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Immigration and Identity Politics: The Senegalese in France

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IMMIGRATION AND IDENTITY POLITICS: THE SENEGALESE IN FRANCE

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Introduction

In 2002, the extreme-right French political party *Front National* made headlines as its candidate, Jean-Marie Le Pen, garnered enough votes to launch his party into the second round of the presidential elections for the first time in French history. Known for his staunch anti-immigration stance, these elections spurred a debate that resonated with the "theme of insecurity" about the threat posed by immigration to the French nation.[1] These anxieties amongst members of the majority French society manifested themselves again with the 2004 ban on wearing Islamic headscarves in public schools. Controversy over the affair, which began in 1989 when three girls refused to remove their headscarves during school, has been "symptomatic of the widespread anxieties over the compatibility of Islamic culture with French norms."[2]

The riots of the fall of 2005, perhaps the most serious civil disruptions since the events of May 1968, further exacerbated these fears.[3] Occurring in the *banlieues*, the urban suburbs populated by a high concentration of disadvantaged minority ethnic groups, these events brought attention to these groups' marginalization from French society. The cause of these riots was often blamed not only on the incompatibility of these migrants with mainstream French culture, but also on their unwillingness to adapt to French cultural norms, rather than the failures of economic and social policies. Alain Finkielkraut, a French philosopher, denied that racism or poverty had spurred the riots and instead claimed that the issue lay in the fact that "most of these youths are Blacks or Arabs, with a Muslim identity… it is clear that this is a revolt with an ethno-religious

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[1] Jane Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004) 8.
[2] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France,* 14.
[3] Alec G. Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society* (New York: Routledge, 2007) 8.

character."[4] Similarly, Hélène Carrère d'Encause, secretary of the Académie Française, blamed the "polygamous marital practices of Muslim immigrants from West Africa" which rendered them "incapable of controlling their teenage children."[5]

Today, one in five people in France are estimated to be of immigrant origin.[6] Yet despite this amount of ethnic diversity, France sees itself and desires to be a monocultural society.[7] These reactions of prominent members of French society, Le Pen and the Front National's success, and the headscarf ban all demonstrate France's concern that immigrants are unable or unwilling to adapt to French culture, while further stigmatizing migrants who are seeking to integrate into French society. Immigrants of African origin, particularly those from Islamic countries, are at the "heart of this debate."[8] However, from a cultural respect, France's model of assimilation has been very successful, especially with second- and third-generation individuals of immigrant origin. The principle barriers of entry have been socio-economic disadvantages, including high unemployment and racial and ethnic discrimination from members of French society. The debates over France's assimilationist model and immigration can thus be seen as the result of its failures in social and economic policy.

These recent events provide insight on the tensions within French society. On one hand, France's founding principles of universalism and Republicanism create a tradition and desire for an equal and homogenous nation. From the French perspective, the growing population of Muslims in France has challenged these Republican principles of

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[4] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 405.
[5] Ibid, 405.
[6] Michèle Tribalat et al., *Cent ans d'immigration, étrangers d'hier français d'aujourd'hui: Apport démongraphique, dynamique familiale et économique de l'immigration étrangère* (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques 1991) 4.
[7] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France,* 575.
[8] Hargreaves, 4.

citizenship and national identity. On the other, arriving immigrants seek to retain some values of their ethno-cultural identity, while adopting some elements of French culture. This difference results in apprehension and in some cases hostility and discrimination on the part of members of French society towards immigrants, and marginalization- sometimes to the point of violence- of France's immigrant and minority groups.

In this paper, I will examine how these seemingly opposing forces manifest themselves and affect the ability or inability of immigrants, specifically Senegalese migrants, to integrate into French society. As immigrants arrive in a new culture, they must modify their behaviors to adapt to their host society. Through a review of current literature, I will examine the psychological and sociological aspects of immigration and the effects on migrant identity. I will argue that migrants most desire a bicultural identity, in which they retain some elements of their ethno-cultural identity while adopting some values of French society. The construction of a bicultural identity presents a challenge due to the particular philosophical foundations of the French nation-state and French culture. In the next chapter, I will analyze the challenges Senegalese migrants confront as they seek to build a bicultural identity. France's assimilationist tradition presents an ideological barrier to successful integration and a model which must be examined to understand France's identity politics. Resulting secondary barriers are evident in France's social and economic policies, which have an exclusionary impact on immigrants and ethnic minorities. Senegalese migrants comprise a particularly vulnerable minority group in France, and socioeconomic pressures are especially influential on the integration of Senegalese migrants due to religious differences, the practice of polygamy, a high concentration in the service sector, and one the largest average household sizes. I will

examine how France's policies and societal behavior affect Senegalese-migrant identity and integration. In the last chapter, I will examine Senegalese perceptions of France and immigration, which are radically different from the true experiences of Senegalese migrants in France. Last, the stigmatization of youth of immigrant origin in France has led to the emergence of rap as a voice of both protest and identity. I will analyze the expression of these identities through forms of popular cultures such as songs, films, and novels.

CHAPTER ONE: A THEORETICAL APPROACH TO MIGRATION AND IDENTITY

Discussion and research on the relationship between identity and immigration, although well established in anthropological and sociological research, is a subject which has only recently begun to be examined from a cross-cultural psychological perspective. Cross-cultural psychology is a branch of psychology that aims to describe and understand the ways in which behaviors and their transmission are shaped and influenced by social and cultural forces.[9] This domain of research is particularly pertinent to the study of immigration and identity because as migrants leave one culture and enter another, different cultures come into contact and changes in their behavior occur. This cultural contact and resulting behavior changes in turn impact the migrant's self-identity and identity as prescribed by others. The study of these changes is particularly important when the presence of multiple ethnic groups within the same national territory results in differences in behavior. When different groups present diverse behaviors within the same territory, these differences have the potential to result in conflict. Whether or not these differences result in conflict is contingent on the acculturation strategies of the non-dominant migrant group and the dominant host society.

Given the recent increases in global people flows, a growing number of people are being exposed to second cultures, increasing the potential for cultural conflict. To

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[9] Colette Sabatier and John Berry, "Immigration et acculturation," In *Stéréotypes, discrimination et relations intergroupes*, by R.Y. Bourhis and J.P. Leyens, 261-291. (Sprimon Belgique: Mardaga, 1994): 261.

understand these phenomena, the ways in which people absorb a cultural identity and adapt their behaviors to cultural values needs to be examined. This chapter will examine the current cross-cultural psychology literature and other research on acculturation and how different forms of acculturation manifest themselves in response to different societal conditions.

The "leader of cross-cultural psychological research on acculturation," John Berry, suggests that acculturation is best expressed as a two-dimensional process.[10] This idea diverges from previous theories which defined acculturation as a linear process of change requiring the migrant to give up one's culture of origin for assimilation to the new culture.[11] Berry defines acculturation as: "The dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural group and their individual members. At the group level, [acculturation] involves changes in social structures and institutions and in cultural practices. At the individual level, it involves changes in a person's behavioral repertoire."[12] Berry also notes that acculturation is part of a broader concept of cultural change and takes place in not only the migrant or non-dominant group, but also within the dominant host society. As both groups experience acculturation, both groups will experience changes to their cultures.[13] While there are differences at the psychological level of acculturation within an individual, when viewed as a broader cultural concept the process of acculturation can be examined at a group level for both the migrants and the host society.

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[10] John W. Berry, "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* (July 2005): 706; Sabatier and Berry, "Immigration et acculturation," 275.

[11] Jean S. Phinney et al., "Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perscpective." *Journal of Social Issues* 57, no. 3 (November 2001): 495.

[12] Berry, "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures," 698.

[13] Berry, 701; Sabatier and Berry, 275.

To analyze the changes that occur as a result of acculturation, the acculturation strategies of each group must be examined. Acculturation strategies are defined as the different ways in which groups and individual seek to carry out the process of acculturation.[14] These strategies involve both the attitudes (an individual's preferences about how to acculturate) and behaviors that are exhibited in daily intercultural exchanges. Within the non-dominant group, these attitudes and behaviors can be limited by constraints imposed by the host society. As Berry notes, it is important to examine the historical and attitudinal situation of the host society that is faced by immigrants in order to understand the process of acculturation. Some societies may seek to eliminate diversity through policies and programs of assimilation while others may be accepting of cultural pluralism and adopt a multicultural ideology.[15]

The process of acculturation: four strategies of identity

Berry proposes that by considering two basic questions, acculturating individuals will select one of four acculturation strategies: Is it considered to be of value to maintain my cultural heritage? Is it considered to be of value to develop relationships with the larger society along with other ethnocultural groups? By answering yes or no to these questions, the four strategies are derived: integration (responses to both questions are positive), marginalization (responses to both questions are negative), separation (positive response to the first questions and negative to the second), and assimilation (negative response to the first questions and positive to the second). Thus, the four terms can be defined as the following:

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[14] Berry, "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures," 704.
[15] Berry, 703; Sabatier and Berry, "Immigration et acculturation," 277.

Integration is the strategy that allows a non-dominant group individual to maintain both his heritage culture while adopting some values of the host culture. The individual maintains some degree of his heritage culture while seeking to participate in the larger society beyond their cultural group. The integration strategy represents a bicultural identity in which values of both cultures are adopted and expressed.

Marginalization occurs when there is little possibility or interest in maintenance of the heritage culture (often due to enforced cultural loss) and little interest in having relations with others, often because of exclusion or discrimination. This strategy involves major loss of the heritage culture and can lead to the emergence of dysfunctional or deviant behaviors such as delinquency or abuse.

Separation is defined as the desire of individuals to retain their original culture while desiring to avoid interaction with individuals outside their cultural group. With separation, individuals turn inward to their heritage culture while limiting involvement with all other groups.

Assimilation occurs when individuals do not desire to maintain their cultural identity and seek interaction with other groups and the adoption of the dominant group's values and culture. In this case individuals shed their heritage culture and become part of the dominant society.

When considering these four strategies, it is important to remember that acculturation not only occurs within the non-dominant migrant group, but also depends on the dominant host society. When the dominant group does not allow the non-dominant group to freely select one of these strategies, and instead enforces or constrains choices,

other terms are necessary.[16] When acculturation strategies are defined by the dominant host society the terms are recognized as such: the assimilation strategy of the migrant group is the melting pot strategy of the dominant host society, separation is referred to as segregation, marginalization is defined as exclusion, and integration translates into multiculturalism. For example, integration can only manifest itself in individuals of the non-dominant migrant group freely and successfully when the dominant society adopts a multicultural strategy. Conflict thus results between the host society and the migrant group when their respective strategies do not align.

Distinctions between English and French terminology

As mentioned before, it is important that these acculturation strategies be analyzed within the context of the specific host group and non-dominant migrant group being examined. For example, when studying acculturation in France, a distinction must be made between these terms, as defined here in the field of cross-cultural psychology, and their usage in French political rhetoric. '*Assimilation*' in the French usage denotes an "*absorption radical…l'identité d'origine disparait totalement…sans réserve et dans retour.*" (radical absorption… the original identity disappears completely… fully and irrevocably)[17] It also conveys a sense of total "*renoncement*" (renunciation) of the culture of origin.[18] In this respect, the French notion of assimilation goes one step further to denote the complete denial of any identity other one that matches the identity of members of the majority French society. The word *intégration* also has, even within France,

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[16] Berry, "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures," 705.

[17] Juliette Grange, "Que veut dire intégration? Histoire d'une notion," In *20 ans de discours dur l'intégration*, by Vincent Ferry, Piero-D.Galloro and Gérard Noiriel, 41-47. (Paris: Harmattan, 2005), 42.

[18] Manuel Boucher, *Les théories de l'intégration entre universalisme et différencialisme: Des débat sociologiques et politiques en France: analyse de textes contemporains* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000) 25-26.

complex and various meanings. Juliette Grange, a French philosopher, contends that 'integration' is part of the process of reinforcing France's unity as a nation-state containing one sole identity. She states:

> La nation à la française n'a jamais été conçue comme une entité naturelle donnée, que ce soit géographiquement ou biologiquement, mais comme une volonté affirmée, un projet politique commun, une histoire remémorée. L'immigration a contribué à cette vitalité et donc au renforcement de l'affirmation de l'identité de la France, non pas dans la fermeture mais par l'intégration : acceptation de nouveaux arrivants et redéfinition de l'identité nationale… Les difficultés récentes de l'intégration tiennent à la fragilité et à la frilosité de la définition de l'identité de la société française et de la nation.[19]

In France, the word *intégration* is often used to convey the strategy that Berry calls 'assimilation'. The term integration is preferred due to the negative connotations in France of the word assimilation, which is often perceived as a 'forced' erasure of elements considered incompatible with French society and the source the disunity of French identity. However, the use of the term integration can be considered as a repackaging of French assimilation to convey the same process, albeit to a somewhat milder degree. Manuel Boucher, a French social scientist notes "Au nom de la lutte contre la fragmentation de la nation et de l'éclatement de la société politique, il s'agit, pour le nouvel arrivant s'installant en France, d'abandonner ses valeurs propres, celles de sa communauté d'origine et de d'approprier les valeurs fondamentales de la nation française." (In the name of the fight against the fragmentation of the nation and the collapse of political society, the newcomer settling in France must abandon his own values, those of his community of origin, and must adapt the fundamental values of the

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[19] Translation: The French nation-state was never conceived as a naturally given entity, either geographically or biologically, but as a strong will, a common political project, a recollected history. Immigration contributed to this vitality and thus to the strengthening of this affirmation of French identity, not by exclusion but by integration: by accepting newcomers and redefining national identity ...The recent difficulties of integration stem from the fragility and the timidity of the definition of the identity of French society and the nation. Grange, "Que veut dire intégration? Histoire d'une notion," 44.

French nation)[20] The 'French model of integration' differs greatly from the multicultural model defined by Berry, instead reflecting his definition of assimilation or the melting pot.

Applications of the acculturation model

The previous one-dimension model, as noted above, identified acculturation as a linear trajectory of assimilation, starting from the first point of contact and ending with a melting pot society in which immigrants are fully assimilated. However, the Berry's model is significant as it adds two others dimensions. First, the desire for cultural maintenance, thus rejecting the notion that assimilation is an immigrant's only option. Second, he places the decision in the hands of the migrant; after reflecting on these two questions, the migrant will determine their acculturation strategy (this is contingent, to some degree, on the acculturation framework imposed by the dominant host society). Based upon experiments using Berry's model, most researchers agrees that integration, or the adoption of a bicultural identity, is the most desired strategy of a non-dominant group.[21]

Jean Phinney, an American psychologist, presents the argument that Berry's model of acculturation can be applied to the variations in ethnic identity (the migrant's existing culture) and in national identity (identity as a member of the host society) as two independent dimensions of group identity. She argues that as with Berry's two dimensions of cultural adaption and cultural preservation, ethnic and national identity

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[20] Boucher, *Les théories de l'intégration entre universalisme et différencialisme,* 41.

[21] Berry, "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures," 707; Colleen Ward, "Thinking outside the Berry boxes: New perscpetives on identity, acculturation and intercultural relations," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, (2008): 106; Carmit T. Tamdor and Philip E. Tetlock, "Biculturalism: A Model of the Effects of Second-Culture Exposure on Acculturation and Integrative Complexity," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* (2006): 174; Jean S. Phinney et al., "Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perscpective," 504.

vary independently and each can be either strong or weak. From this perspective, an integrated or bicultural individual would be one who retains a strong ethnic identity while also identifying with the culture of the host society. [22] Ethnic identity depends on experiences and values within the family, ethnic community, and larger society, and is distinguished from how one's ethnicity is perceived by others. National identity involves an adoption of the values of the larger society and a sense of belonging to the host society. As with acculturation strategies, the ability of a migrant to adhere to both cultures and maintain a bicultural identity is influenced by the attitudes of the host society.

Phinney finds that the attitudes of the host society toward immigrants can have an important effect on identity conflict. Societal inclusion is an integral part of developing a strong national identity and can be impeded if immigrants are met with discrimination or rejection from the host society. Immigrants who are isolated by the host society are unlikely to be "satisfied or productive members of society." However, due to the primacy of one's "ethnic identity as a defining characteristic," pressures from the host society to assimilate and give up one's sense of ethnicity and values may result in "anger, depression, and, in some cases violence."[23] Phinney argues that societies must "find a balance" between accepting culture retention and fostering adaptation to the larger society.[24]

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[22] Phinney et al., "Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perscpective," 495.
[23] Ibid, 505.
[24] Ibid, 506.

Adverse effects of non-integration acculturation strategies

When immigrants select strategies other than integration or are not able to integrate freely due to pressures from the dominant society, individuals can experience many adverse psychological effects that have larger sociological impacts. Colleen Ward, a social psychologist, identifies the problem of ethno-cultural identity conflict, which arises when an individual has multiple identities that become incompatible. Ethno-cultural identity conflict arises from conflict between ethnic values and norms, usually expressed in the family group, and the values of the greater society. Identity conflict is also stronger when there is a greater distance between two cultures.[25] Ward finds that one of the prevailing predictors of ethno-cultural identity conflict is perceived discrimination. When individuals are unable to achieve positive intergroup relations, perceive group boundaries as impermeable, have infrequent contact with national peers, or feel that their cultural continuity is threatened, ethno-cultural identity conflict will be high.[26]

Carmel Camelleri, a French cross-cultural psychologist, found this to be the case amongst marginalized ethnic minorities. Camelleri developed the identity strategies model to analyze the psychological effects of acculturation.[27] He defines identity conflict as the "crises of identity" in which an immigrant's ability to form behaviors from two sets of cultural values leads to the development of a positive or negative identity. An immigrant has a positive identity when he feels that he has at least partial control over his

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[25] Ward, "Thinking outside the Berry boxes," 108; C. Camilleri and H. Malewska-Peyre, *Socialization and Identity Strategies.* Vol. 2, in *Handbook of Cross-cultural Psychology: Basic Processes and Human Development*, edited by John W. Berry, Ype H. Poortinga and Janak Pandey, (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1997), 55.

[26] Ward, 108.

[27] M. Brégent, R. Mokounkolo, and D. Pasquier, "Recherche et classification d'indicateurs d'acculturation à partir du contexte francophone,"*Psychologie française,* 53 (2008): 51-69 ; Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre, *Socialization and Identity Strategies*, 58.

environment and possess certain qualities that are expressed by the host society. He uses the behaviors that respond to the values of the host society. An immigrant has a negative identity when he perceives social interactions as unfavorable and stigmatizing or is perceived as unable to meet social expectations. Ethnic minorities, as members of low socioeconomic groups and as marginalized individuals, are often labeled with negative tags.[28]A crisis of identity occurs when these individuals, due to their negative labels and marginalized status, are unable to construct a valorized identity as part of the new social group and experience feelings of "*déstructuration du sens*" (breakdown of meaning) and "*dévalorisation de l'image de soi*." (devaluation of their self-identity).[29] The resulting negative identity has negative psychological effects on the individual, which can manifest themselves in ways that are detrimental to the individual and their society.

Integrated individuals experience significantly less ethno-cultural identity conflict. Phinney finds that the bicultural identity is also generally tied to higher levels of wellbeing than the other acculturation strategies and the least amount of acculturative stress.[30] Individuals who adopt a bicultural identity are also able to respond in more complex ways to situations of cultural conflict because they can draw on the values and norms of both cultural groups. However, since adopting a bicultural identity requires an individual to internalize values of both cultures, the individual must be able to achieve cohesion amongst conflicting values to avoid identity conflict. Camelleri finds that individuals often do so by expressing a "chameleon" or circumstantial identity in which the individual adapts different behaviors to different situations in order to avoid conflict

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[28] Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre, *Socialization and Identity Strategies,* 59.
[29] Sabatier and Berry, "Immigration et acculturation," 53.
[30] Berry, "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures,"708.

during social interactions.[31] However, regardless of the immigrants' efforts to integrate, the immigration policies of the host society and to a greater extent the cultural attitudes of the society affect the success of the acculturating migrants.[32]

When immigrants feel that the host society is unwilling to accept or support the migrant groups' value system and culture, acculturation may take the form of segregation or separation. A growing body of research on diasporas and transnational communities supports the assertion that these communities are formed when the minority group does not find its culture represented in the host society and experiences "erasure and silencing" of its culture by the host group.[33] Transnational migration is defined as the process by which immigrants "forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations" in both their societies of origin and settlement. Transmigrants therefore are immigrants whose lives involve daily interactions across international borders and whose identities are defined by ties to more than one nation-state. A transnationalist identity differs from a bicultural identity in that cultural retention involves more than retaining one's heritage and interactions with family and ethnic community and includes constant interactions with the emigrant society.[34]

It is important to note that the formation of diasporas is the consequence of political ramifications. Transnational migration is more likely to occur when political or economic inclusion in the host society is not positive due to negative labeling of

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[31] Camilleri and Malewska-Peyre, *Socialization and Identity Strategies*, 57.

[32] Phinney et al., "Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perscpective," 500.

[33] Sunil Bhatia and Anjali Ram, "Theorizing Identity in Transnational and Diaspora Cultures: A Critical Approach to Acculturation,"*International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, (2009): 141.

[34] Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration,"*Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (January 1995): 48.

immigrants from racism and other factors that limit immigrants' social interactions.[35] When the immigrant is unable to forge connections with the host society outside of economic interaction, the immigrant has a strong motivation to maintain ties to the migrant group and the emigrant society.

Bhatia and Ram argue that while integration and bicultural identities are worthy goals for immigrants, outside factors often work beyond the immigrants' control to make their attainment impossible, temporary, or inconstant. As noted earlier, immigrants who are segregated from the host society are rarely productive or satisfied members of society.[36] The existence of segregated or transnational communities demonstrates the importance on the part of the host society of pursing an active acculturation strategy that permits the inclusion of immigrants into the host society and culture in order for immigrants to be a satisfied and productive sector of the overall society.

Application of the acculturation model to the French context

Many critiques of acculturation research have remarked that Berry's four-strategy model and other schemas are often too broad and are not an applicable framework for many countries. When applied to migration and identity studies in France, many francophone experts agree that these models must be adjusted to acknowledge France's political and philosophical foundations.[37] Colette Sabatier, a French cross-cultural psychologist, states:

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[35] Schiller, Basch, and Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration" 50.

[36] Phinney et al., "Ethnic Identity, Immigration, and Well-Being: An Interactional Perscpective," 495.

[37] Brégent, Mokounkolo, and Pasquier, "Recherche et classification d'indicateurs d'acculturation à partir du contexte francophone," 51-69 ; Colette Sabatier, "Les études sur l'acculturation sont elles universelles ou contextualisées? Perspective française," *VIII Congrès de l'Association Internationale pour la Recherche Interculturelle* (2006) 1-4.

Des accommodations de ce schéma aux problématiques, valeurs et cultures locales semblent nécessaires … pour rendre compte aux mieux des processus en comprenant de façon nuancée les différents enjeux, retracer les réels déterminants et comprendre leurs effets … [j'insiste] sur la nécessite de prendre en compte les différents contextes politiques tant sur le plan des attitudes des membres de la société d'accueil à l'égard de l'adaptation des immigrants, les attitudes discriminatoires présentes dans la société qui s'expriment différemment selon les groupes visés, que sur le plan de la politiques à l'égard de l'immigration.[38] L'organisation structurelle de chaque État et sa conception de la citoyenneté et des rapports entre le citoyen et l'État, ont induit des approches sensiblement différentes [au] problème [d'acculturation]… [par exemple,] une approche individuelle comme en France. Ces aspects viennent modifier sensiblement la qualité des relations entre les individus membres des groupes culturels en contact et conditionnent de façon particulière les possibilités et les limites de l'adaptation des individus qui ont immigré. [39]

Richard Bourhis, a francophone social-psychologist, has adopted Berry's model to France with the addition of a fifth strategy: individualism. Thinking back to the two values from which Berry's model are derived, individualists are those who consider neither the importance of maintaining one's culture nor adopting the dominant host society as criteria for successful acculturation. Immigrants who utilize the individualist strategy instead focus on personal characteristics rather than ones group membership and do not depend on the support of their immigrant community or the host society to achieve their personal goals. When endorsed by the dominant host society, individualism refers to those who refuse to categorize themselves or others as members of the migrant non-

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[38] Sabatier, "Les études sur l'acculturation sont elles universelles ou contextualisées? Perspective française," 2.

[39] Translation: Adjustment of this schema to the issues, values, and local cultures seems necessary… in order to better understand these processes and the nuances of these various issues, and trace the actual determinants and understand their effects ... I insist on the need to take into account the different political context both in terms of the attitudes of members of the host society with respect to the adaptation of immigrants- those discriminatory attitudes in society that are expressed differently depending on the target group- and in terms of policies towards immigration. The structural organization of each state and its conception of citizenship and the relationship between citizen and state have led to substantially different approaches to the problem of acculturation ... For example, an individual approach in France. These aspects substantially alter the quality of the relationships between individual members of the cultural groups in contact, and create the conditions for the possibilities and limitations to adaptation of the individuals who have immigrated. Sabatier and Berry, "Immigration et acculturation," 265.

dominant group or as part of the host society. Thus, individualists interact with immigrants in the same way they interact with individuals who are members of the host society.[40]

The addition of the fifth individualist orientation demonstrates that it is essential to examine the founding myths of the French Republic when analyzing France's strategies of acculturation. The French Republic was founded after the revolution as a modern nation-state, universalist and egalitarian, viewed as both a physical territory and a collective consciousness in which its citizens share the same rights and privileges.[41] This equality was inherent to all "*sans distinction d'origine, de race et de religion*" (without distinction based on origin, race, or religion.) This universalism was constructed through such institutions as *L'École,* which would be "*gratuite, laïque, et obligatoire*" (free, secular and compulsory) and which would disseminate the ideals of the Republic to all its citizens.[42] The French school is regarded as the fundamental platform to promote the values of French society and to support the affirmation of a Republican spirit; its mission is to "form men and citizens" as the institution of moral and civic instruction.[43]

Legitimized by the Republican founding myth, these principles imply and "entail" the assimilation of individuals, who become citizens by choice. The political foundations of the French Republic clearly express France's tradition and desire for the assimilation of immigrants and ethnic minorities into the image of the French citizen. Thus, the French integration policy is mainly assimilationist; the model requires immigrants to give

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[40] Geneviève Barrette, et al, "Acculturation Orientations of French and North African Undergraduates in Paris," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 28, (2004): 417.
[41] Riva Kastoryano, *Negotiating Identities: States and Immigrants in France and Germany,* Translated by Barbara Harshav (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002) 43, 99.
[42] Sabatier, "Les études sur l'acculturation sont elles universelles ou contextualisées? Perspective française,"3.
[43] Sabatier, 4.

up their collective linguistic, religious, and cultural traits for citizenship, through which they gain equal treatment.[44] Riva Kastoryano notes that in fact in France the term *ethnicité* is "disturbing…it goes against the ideology of the republic 'one and indivisible' because it refers to communities other than the national community, over and against the state. It is therefore rejected."[45] Reinforcing this belief, state immigration policies do not recognize ethnocultural communities. The 1997 report of the *Haut Conseil à l'intégration* made it clear that "French universalism" cannot recognize the "rights of minorities" or accept the existence of "communal particularisms." Rights are granted to the individual to "take a place in French society."[46] This rhetoric and political context demonstrates the overwhelming universalist tradition of France as a nation-state and its opposition to the existence of *l'autre*, the 'Other', within French society, and the challenges posed to the accomplishment of true integration.

The context of France's universalist tradition is particularly relevant when analyzing the acculturation of postcolonial immigrants. France's colonial legacies blur the definition of French 'citizens' and '*l'autre.*' The Senegalese, unified as a nation from the Four Communes under French colonial rule, have been the subjects of French assimilationist policies since the 19th century, as have other postcolonial nationals. Alec G. Hargreaves, a scholar of French immigration politics, analyzes the effect of France's colonial legacy on the acculturation pressures encountered by postcolonial immigrants:

> In recent years, memories of the colonial period have forced themselves onto the public agenda in France; this is in part because of the settlement of immigrant minorities originating in former colonies. It is those minorities who have been at

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[44] Barrette, et al, "Acculturation Orientations of French and North African Undergraduates in Paris," 420.

[45] Kastoryano, *Negotiating Identities,* 2.

[46] Jeremy Jennings, "Citizenship, Republicanism, and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France." *British Journal of Political Science* 30, no. 4 (October 2000): 583.

the center of the pulic debates surrounding immigration during the past quarter of a century. The growing recognition that these minorities have suffered high levels of discrimination has alerted policy-makers and the public at large not only to the role of ethnicity as a signficant force in French society but also the legacy of French colonialism, a fundamental aspect of which was institutionalized racial and ethnic discrimination against non-Europeans. …echoes of that period [of French colonial domination] remain very much alive today.[47]

In part because they are generally fluent in French, though also for historical reasons, sub-Saharan immigrants who reside legally in France have adapted to French culture and values at a faster rate than immigrants from the Maghreb.[48] Nonetheless, migrants of sub-Saharan origin suffer high rates of unemployment, and when employed they more frequently perform low-paying service sector jobs. France seeks to be a nation defined by its *égalité* and *liberté,* but in the next chapter I will demonstrate how French immigration policies and social attitudes have limited the ability of Senegalese immigrants to integrate into French society and share these values. Instead, I will provide examples of France's exclusionary framework that have caused segregated and marginalized identities amongst France's immigrant populations.

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[47] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 13.
[48] Ibid, 144.

CHAPTER TWO: A HISTORY OF SENEGALESE MIGRANTS IN FRANCE

Until the mid-1980s, immigrants from the Senegalese river valley comprised four-fifths of the sub-Saharan African immigrants in France, and Senegal remains the largest sending country of sub-Saharan Africa.[49] Senegal was part of French West Africa until gaining independence in 1960, and Senegalese nationals first arrived in France as part of the *tirailleurs sénégalais* (Senegalese soldiers) during World War I. During the two World Wars, more than 367,000 colonial *sujets* (subjects) were enlisted with the promise of French citizenship: "Mes frères noirs, en versant le même sang, vous gagnerez les mêmes droits que vos camarades français." (My black brothers, by paying the same blood, you will gain the same rights as your French comrades.)[50] However, as many immigrants have reminded the French government in recent years, these promises mostly proved to be false. After the two world wars, some *tirailleurs* deployed in France, but most returned to the colonies. The first large wave of African migration began after World War II when France had a high demand for workers to meet the needs of France's reconstruction and rapidly expanding economy. While there was widespread agreement that European immigrants were more desirable that Africans or Asians, the high demand for migrants to fill France's labor force outweighed the concern about immigration as a factor of France's demographic future.[51] For example, many French car manufacturers recruited workers from the Senegal River valley and the Tambacounda region of Senegal. Between 1954 and 1975, the number of immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa rose from

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[49]Abdoulaye Gueye, "The Colony Strikes Back: African Protest Movements in Postcolonial France," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* (Duke University Press) 26, no. 2 (2006): 233.

[50] Philippe Dewitte, *Deux siècles d'immigration en France* (Paris: Documentation française, 2003) 51.

[51] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,*19.

2,300 to 81,850.[52] This period was characterized by a pattern of circular migration, in which male migrants worked in France for several months at a time but returned often to their families and personal lives in the sending countries. Immigration for colonial migrants required limited documentation, and travel between the colonies and France was relatively simple. As a single, male-dominated population, housing for these immigrants was extremely poor, and state-run *foyers* (hostels) were designed to house migrant workers. The government hoped that these *foyers*, unsuitable for families, would discourage men from bringing their families to France and settling permanently.[53] This period of economic expansion, referred to as *les trentes glorieuses*, the thirty glory years, lasted until the end of France's booming economic success in 1974. The year 1974 is seen as the end of France's open-door immigration policy and marks a major shift in both French policy and social attitudes. The post-war period is significant to immigration history as it helped to shape the modern image of the *immigré* (immigrant). Because migration was the result of labor market demands, 'immigrants' came to be synonymous with 'migrant workers', who were in turn equated with unskilled workers. Since most of the unskilled foreign workers in France were non-Europeans, the term 'immigrants' thus became equated to unskilled people of color, while European residents were known as *étrangers* (foreigners).[54] Thus the presence of 'immigrants' became the measure used to determine whether the efforts to stop new immigration were working.[55]

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[52] Dewitte, *Deux siècles d'immigration en France*, 75.
[53] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 23.
[54] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France,* 15-16.
[55] Hargreaves, 25.

The 'end' of immigration and the increase in migrant visibility

France officially stopped immigration in 1974 due to fears of rising unemployment and a stagnant growth of the economy. New policies limited immigration and made re-entry to France difficult, but attempts to stop family reunification were deemed unlawful.[56] This led to the development of new strategies for maintaining family and community structures and brought about a significant structural change in the immigrant population. Immigrants were now predominately women and children, and rather than the trend toward 'reverse migration' that the French state hoped for, migrants stayed and were joined by their families. According to the *Institue national de la statistique et des études économiques*, (l'INSEE) the number of women from sub-Saharan Africa increased exponentially between 1968 and 1982: the female population went from less than 5,000 in 1968 to 16,500 in 1971 and jumped to 42,000 in 1982. From 1982 to 1990, the population increased by more than 70%, leading to the presence of 73,000 women in 1990.[57] This demographic shift led to the need for greater attention to the domestic policy concerning immigrants. As families joined their husbands and fathers, the need for housing other than the *foyers* dramatically increased. While migrants housed in the *foyers* had remained relatively segregated from the majority of French society outside of their work, the introduction of families greatly increased the visibility of immigrants in French society. As families arrived in France, immigrants entered the housing market and mainstream neighborhoods, and began to insert themselves into schools as the population of immigrant children began to grow. The visibility of these

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[56] Freedman, 25.

[57] Helene Trauner, "Dimensions of West-African Immigration to France: Malian Immigrant Women in Paris," *Stichproben Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien* 8, no. 5 (2005): 2.

migrants also differs crucially from other waves of migration, as immigrants originating from Africa were "instantly recognizable" due to their skin color and other somatic features.[58]

During this period, the *sedentarization* of African immigrants began to take hold. Abdoulaye Gueye, a sociologist and scholar of black France studies, defines *sedentarization* as "the act of tying one's destiny to the fate of a country."[59] This process involved a changing attitude about immigration as an act of permanent relocation, which was also influenced by the deteriorating economic conditions of the sending countries. As France experienced the end of economic growth, most African countries experienced worsened economies. In Mali and Senegal, periods of drought during the 1970s limited agricultural development and employment opportunities. Families depended more and more on remittances; thus, compounded with the changes in immigration policies, immigrants were highly incentivized to settle permanently in France.

The wider awareness of immigrants in French society led to a heightened concern about unemployment, crime, housing and education problems, and other social issues to which immigrants became the "scapegoat."[60] Anti-immigration discourse, particularly from the Front National, which gained 35 seats in the National Assembly in 1986, helped to shape immigration and citizenship policies of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The Pasqua Laws, named after the Minister of the Interior who oversaw their development, initiated increased restrictions on entry and residence rights. In 1993, the Right-wing majority passed this new set of laws to achieve 'zero immigration'. These laws made it

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[58] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 26.
[59] Gueye, "The Colony Strikes Back," 232.
[60] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France,* 42.

easier for police to prevent entry and expel immigrants, tightened restrictions on family reunification (for example making polygamous reunions illegal), and attempted to constraint immigrant's access to the social security system and other social rights, particularly health care and education, and more.[61] The limitation of immigrants' social rights can be perceived as the government's attempt to limit immigration and regain control of the immigration system as external controls weakened.[62]

1993: A year of reforms

The 1993 Pasqua laws had a particularly crucial effect on the status of sub-Saharan African immigrants. One reform created changes to the legal status of children born to people born in French territories between 1946 and 1960 (independence.)[63] Before this reform, any child born in France to parents born in a previously-French territory was granted French citizenship at birth. Now, these rights were suspended (although this continued to apply for Algerians.) Other reforms centered on discussions of citizenship and national identity argued that the *droit du sol*, (jus soli) made citizenship "too easy" for immigrants who did not "deserve it" or "merit the honor."[64] Now, children born to non-French parents born in France must apply for citizenship at the age of 18, but this request can be denied.[65]

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[61] Vasoodeven Vuddamalay and Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, "Migration and Migration Research in France," In *International Migration and the Social Sciences: Confronting National Experiences in Australia, France and Germany*, by Ellie Vasta and Vasoodeven Vuddamalay, 79-142. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 87.

[62] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 44.

[63] Madeleine Dobie and Rebecca Saunders, "Introduction: France in Africa/ Africa(ns) in France," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* (Duke University Press) 26, no. 2 (2006): 186.

[64] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France,* 43.

[65] Ibid, 45.

One outcome of this reform was the increase in *clandestin* (illegal) immigration, generating the "new figure of the immigrant as a marginal individual in flight from the authorities, which has subsequently become the dominant image of sub-Saharan immigrants."[66] Illegal migration intensified due to the push factors of collapsing economies at home, the pull factors of recruiting sectors such as building and clothing manufacturing industries and domestic and restaurant services, and the lack of legal options.[67] The political attention on *clandestin* immigration often framed the issue with a clear distinction between legal immigrants, who ought to be integrated into French society, and illegal immigrant who needed to be removed.[68] However, during the 1993 legislative reforms there were many immigrants who had entered France legally but now found that they were unable to renew their papers, rendering their continued presence in France illegal. The issue was more complex that was often acknowledged and created ambiguous identities for these immigrants pushed to the peripheries. These reforms had significant impacts on the security of immigrants as they limited their ability to seek employment, and claim benefits such as health care or education for their children.[69]

The 1993 Pasqua laws demonstrate the determination of the French government to control immigration and limit immigrant's rights. During this time, the *Haut Conseil a l'Integration*, (High Council for Integration- HCI) was established to promote the 'integration' of immigrants in France. These two objectives, limitation and integration, characterize the French government's policies since 1974. Nicolas Sarkozy, as Minister of the Interior in the early 2000s, continued this rhetoric and emphasis on the need to

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[66] Dobie and Saunders, "Introduction: France in Africa/ Africa(ns) in France," 186.
[67] Vuddamalay and Wihtol de Wenden, "Migration and Migration Research in France," 84.
[68] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France,* 79.
[69] Ibid.

limit immigration, particularly '*clandestin*' immigration, and to institute a formal 'integration' requirement in order to reside in France. Alec Hargreaves describes the context of the present climate:

> The immigrant populations which have been settling in France in recent decades have been doing so in a context of high unemployment, fitful growth and major economic restructuring. The opportunities for effective socio-economic incorporation have therefore been far less plentiful than during earlier periods. It is indeed arguable that the roots of present fears concerning ineffective integration lie far more in socio-economic circumstances that in cultural differences between post-colonial migrants and their European predecessors. As Noiriel (1988, 47) pointed out, bouts of xenophobia similar to that currently directed against non-European immigrants marked the economic downturns of the 1880s when Italians and Poles were castigated as 'inassimilable', which in the language of the day was equivalent to saying they were impossible to integrate.[70]

The situation of Senegalese migrants must be analyzed in this context. Senegalese immigrants count amongst one of the most vulnerable minorities in France. Socio-economic factors, coupled with cultural stigmatization, severely impede their ability to construct integrated identities and instead result in separation or marginalization.

Immigration and census classification

To begin, some demographic information on Senegalese in and migrating to France must be examined. While it is impossible to collect certain demographic data in France (such as an individual's ethnic origin or linguistic or religious practices, which are excluded) l'INSEE and l'INED (*Institut national d'études démographiques*) collect some census data related to migration.[71] It is therefore of vital importance to start with clear definitions of the terminology used in French policy. The terms '*immigré´*' (immigrant) and '*étranger*' (foreigner) are both used with specific distinctions. The HCI defines an *étranger* as "*personne ayant déclaré une nationalité autre que celle du pays dans lequel*

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[70] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 35.
[71] Kastoryano, *Negotiating Identities,* 103

il reside" (a person who declares citizenship to a country other than the one in which he resides.) This is distinct from an *immigré,* who is a "*personne née étrangère à l'étranger, et résident en France. En France, la qualité d'immigré est permanente : un individu devenu français par acquisition continue d'appartenir à la population immigrée. C'est le pays de naissance et non la nationalité qui définit la qualité d'immigré*" (a person who is born abroad, without French citizenship, and who resides in France. In France, classification as an immigrant is permanent: an individual who acquires French citizenship continues to be part of the immigrant population. It is the country of birth, not the country of citizenship, which classifies an immigrant.) [72] Since *immigrés* are also French citizens, no distinction is made between *immigrés* and other French citizens in census data.

Here, definition and actual usage differ. As noted above, *étranger* and *immigré* have connotations that differ greatly from their official definitions. In addition, the term *immigré*, which by definition does not include the children of immigrants born in France, in often used to refer to second and third generation descendants of *immigrés* in social usages. The official usage is important given that the 1993 Pasqua laws declares that children born in France to immigrant parents do not receive automatic French citizenship, immigrant-born children in France are therefore considered *étrangers,* although not *immigrés*. As a result the statistics concerning *étrangers* include all residents without French citizenship, including children born in France who have not yet applied for citizenship. In 1999, 86.5% of Senegalese children classified as *étrangers* were born in

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[72] Tribalat et al., *Cent ans d'immigration, étrangers d'hier français d'aujourd'hui* , 8.

France.[73] Most of these children will apply for French nationality after the age of 16, thus becoming *Français par acquisition* (French by acquisition.)

The demographics of Senegalese immigrants in France

Since 2000, between 3,500 and 4,000 Senegalese have migrated legally to France (3,573 in 2008), including students who stay for at least one year.[74] In 2007, there were 50,476 immigrants in France with Senegalese nationality. During this year, Senegalese ranked the 13th largest non-French nationality in France. Not including other-European nationalities, it ranks 6th. Of sub-Saharan nationalities, it ranks 2nd only to Mali.[75] Of these, 9,782 were younger than 17 years old, 36,501 were between the ages of 18 and 59, and 4,193 over the age of 60. Male Senegalese outnumbered female Senegalese residents by 6, 439, or a ration of 55% to 45%. About half of these extra males were between the ages of 18 and 59, and the rest were over 60.[76] This can be explained by the number of single men who migrated or men who migrated without their families to work in France.

Ile-de-France, the region of France encompassing Paris metropolitan area, has the highest proportion of immigrants in France. In 2005, 16.7% of the population, or 1,916,000 people, of Ile-de-France were immigrants. Of these, 38,000 were Senegalese. Ile-de-France then is home to about three-fourths of all Senegalese immigrants, about 40% of which have obtained French citizenship. In Ile-de-France there were also

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[73] INSEE, Atlas des Populations Immigrées en Ile-de-France: Vie Familiale, (l'INSEE, 2000) 1-15.
[74] Institut national d'études démographiques (INED), http://www.ined.fr/fr/pop_chiffres/france/flux_immigration/, 2011
[75] Yannick Croguennec, "La population étrangère en 2007," *Infos migrations*, Febuary 2011.
[76] L'Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (l'INSEE), 2011 http://www.insee.fr/fr/insee-statistique-publique/default.asp.

approximately 28,000 Senegalese "étrangers," which includes immigrants without French citizenship and their children born in France.[77]

Senegalese and other sub-Saharan immigrants are heavily represented in the services sector; 76% are employed in the manual labor sector (primarily unskilled) or work as non-manual workers (primarily personal service staff).[78] In 2002, more than twice as many immigrant women were employed in the 'personal service' sector (low-status domestic work, manual labor) than non-immigrant women. In 1999, 22.2% of immigrant men worked in the construction sector, compared to 8.8% of French citizens.[79] However, unemployment amongst these migrants is extremely high; in 1999 it reached 35%. Concentrated in these sectors, African immigrants are often poorly paid and face seasonal and market fluctuations. During a recession, these sectors are often the first and hardest hit. Similarly, the state reserves employment by the state to French nationals (and EU nationals), which excludes foreigners from the securest part of the tertiary sector.[80] Thus, immigrant exclusion easily occurs through labor; those who face unemployment, particularly long term, are often victims of exclusion. Exclusionary practices by the host society, as demonstrated in chapter one, can lead to segregated migrant communities and identities. One example of the result of labor exclusion is the increase in 'ethnic' businesses, such a restaurants, groceries, or import stores catering directly to their ethnic communities.

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[77] INSEE, 2011, http://www.insee.fr/fr/insee-statistique-publique/default.asp.
[78] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 44-47.
[79] Corinne Régnard and Florent Demargue, "Les nouveaux migrants en 2009," *Infos Migrations* (January 2011).
[80] Hargreaves, 49.

Labor niches or exclusion are also directly linked to housing; lower income translates to less housing options and poorer living conditions. Based on 2010 estimates, there are 22,620 Senegalese households in France.[81] In 1999, 80.5% of sub-Saharan Africans were tenants, 46% of these in HLMs (*habitation à loyer modéré* –government subsidized housing). French households in Ile-de-France average 3 people per household, whereas Senegalese families average 8, the second highest by nationality. This can be attributed to the fact that Senegalese families are more likely to share a household with other families or relatives, and more likely to have more children. Malian and Senegalese immigrants have the highest number of families in France with 4 or more children under the age of 16. In 1999, 36.3% of Senegalese families in Ile-de-France had 3 or more children, whereas for the entire population (both French and foreign residents) this was true for only 11.5%.[82]

Within this context, Senegalese immigrants can be viewed amongst the most economically vulnerable immigrants in France. An integrated, or bicultural identity, involves value adaptation and participation in both the migrant group and the host society. However, these economic conditions have limited Senegalese migrants, heavily clustered in the construction and service sectors, to have contact with the mainstream French society. Unemployment and immigrant-dominated housing further exclude migrants from daily interactions with French society. Exclusion is perpetuated by state policies that limit upward mobility and 'breaking the cycle' and is exacerbated by social stigmatization through discrimination and xenophobia. These factors lead collectively to

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[81] Defined as households in which the head of household holds Senegalese citizenship. Croguennec, "La population étrangère en 2007," 4.
[82] INSEE, Atlas des Populations Immigrées en Ile-de-France, 1-15.

a segregated identity, in which Senegalese immigrants interact within their ethnic group and have limited contact outside these circles.

The economic and social marginalization of Senegalese immigrants

Sociologist Michel Wieviorka notes that similar to immigrants from other former colonies, the Senegalese regularly encounter prejudice and discrimination that "have roots in the endemic racism of France's colonial past, but also have new anchors in the landscape of postcolonial and postindustrial Europe."[83] I will now turn to the ethnocultural factors that have both generated fear and hostility toward Senegalese migrants and limited their ability to integrate culturally into society due to their divergence from the attitudes and behaviors of the majority French society.

Senegalese and other African immigrants encounter widespread prejudice on the basis of cultural difference, physical appearance, and religious adherence. Racism and xenophobia are issues in France that even formal citizenship cannot erase; discrimination towards immigrants has been documented even when African immigrants have French citizenship. An INED/INSEE survey found that "second-generation non-Europeans had higher jobless rates and more insecure forms of employment than young people of French origin with the same level qualifications," playing a key role in limiting the employment opportunities of ethnic groups.[84] Their exclusion arises often because they are easily identified as 'the other,' or because they are viewed through an ethnic hierarchy, which places African immigrants at the bottom. In 1984, a poll found that 48% of French citizens believed that "black Africans" were "badly integrated into French society."[85]

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[83] Michel Wieviorka, *La France raciste* (Paris : Seuil, 1992).
[84] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 55.
[85] Ibid, 144.

The debate over religion has filled the pages of many studies and is more nuanced than can be explained here. However, as the second largest religion in France, Islam hold an important place in the lives of North and West African immigrants and influence the relation between these immigrants and French society. The growing presence of a Muslim population has caused fear amongst the majority population that Islam is a threat to social stability. The politicization of religious identity has fueled many debates over the principle of *laicité*¸ and added to the social exclusion of Muslim immigrants and fueled xenophobic sentiments.

Dobie and Saunders, scholars of French colonialism, argue that while many of the challenges facing sub-Saharan immigrants are the same ones that other non-European immigrants have faced for several decades, increases in immigration from sub-Saharan Africa have also been "accompanied by the rise of a distinct set of social and cultural preoccupations."[86] These anxieties have contributed to the French insistence of the inassimilable nature of immigrants and the challenge of asserting a bicultural identity.

One of these concerns is the practice of polygamy amongst some West African Muslim migrants. Polygamy is a sensitive issue not only because it is often perceived as a form of male domination over women, but because it is also often blamed for the overcrowding of French public housing.[87] Before 1993, resident aliens were governed by the laws of their own country; thus immigrants from Senegal were permitted to bring more than one wife with them to France. There is estimated to be between 3,000 and 15,000 polygamous households in the Ile-de-France region, representing about a third of

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[86] Dobie and Saunders, "Introduction: France in Africa/ Africa(ns) in France," 185.
[87] Ibid.

the sub-Saharan African population.[88] The issue is widely contended because in Senegal, and other West African countries, polygamy is viewed as a symbol of status and wealth. In France, polygamy has come to be perceived as a compensation for poverty; the more children living in a household, the greater the family allowances. Many polygamous families have experienced marginalized identities: the practice is excluded from French society and has also diverged from its traditional practice in Senegal. Being unable to identify with either majority, polygamous immigrants may in this regard develop an identity of marginalization.

Female circumcision, a practice confined principally to immigrants originating near the Senegalese River valley, is a practice that is also highly politicized. Perceptions of the practice vary widely depending on the cultural context from which it is considered.[89] For example, some activists opposed to female circumcision argue that it is a custom rooted in a male-dominated society. Similarly, while it is equated with mutilation in French jurisprudence, thus implicating a malicious motive on the part of the parents, from their perspective it is a rite of passage to prepare girls for adulthood and marriage.[90]As with polygamy and the headscarf affair, the extent to which this practice is a representation of freely constructed values is unclear. These conflicts are further complicated as diverse African perspectives exist on the matters.[91] Hargreaves notes that "it is not always easy to know whether particular acts have been freely chosen, passively reproduced or grudgingly performed under psychological or even physical coercion."[92]

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[88] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 71.
[89] Ibid, 100.
[90] Ibid, 101.
[91] Dobie and Saunders, "Introduction: France in Africa/ Africa(ns) in France," 185.
[92] Hargreaves, 101.

However, these issues also demonstrate how concerns generated by the practices of a relatively small group of immigrants are heightened by the more general context of immigration- incited anxiety, anxieties which in turn drive social exclusion and cause segregated or marginalized identities.

The *sans-papiers* movement: the vocalization of African immigrant exclusion

The *sans-papiers* movement provides a clear example the exclusionary consequences of French policies for African migrants as well as their wish to integrate. The presence of illegal immigrants increased after the legislative reform began in the 1970s and exacerbated the exclusionary tendencies of the labor and housing markets. After the 1993 Pasqua laws, many immigrants who had migrated to France legally found that they were no longer able to renew their visas. In 2006, the number of illegal immigrants was estimated to be between 200,000 and 400,000.[93] The complete exclusion of this population through economic, social, and legislative means stemmed the *sans-papiers* (without papers- illegal) movement which culminated in the occupation of the Saint-Bernard church in 1996. The collective mobilization of these *sans-papiers*, mostly immigrants from Senegal and Mali, brought vital attention to the issue of illegality and how people come to be 'illegal' residents in France.[94] Minority policies that focus on shared experiences and the social location of particular groups are often rejected in France because, as Dominique Schnapper, a sociologist and member of the French Constitutional Council, argues, such policies "would break with a long tradition of

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[93]Trauner, "Dimensions of West-African Immigration to France," 7.
[94] Freedman, *Immigration and Insecurity in France,* 78.

national integration in France and weaken the social fabric."[95] However, the movement also unified immigrants through what Catherine Raissiguier, a scholar of gender studies in France, calls an "identity of lack," which emphasized their exclusion but more importantly their desire, often disregarded or deemed impossible, to integrate into French society.[96] The "identity of lack" helped the *sans-papiers* forge alliances and launch the political action of other homeless, jobless, and marginalized groups.

Gueye notes the importance of the *sans-papiers* movement as a collective assertion of an African identity and destiny in France and as a means to come out against social mobility restrictions and redefine the roles of African immigrants.[97] Madjiguène Cissé, one of the leaders of the movement, stated "pendant toute cette période, nous avions beaucoup d'identités à réinvestir…Ainsi, nous avons tenu à tenir une conférence de presse…pour bien faire comprendre que nous ne sommes pas seulement des 'étrangers'." (Throughout this period, we had many identities to reinstate...so we wanted to hold a press conference to make it clear that we are not just 'foreigners'.)[98] This movement helped African immigrants to assert their desire for a bicultural identity: they demonstrated both their unity around a shared ethnic identity and also a desire to identify with the greater French society. Catherine Quiminal writes that these African immigrants used the movement to address their demands for justice given the historical relationship between France and Africa. She writes:

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[95] Dominique Schnapper, "The Debate on Immigration and the Crisis on National Identity," In *The politics of immigration in Western Europe*, by Martin Schain (Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex: Frank Cass, 1994) 127-139.

[96] Catherine Raissiguier, *Reinventing the Republic: Gender, Migration and Citizenship in France* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010) 38.

[97] Gueye, "The Colony Strikes Back," 236.

[98] Madjiguène Cissé, "Sans-papiers: Les premiers enseignements," *Politique*, (1996): 2.

>Les Africains se sentent dans leurs droits de toute l'histoire passée mais aussi présente. Ce qui se dit c'est le refus de faire comme si la présence des Africains en France aujourd'hui n'avait rien à voir avec la présence des français en Afrique hier mais aussi aujourd'hui. A travers une demande d'intégration un peu moins inégale un peu plus citoyenne c'est la réinterprétation d'un lien qui se joue, l'affirmation d'une dette qui s'exprime, la contestation de la perpétuation de dynamiques inégalitaires.[99]

The *sans-papiers* vocalized the importance of historical context to African immigrant identity and also the need for justice in France's treatment of African immigrants. The *dette du sang,* or blood debt paid by the *tirailleurs sénégalais* was similarly evoked. Senegalese and other African immigrants declared that France has a duty to repay Africa for the service of the 'colonial conscripts,' who were denied French citizenship and yet were conscripted to fight for the nation. Emmanuel Blanchard, a French historian and screenwriter, wrote about the historical relevancy of the *sans-papiers*' claims: "Longtemps occultée, la participation des populations coloniales aux efforts de guerre de la France est aujourd'hui un véritable enjeu de mémoire au cœur des luttes politiques et juridiques des anciens combattants et des sans-papiers."[100] The participants of the *sans-papiers* movement called on the French government to recognize the past service of Africans and repay their debt by allowing Africans to immigrate or stay legally in France. Two organizations, Collectif Egalité and Africagora, emerged from this movement and continued the efforts began by the *sans-papiers* movement. They have argued for affirmative action policies that will help Africans overcome socioeconomic

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[99] Translation: Africans feel that all of history as well as the present is integral to their rights. that is to say that the refusal to act as if the African presence in France today had nothing to do with the French presence in Africa both yesterday and today. The demand for integration that is less unequal and more as a citizen is a reinterpretation of a persisting connection, an affirmation of a self-expressed debt , and a challenge to perpetual, unequal dynamics. Catherine Quiminal, "Societes africaines et diaspora: Le rapport colonial revisité: Les luttes des africains et des africaines en France," *Societes africaines et diaspora* (1996): 25.

[100] Emmanuel Blanchard, "Les tirailleurs, bras armé de la France coloniale," *Ligue des Droits de l'Homme - Toulon.* (August 25, 2004, http://www.ldh-toulon.net/spip.php?article297 accessed November 27, 2011).

limitations and have fought to gain recognition as an integral part of the French population.[101] Mobilization of the African community played a key role in gaining political attention and thus determining group identities. These movements demonstrate the African community's desire to assert its own identity as both African and French, will economic and political participation equal to other French citizens. The ability of immigrants to incorporate into the French nation-state depends on socio-economic processes, the values and objectives of the minority ethnic group, and the attitudes and behavior of the majority population, both in society and in policy.[102] As is evidenced by the current position of Senegalese immigrants in France, their desire to live with a bicultural identity is often impossible due to the assimilatory and exclusionary attitudes of French society and French policies.

The beginnings of a multicultural awareness

While the image of Senegalese immigrants may seem bleak and filled with problems needing solutions, the social framework that has emerged in the last thirty years has shown some multicultural adoptions. Paris today contains many Senegalese and other African restaurants, markets, and radio stations, and other forms of ethnic penetration into French society. African immigrants have achieved prominence through the development of French rap and other 'world music' genres. Businesses are also responding to the demands of their Islamic patrons; some Quick and KFC restaurant chains have begun serving halal meat. While France may fear and attempt to stifle multicultural representations as the demise of French universalist traditions, undoubtedly some changes have occurred. As immigrant and ethnic communities demonstrate signs of

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[101] Gueye, "The Colony Strikes Back," 237.
[102] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France:Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society,* 140.

socially integrated identities, their existence proves that France too has acculturated. Shifting from *le creuset français*, France may be, in spite of itself, slowly embracing multiculturalism.

I will next explore the ways in which forms of ethnic culture represent the identities of immigrants in France and the ways in which they are perceived by their families and countrymen in Senegal. I also analyze the culture that has emerged in the *banlieues* amongst immigrant and youth of foreign origin. The ongoing struggle, in France and its former colonies, is to come to terms with the colonial past and its contemporary legacies. The next chapter will examine the influence of Senegalese perspectives of France on patterns of immigration, as well as the ways in which the colonial legacy manifests itself in both French and Senegalese attitudes.

CHAPTER THREE: EXPRESSIONS OF SENEGALESE IDENTITY IN FRANCE

Migration is a common symbol of Senegalese contemporary society; remittances play an important role in Senegal's economy and migrants are often celebrated for the efforts they make to support their families and communities. In countries of emigration, narratives about migrants as well as images of foreign countries in the context of migration often "become metaphors for thinking about social and cultural changes, which characterize the local contexts themselves."[103] Migration is an integral part of Senegalese society and has a mutual relationship with popular culture, each celebrating and perpetuating the other. In addition to objective observations, these subjective constructions made by everyday people are "important sources of identity," giving migrants both recognition and demanding expectations.[104] The expression of Senegalese perceptions of both migrants and Europe, particularly France, can be found through forms of popular culture.

The migrant as hero: El Dorado and life in the land of success

Emigration from Senegal to Europe is often seen as the 'El Dorado', the road to riches which will lead migrants and their families to wealth and success. This image has been spurred by a number of economic push in recent years. Since the colonial period, groundnuts have been the largest product of Senegal's agriculture-based economy. Due to drought, which has occurred cyclically since 1968, production has been irregular and hopes of developing Senegal's economy through agriculture have been limited. The drought has caused a large rural exodus from the 'groundnut basin' to the cities and

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[103] Bruno Riccio, "Talkin' about migration- some ethnographic notes on the ambivalent representation of migrants in comtemporary Senegal," *Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien (Sampling. Vienna Journal of critical African Studies)* 8, no. 5 (2005): 99.
[104] Ibid, 100.

abroad as people search for more stable work and better living conditions. Bruno Riccio, an Italian scholar of anthropology of migration who has done several studies about Senegalese migrants, quotes a Senegalese migrant who says that he is from the region where "if someone does not emigrate, it is because he has no legs to do so."[105]

The search for employment has been equally difficult for those with educations, as the public and industrial sectors have been constraining hiring for decades.[106] This lack of opportunities intensifies brain drain trends: an uneducated peddler who goes abroad is more likely to shows the signs of 'success' (by getting married with a lavish wedding, owning a house, and other expressions of material wealth) than an educated individual who stays in Senegal because of the lack of job opportunities. Riccio notes one migrant who left a post as a labor inspector to sell electric appliances abroad because he could have greater economic success.[107] Similarly, another interviewee observes that "mothers now want to marry their girls to rich migrants; they do not want to marry them to the brilliant students any more [sic]."[108] An evident shift in the valorization and identification of the migrant as wealthy and successful has occurred, working with economic push factors to encourage more and more Senegalese to migrate.

The important role of migrants in Senegalese society due to their remittances has also led to an idolization of the migrant figure. Migration is often seen almost as an obligation in order to look after the well-being of ones' family. Migrants are popular symbols in the songs of Senegalese musicians, who sing about migrants as the representatives of contemporary Senegalese society. Musicians such as Youssou N'Dour,

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[105] Riccio, "Talkin' about migration," 102.
[106] Ibid, 103.
[107] Ibid, 110-115.
[108] Ibid, 107.

a popular Senegalese artist, praise migrants for the efforts they have made to support their families, even from far away. The praise of migrants in music is particularly significant in Senegal, where music and the stories of *griots*, the traditional guardians of Senegal's oral history, are revered. In one of Youssou N'Dour's early songs, *immigrés/bitim rew*, he sings:

> We thank you and we pray for you
> Yes, Senegal is our country and when back we will sing about you[109]

The migrant as a successful, influential member of his community of origin has played a key role in perpetuating migratory patterns. Riccio notes the importance of this identification in comparison to the *modou modou*, or the rural migrants who can only find work abroad as peddlers but nevertheless return with the signs of economic success.[110] While they used to be disdained for their ignorance, these migrants are now seen as "idols and heroes."[111]

The image of France, still the primary destination of migrants who go abroad, plays an important role in migrant identity. France is still viewed by many as 'El Dorado' and the place of economic success. Fatou Diome's *l'homme de Barbès*, (the man from Barbès), is often asked, "[What] was it like over there, in Paris?" to which he responds with stories of France's luxury and splendor. "Ah! Life, over there! A real life of luxury!" Encouraging the logic of his listeners- "where dead men sleep in palaces, surely the

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[109] Youssou N'dour, "Immigrés/ bitim rew," *Immigrés* (1995).
[110] Bruno Riccio, "From 'ethnic group' to 'transnational community'? Senegalese migrants' ambivalent experiences and multiple trajectories," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2001): 595.
[111] Riccio, "Talkin' about migration," 102.

living must be dancing in paradise" –he says nothing of the socioeconomic realities that vary widely from the distorted constructions held in Africa.[112]

One of Youssou N'dour's songs, *Solidarité*, brings to mind Senegal's preoccupation with the *métropole* and explicates the realities of post-colonial immigration:

> Nasaran (French) it is you who told us we should live within equality
> Your aid does not suffice and is not clear
> Do not address your harsh policies (Immigration control) towards my people[113]

This attitude is similar to those expressed by the members of the *sans-papiers* movement: that France owes part of its success to the labor and resources of its colonies, both historically and in the present, yet ignores these contributions. Instead of compensation or thanks, immigrants are met with racism and exclusion.[114] Thus, this identity of the migrant as a man of success and wealth, which is often preserved by returnees, like *l'homme de Barbès*, who tells only stories of France's riches, hides the true realities of the life of a migrant.

Double exile: The realities of migrant identity

The bitter realities of the migrants' life in France are vividly expressed in two pieces from Senegalese artists; Fatou Diome's *Le Ventre d'Atlantique* (The Belly of the Atlantic) and Ousmane Sembene's film *Le Noire de…* (Black Girl). Both Diome's novel and Sembene's film explore the identity of the migrant as their protagonists struggle to integrate into French society and feel cut off from their Senegalese roots. Both pieces

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[112] Fatou Diome, *Le Ventre de l'Atlantique (The Belly of the Atlantic).* Translated by Lulu Norman and Ros Schwartz. (Paris: Anne Carrière, 2003) 55-56.

[113] Youssou N'Dour, "Solidarité," *Lii,* (2000). Translations from Wolof to English taken from Riccio, "Talkin' about migration," 105.

[114] Riccio, "Talkin' about migration," 102.

also deal with the post-colonial relationship between Senegal and France and its effects on the attitudes of both the French and Senegalese.

Le Ventre d'Atlantique, the first novel of Fatou Diome, a Senegalese woman who migrated to Strasbourg, explores the effects of both emigration and immigration. Dominic Thomas, a scholar of francophone literature, writes: "Diome's novel explicitly acknowledges the transcolonial nature of French-African relations… [and] endeavors to contribute to the process of demystifying the centrality of France as a construct for African youth circulating at the global periphery." Diome also goes "a step further" to propose "a solution to the 'virus de l'émigration'."[115] Throughout her story, Diome contrasts the lives on two Senegalese migrants in France: Salie, the young student who narrates the story, and the character known only as *l'homme de Barbès*, the man from Barbès, who is atypical *modou modou* who emigrates to France and returns with wealth and glamorous stories. By contrasting these two characters, Diome demonstrates the grim difference between the way migrants are perceived by their Senegalese countrymen and reality.

L'homme de Barbès weaves tales of his luxurious life in France, but the money that renders him relatively wealthy in Senegal hides the true realities of his daily life. Barbès, a Parisian neighborhood, is an area of Paris that "has become inextricable associated with the African disapora in France" and which is characterized by the "immigrant underclass."[116] Diome uses the title *l'homme de Barbès* to symbolize the

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[115] Dominic Thomas, *Black France: Colonialism, Immigration, and Transnationalism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press): 2007. Chapter first published as: "African Youth in the Global Economy: Fatou Diome's Le ventre de l'Atlantique," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Volume 26, Number 2, 2006, pp. 243-259, (Duke University Press).
[116] Thomas, *Black France,* 249.

reality of his migrant experience and his identity as part of France's marginalized communities. He perpetuates Senegalese perceptions in order to preserve his "status," but in reality his "wretched existence" in France involved the same excluded experiences as many other immigrants; in France he was often greeted only as "Sambo," the immigrant with no identity.[117]

For Salie, the migrant experience is also one of marginalization. In France, she is marginalized from French society, and she is also an outsider in her village in Senegal.[118] Salie speaks often with her younger half brother, Madické, who still lives in Senegal and whose sole dream is to move to France as a professional soccer player. Through Madické, Diome demonstrates the preoccupation of Senegalese youth with the need to immigrate to France in order to find success. Salie, instead, describes the socio-economic realities of life in France as a Black African and the racism and exclusion she meets. She reflects, "How many work-filled days and sleepless nights still separate me from that so-called success that my people, on the other hand, took for granted from the moment I told them I was leaving for France?"[119] Madické, who wants Salie to help him come to France, cannot comprehend that her life is anything other than one of wealth and luxury, as other migrants claim. He thinks she is being selfish and unwilling to help her family; "you're so westernized! And now Miss high-and-mighty criticizes our customs!"[120] Salie, saddened by his perception of her life in France, wonders how she can make him "understand the loneliness of exile, [her] fight for survival."[121] "In Europe," she says,

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[117] Diome, *Le Ventre de l'Atlantique,* 59-60.
[118] Thomas, 256-57.
[119] Diome, 3.
[120] Ibid, 96.
[121] Ibid, 26.

"you're black, first, citizens incidentally, outsiders permanently, and that's certainly not written in the constitution, but some can read it on your skin."[122] Salie demonstrates the feelings of marginalized immigrants, who are living a life of double exile: they encounter exclusion and racism in France, and face resentment from home as none can imagine that the "*éden européen*" is far from a life in paradise. When Salie returns to Senegal to visit her village, she feels equally is called a "*Francenabé*" (an African who has become French) and greeted with "welcome to our country."[123] Unable to be part of French society, she has also been excluded from her own community.

Ousmane Sembene, a Senegalese film writer and director, is one of the first and most influential African filmmakers. Diouana, the protagonist of Sembene's first film *Le Noire de...*, conveys many of the same feels of alienation as Salie as she feels alienated and misunderstood by both cultures. Diouana takes a job as a nanny for a French couple and later accepts their offer to return with them to France, dreaming of the wealth she will have and the envy of her friends. However, when she arrives in France, she is treated as a domestic servant and finds her life far different from her expectations. She wonders: "What am I here? Cook? Housemaid? Washerwoman? …I spend my life between my bedroom and the kitchen. Is that living in France?"[124] She begins to see her job and the treatment of her employers as little more than paid slavery, and soon Diouana realizes that the portrayal of France that is so popular in Senegal has little to do with the reality. Eventually, she can longer tolerate the complaints of her "Mistress," whose outrage toward Diouana is "a byproduct of the expectations that the economic exploitation of

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[122] Diome, *Le Ventre de l'Atlantique,* 126.
[123] Ibid, 139.
[124] Ousmane Sembene, *Le Noire de... (Black Girl)* (Filmi Domirev 1966).

France's African imperialism have given her," and Diouana takes her own life.[125] Reflecting Sembene's own sentiments about the neo-colonization of Africa through immigration, the film also conveys Diouana's sense of unbelonging. The title *Le Noire de…* directly translated means 'the Black girl of…' Diouana has no identity, being neither the Black girl of Senegal nor the Black girl of France.

Daniel Vigne's 2001 film *Fatou la Malienne* (Fatou the Malian) offers a more modern perspective of life in France for second-generation youth of immigrant origin. Fatou, a young girl born in France to Malian parents, dreams of becoming a fashion hairstylist and "*créatrice*" (creative designer). The film represents the fragile identity of second-generation youth, who often experience alienation from both French culture and their parent's culture. When Fatou announces her dream to her parents, they are angry that she is disregarding the education opportunities available to her by choosing a traditional African profession. When she proves adamant, they turn to more traditional thinking and arrange a marriage. Fatou represents the alienation of many youth as she does not wish to accept the decision of her parents, which by the tradition of her parents' culture she cannot refuse. At the same time, she and her brother are asked during the beginning of the film to "show their papers," or identity cards, in order to prove their legal status in France, demonstrating that they are not considered as French by other members of French society. In the next section, I will examine the emergence of rap in France as a voice of these isolated youth.

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[125] Eric Henderson, "Black Girl: Movie Review," *Slant Magazine* (December 30, 2005).

The voice of 'ethnic' France: *Le mouv'* **and rap as an expression of identity**

The societal stigmatization of ethnic youth in France, who are often excluded or segregated due to socio-economic conditions, as discussed in chapter two, has given rise to many forms of 'ethnic expression' in French popular culture. The children of immigrants, who are considered *étrangers* without French citizenship until the age of 18, have a particularly vulnerable position in French society. Adolescence is the period in which individuals construct their identity, which are most influenced by family and societal interactions. For the children of immigrants in France, constructing an identity can be difficult due to the difference between the way they are perceived by society and the way in which they perceive themselves. Having been born in France and having grown up in the French cultural context, these children may identify themselves as 'French'. On the other hand, these children are often identified as immigrants or foreign by members of French society. This identity clash is worsened by the discrimination and exclusion experienced by second-generation youth, who desire to define themselves as French or who wish to identify with their parents' culture and who are treated differently from other French youth. The frustration and confusion stemming from their attempts to valorize their identities have given rise to the rap culture in France, in which sentiments of social exclusion and ethnic solidarity are expressed. Chris Warne, a French history scholar, writes:

> France's marginalized youth [have] favored the emergence of more culturally
> based forms of political and social world views, among which music is
> particularly significant. Younger participants…from France's marginalized outer-
> city suburbs …frequently express empathy with the experience of the African

diaspora. French hip-hop finds itself at the margins: it has resonated the most amongst young …faced with the failure of traditions (either of working-class culture and political activism, or of the cultures of their immigrant parents), these young people have been forced to invent their own. In doing so, they raise important questions …as to what constitutes 'Frenchness.' …and about the role of popular culture in France. …at its heart, the movement addresses notions of identity, what it means to belong or to be on the margins.[126]

Rap emerged in France in the mid-1980s, following the footsteps of the U.S. rap movement. The first French rap release, 'rapattitude' was released in 1990, the same year MC Solaar released his first single "bouge de là," which is credited as starting the political rap movement in France.[127] MC Solaar, who was born in Senegal to Chadian parents, moved to the Paris *banlieue* (exact?) as a child. When the rap movement began, rappers were mostly "*des jeunes issus de l'immigration*" (second-generation youth), and MC Solaar describes his fans as "95% mélanos-antilles ou africains."[128] Rap quickly grew in popularity as these youth began to use rap as a political voice to speak out in resistance against socio-economic exclusion and racism and bring attention to the marginalized status of the ethnic populations living in the *banlieues*. Referred to as *le Mouv'* (the move[ment]), rap began to explore and rebuff the ideological foundations of exclusion and racism, verbalizing an anti-nationalist identity and rejecting the 'republican' integration model of French "race relations."[129]

Axiom, a French-Moroccan rapper, wrote a song verbalizing these ideas during the 2005 riots. Titled '*ma lettre au president,*" (my letter to the president) the lyrics reflect the sentiments of the discontent youth:

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[126] Chris Warne, "The Impact of World Music in France," In *Post-Colonial Cultures in France*, edited by Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney (London: Routledge, 1997) 142.

[127] Steven Cannon, "Paname City Rapping: B-boys in the Banlieues and Beyond." In *In Post-Colonial Cultures in France*, edited by Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney, (London: Routledge, 1997) 153.

[128] Ibid, 153.

[129] Ibid, 162.

Je suis français, ai grandi dans les quartiers populaires
Mes grands-parents ont défendu ce pays pendant la guerre
Mes parents eux aussi l'ont reconstruite cette république
Rappelez-vous ces ouvriers qu'on a fait venir d'Afrique
Et Leurs enfants ignorés par le droit du sol
Citoyens de seconde zone, de la naissance à l'école
J'accuse trente ans de racisme et d'ignorance
La répression sans prévention en France
La Discrimination, à l'embauche, à l'emploi, cela va sans dire
…laisse une jeunesse sans avenir.[130]

Axiom's lyrics express the discontent of this young, ethnically diverse and socially excluded sector, who speak out to political leaders about need for both structural and social change.[131] These rappers represented the identity of these youth who were excluded from French society as different and who sought to voice their protest against this discrimination.

Articulating French post-colonial identities is another important component of rap lyrics. The movement rejects colonialist attitudes, which continue have a continued presence in the French education system through the distortion of African and Maghreb history, and which reinforce social and economic exclusion.[132] Rappers seek to use their lyrics to bring attention to France's colonial history by emphasizing, as Axiom does, the important role of Africans in French history. Soprano, a rapper of Comorian descent, writes:

J'aurais été chez Kunta Kinte ou sur Gorée

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[130] Translation: I am French, I grew up the poor neighborhoods/ My grandparents defended this country during the war/ My parents, they also rebuilt the republic/ Remember these workers that we brought in from Africa/ And their children ignored by the *droit du sol*/ Second-class citizens, from birth to the school/ I accuse thirty years of racism and ignorance/ Suppression without prevention in France/ Discrimination in hiring, employment, that goes without saying/ ...leaves a youth without a future. Axiom, "Ma lettre au President," *A Vote* (2005).

[131] Chris Warne, "Articulating identity from the margins: Le Mouv' and the rise of hip-hop and ragga in France," In *Voices of France: Social, Political, and Cultural Identity*, by Màire Cross and Sheila Perry (London: A Cassell Imprint 1997) 136.

[132] Cannon, "Paname City Rapping," 162.

> Pour leurs donner des fusils avant que les colons arrivent
> J'aurais été voir les tirailleurs africains
> Pour leur dire qu'on traite leurs enfants de sales immigrés[133]

In these lyrics, he makes reference to symbols of the enslavement of Africans and French colonization, echoing the same critique that their descendants, to which France has an obligation, are being mistreated. Calling for France to be accountable for its past actions reinforces their demand for a change in French policies to meet the needs of post-colonial immigrants and of French youth of immigrant origin. As the historical colonial framework is rejected, it is accompanied by a revalorization of an African identity.[134] MC Solaar, in his song 'Les colonies' (the colonies) compares France's colonial oppression of Africa to today's exploitation of the third world and the poor conditions that have caused Africans to migrate to France:[135]

> On a connu les colonies, l'anthropophage économie
> La félonie, la traite d'esclaves, la dette, le F.M.I.
> Bruno, Jean-Marie, si j'cours j'ai des raisons[136]

While rap has been a means to assert a resistance to their social exclusion in France, many rappers admit that their own experiences have been different, that they are "caught between two cultures." While they have pride in Africa and wish to promote Black solidarity, they "acknowledge being deeply rooted in the French urban context" and disconnected from their parents' native lands.[137] The unique context of France's

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[133]Translation: I would have gone to Kunta Kinte's or to Gorée/To give them guns before the colonizers arrived/I would have gone to see the African *tirailleurs*/To tell them that we treat their children like dirty immigrants. Soprano, "Hiro," *La Colombe* (2010).

[134] Cannon, "Paname City Rapping," 162.

[135] Veronique Helenon, "Africa on their Mind: Rap, Blackness, and Citizenship in France," Chap. 10 in *The Vinyl ain't Final: Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Popular Culture*, edited by Dipannita Basu and Sidney J. Lemelle, 151-166. (London: Pluto Press, 2006) 153.

[136] Translation: We have known the colonies the cannibal economy/ Felony, the slave trade, debt, the IMF/ Bruno, Jean-Marie, if I run I have my reasons. MC Solaar "Les colonies," *Cinquième as* (2001).

[137] Helenon, "Africa on their Mind," 158.

banlieues is *Le Mouv'*s driving force and also allows for ethnic diversity and solidarity. Unlike American ghettos, the French cites are racially mixed, including many immigrants and also poor white populations. Many French rap groups are comprised of members not only from black Africa but also from North Africa and the Caribbean. Similarly, white rappers are well accepted into the movement. Steven Cannon, a French and music scholar, notes, "Rap expresses a collective identity of the oppressed, marginalized and ethnic solidarity. These expressions of collective identity and resistance transcend the divisions that are ever more openly fostered by the French state."[138] MC Solaar emphasizes the importance of creating a collective cultural identity through his use of multiple languages in his lyrics in order to appeal to a collective experience, rather than a common origin.

For these youth, rap has emerged out of the particular context of France's ideological immigration debate: for youth who know no country other than France, yet are excluded from joining the French identity, rap has become a means to verbalize a cultural identity around their collective experience. To express their identity and the need for a wider acceptance of multiculturalism in French society, these youth of immigrant descent have taken up the mantra of one of MC Solaar's songs which cries "lève-toi et rap!"[139]

As each of these cases shows, forms of popular culture both reflect and contribute to the production of cultural identity. Senegalese songs and tales celebrate the success of migrants, often hiding the realities and challenges that are the migrant's daily struggles. Migrant writings such as Diome's novel and Sembene's film reveal the double exile of

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[138] Cannon, "Paname City Rapping," 163.
[139] MC Solaar, "Lève-toi et rap," *Cinquième as* (2001).

the migrant who is marginalized from both sides. Last, with the youth population and second generation we see the emergence of rap as a new form of popular culture, expressing a unique identity, multicultural mélange rising from the collective experience of France's excluded. As each of these forms of expression brings attention to the experiences and identities of immigrants in France, they announce the need for France to acknowledge its colonial past and come to term with its legacy. Rap's growing popularity within the youth population may be a sign that French society is beginning, albeit without complete consent, to acknowledge its multicultural composition.

CONCLUSION

It is impossible to deny that France's immigrant populations have changed the landscape of French society: through the existence of ethnic businesses, through movements such as that of the *sans-papiers*, and with the growing presence of a distinct youth culture, France's immigrants and youth of foreign origin are asserting themselves and becoming more visible in French society. I have demonstrated with psychological and sociological research that immigrants most desire a bicultural identity, an identity in which they can retain some elements of their ethnocultural identity while adopting some values of French society. I argued that for most Senegalese immigrants France, a bicultural identity is impossible due to socio-economic exclusion and the reluctance of French society to accept multiculturalism. I have also argued that immigration can be a highly stressful and conflictive experience for many migrants, who face expectations both from home and French society that they are unable to meet. I have shown that the migrant experience is an important element of Senegalese culture, as demonstrated through mediums such as songs, films, and novels. I have also demonstrated the importance of verbalizing one's identity and experiences, whether as a form of protest or celebration.

The pertinent question now is how France will evolve. For migrants to become truly integrated into French society and for bicultural identities to thrive, France must undergo massive structural and ideological changes that at this time France is not ready to initiate. However, the acceptance of multiculturalism is an important step for France as a democracy, both socially and economically. For France to be a truly democratic state, it must address the social and economic structures that are causing exclusion and discrimination amongst its society. Immigrants and their descendants are an important

sector of France's economy, and France needs to accept their presence and visibility as a part of French society. The simple fact may be that migration is a continuous phenomenon that France must inevitably accept, and the incontestability of this phenomenon may lead to positive change.

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