

- CMA - *Club municipal d'Aubervilliers* (Aubervilliers): interview with senior employee (16/03/01).

- *La Mission Locale d'Aubervilliers - Association pour l'insertion sociale et professionnelle des jeunes et des adultes* (Aubervilliers) : interview with senior employee (20/03/01).

- *Cap Insertion* (Aubervilliers): interview with employee (30/03/01).

- *Mémoire d'Immigrants et Projets Solidaires, Clef Insertion* (Saint-Ouen): interview with President (27/04/01).

- *La Médina* (Aubervilliers): interview with president and various members at Annual General Meeting (16/06/01).

- *Auber-Palestine* (Aubervilliers): interview with activist (20/06/01).

- ASEA – *Association solidarité emploi d'Aubervilliers* (Aubervilliers): interview with employee (20/06/01).

Political and Trade union representatives

- Interview with '*Hamid*', *Parti Socialiste* activist and parliamentary assistant (15/11/99).

- Interview with 'Ousmane', trade union representative, *CFDT* (Confédération française du travail) (02/12/99).

- *Maire adjoint à la vie associative, Mairie d'Aubervilliers* – local councillor responsable for associations (25/01/01).

Head Teachers, Teachers (lycée names are pseudonyms)

- Interview with Head Teacher, *Lycée Paul Bert*, Aubervilliers (07/10/00).

- Interview with Head Teacher, *Lycée Pablo Picasso*, Aubervilliers (12/10/00).

- Interview with Economics teacher, *Lycée Pablo Picasso*, Aubervilliers (07/06/01).

- Interview with Deputy Head Teacher, *Lycée professionnel Van Gogh*, Aubervilliers (08/06/01).

Municipal employees

- *Coordinateur de quartier, Mairie d'Aubervilliers* (01/03/01)

- *Service des Sports, Mairie d'Aubervilliers* : interview with senior employee (23/03/01).

- *Service communal d'hygiène et de santé, Mairie d'Aubervilliers* : interview with senior employee (11/07/01).

Police

- Interview with '*Major Forestier*', Commissariat d'Aubervilliers (10/09/01).

Young people of either North African, European or French Origin

- Interview with 'Hawa', university student, Paris (29/10/99).

- Interview with 'Dalia' and 'Soraya', pupils in *terminale ES*, *Lycée Pablo Picasso*, (16/11/00).

- Interview with 'Souad', secretary, *Centre de formation*, Aubervilliers (23/11/00).

- Interview with 'Najate' and 'Raïssa', nursing students, *Centre de formation*, Aubervilliers (23/11/00).

- Interview with 'Carla', pupil in *première ES*, *Lycée Pablo Picasso* (26/03/01).

- Interview with 'Rania', pupil, *Collège Pablo Picasso* (05/04/01).

- Interview with 'Sophie' and 'Elyse', pupils at *Collège Voltaire*, Aubervilliers *troisième* – Year 9 (18/04/01).

- Interview with 'Céline' and 'Karima', pupils in *première littéraire*, *Lycée Pablo Picasso* (18/05/01).

- Interview with 'Francesca', pupil in *première ES*, *Lycée Pablo Picasso* (19/05/01).

- Interview with 'Amadou', pupil in *terminale ES*, *Lycée Pablo Picasso* (21/05/01).