

**To Belong or Not To Belong:
Ethnic, Religious and National Identities among second
and third-generation Algerians in a Post-Colonial France.**

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Abstract

Discrimination and segregation continue to affect North-African groups, who are often negatively portrayed as the 'other' and denied the opportunity to claim an ethnic and/or religious identity. Current literature suggests that the topic of ethnic minority identifications and assimilation is more developed in the US than in France. The lack of research is explained by the absence of official censuses on ethnicity, race, and religion. The area of race, ethnicity and religion remains somehow taboo in the colour-blind France. Therefore, many areas remain overlooked and unexplored by social scientists. Using a qualitative methodology, twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted (ten with the second-generation and ten with the third), this research aims to explore the ethnic, religious, and national identity of second and third generation Algerians in France. The research findings support that the Algerian identity in France is indivisible from the colonial past. It unpacks identity mechanisms and strategies adopted by the participants to make sense of their ethnic, religious and national identity in the French post-colonial, assimilationist and colour-blind context. Furthermore, this study discusses patterns of intergenerational identity negotiation, including ethnic revival, reactivity, and reconciliation. Finally, this research challenges the notion of straight-line assimilation for second and third-generation Algerians and supports the idea of segmented assimilation instead. The study highlights the overlapping of exclusion based on ethnicity, religion, social status, economics, and residential location, which has led to the emergence of new identity trends among the second and third generations of Algerians.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for a degree or other qualification at this University or elsewhere. All sources are acknowledged as references.

A. SAIDANI

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I. Introduction

After Algeria's independence, the French Republic felt a sense of trepidation around the development of an Algerian identity in France. This period has greatly shaped how the French state dealt with ethnic and religious identities within its territory. As Shepard (2013) explains, it reinforced the idea of a French model in the nation-state where ethnic origins or faith are constantly rejected for the benefit of an overhanging French identity. With Algerians making up the largest ethnic population in France and the rapid spread of Islam, social tensions were almost inevitable in a secular country like France (Croucher 2008). The mass Algerian immigration was immediately questioned and problematized due to concerns around their cultural and religious differences and their perceived inability to assimilate, seen as a prominent threat to French identity. These reactions quickly revealed the French mentality in the post-colonial era and marked a shift towards persistent forms of ethno-racial discriminations, enabled by political and media discourses (Loyal 2009). During the 80s, immigration reached an unprecedented scale on the political front, often framed as a matter of “control or invasion” or “integration or crisis” (Bonhning 1991 cited in Silverstein 2004, p.21). Political debates on immigration, from left and right wing parties, shifted towards blaming second-generation Algerians for national problems such as delinquency, education, economic crisis and residential issues (Silverstein 2004; Bowen 2007).

Bourdieu (1961) points out the contradictory principle of the singular assimilation and integration model of the French former colonial state. A model that unmask a frustrated colonial past and a lingering desire to force assimilation onto the Algerians. To deny them having an original culture and ethnic practices/values while always portraying them; as the negative other. Nilsson (2018), in his extensive and spectacular analysis of secularism in France, talks about the appropriation of a Muslim-other. Indeed, Algerians and, subsequently, the Muslim community have been portrayed as a threat to Laïcité and accused of reinforcing communitarianism, back by media and political manipulation. From this negative portrayal ensued the voting of a number of restrictive secularist laws, starting with la-Loi-2004. This law was a turning point in contemporary French history, and many agreed that it would lead to further social issues without addressing the real problems of integration in France (Bowen, 2007). By enforcing this law, politicians and voters believed it would reinforce the French motto of 'Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite' (Bowen, 2007). However, some argued that it led to religious persecution rather than cohesion. Politics were blamed for stirring religious

and political struggles in France for Muslims, and creating more exclusion towards minorities (Croucher, 2009). This whole post-colonial context has aroused a sensationalist reaction from the political body as well as the public consciousness leading to the creation of a special status for Algerians and subsequently for Muslims in France.

From 1990 onwards, studies have highlighted that French-born children and grandchildren of former colonised populations sense a feeling of exclusion from the national scene (Saada 2017). French society is often seen as having a limited tolerance for multiculturalism and diversity in the social sphere, and French nationality is sometimes used to reinforce distinctions between the national in-group and out-groups (Lamont 1995). However, certain ethnic minorities, such as North-Africans, despite being French citizens are still perceived as out-groups. There is a large concern around the fact that youths of North-African origins have been “born, brought up, educated, and socialized” in France (Addi 1993, p.222), but are still not included as part of the national group. Furthermore, these representations reflect a process of racialisation of social relationships in France, thus, correlatively diminishing the relevance of the French nationality for specific minority groups. To the extent that the French nationality does not protect them from exclusion and does not give them the same privileges held by the majority group, or by other White groups.

In modern-day immigration societies, the dominant order may either eradicate or adopt ethnic and religious subcultures, leading to questions about which groups are legitimately accepted and who is seen as deviant on the national scene (Edensor, 2016). However, the poor management of new ethnicities in France has created a discomfort vis-a-vis immigration, identity and citizenships within the nation-state (Silverstein 2004), which resulted in difficulties from individuals to negotiate their identities and navigate their sense of self. Therefore, this research aims to explore the ethnic (Algerian), religious (Muslim), and national (French) identities of second and third generation Algerians in France, because, how does one negotiate their ethnic, religious and national identity in a Republic whose essence is, according to Nilsson (2018), essentially exclusionary? This research analyses the concept of the second and third-generation, their characteristics, and the social contexts in which they emerged.

The thesis is structured as follows: Chapter II presents a literature review of various concepts, theories, and recent studies, identifying gaps and overlooked areas. It also present the research questions. Chapter III provides a detailed account of the methodology adopted, justifies the methodological choice, and reflects on my role as a researcher. Next, Chapter IV presents the research findings and discusses their correlation or contradiction with recent literature. Finally, chapter V identifies the key findings, areas for future research, research limitations, and concluding remarks.

II. Literature Review

1. Dimensions of Identity

This section explores two predominant theories of identity, SIT and IT, providing an account on how identity is understood, achieved and performed.

1.1. Theoretical views of identity.

Identity is a complex concept composed of a mosaic of social identities such as gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, religion, or class. Identity is demanding because it is always in movement and in a constant state of formation and negotiation (Hall & du Gay 1996; Feliciano and Rumbaut 2018). To understand identity, one needs to unfold theories around its performative aspect and the processes it involves. Identity is highly influenced by its surroundings, the latter being impacted by external factors such as government, institution, school, or work settings, as well as internal factors like ethnicity, religion, or family (Kabir 2010; Andreouli and Howarth 2014). There are formal and informal goals in identity. Formal, such as finding a job or improving one's living standards, and informal, such as defining one's position in society, gaining a greater sense of self-esteem, distancing oneself from a hurtful past, etc. (Abdessadek 2012).

Two dominant theories deal with the informal part of identity: Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Identity Theory (IT). Both theories place individuals as valued and socially integrated, which strengthens their perceptions of being a valuable addition to society and accepted as such (Stets and Burke 2000; Stets and Burke 2014). SIT refers to social groups or categories as “a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category” (Stets and Burke 2000, p.225). Stets and Burke (2000) see similarities in both theories and propose using them in combination to develop a more general theory of the self in identity field. According to SIT, the construction of one's identity enforces an interactive relationship between an individual and their group of socialisation (Stets and Burke 2000; Cherif 2007). Identity cannot be performed alone, as it is both individual and group-centred (Kabir 2010). Facets of identity such as ethnicity, religion, and nationality are constantly self-verified in the presence of others. Individuals constantly test out their identity through identity markers and seek validation from others, this is what Stets and Burke (2014, p.415) refer to as “the verification of identity” in IT or “Depersonalisation” in SIT (Tajfel and Turner 1979); when individuals receive

acceptance from the group, their identity is verified, therefore they feel worthwhile and a constituent element of society. In other words, their social belongingness is endorsed. Stets and Burke (2014) argue that when someone activates a particular facet of their identity in a given situation, meanings are sent out and received. These meanings are then monitored and interpreted by other individuals, providing valuable input into the identity process. The authors explain that how others see a person and the feedback they provide is crucial and meaningful to the self-perception of one's identity. Once an identity is deeply internalized and becomes strongly manifest, it is recognised by others as a “master identity”, and this master identity will then impact and influence the meanings of all one's other identities (Stets and Burke 2014, p.416). SIT and IT pose that some identities are prevalent or more powerful than others (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Identity is a constant game of verification and validation, of displaying who we are or think we tend to be and being validated and recognised by others. In this way, it increases sentiments of authenticity. People have a sense of being recognised for who they are, of their true selves. Individuals are decision-makers regarding which identity they want to claim and manifest but these are always determined by specific social contexts (Younge 2005; McCrone and Bechhofer 2015).

Both theories work in tandem emphasizing that the self is multi-dimensional and powerful, mediating between social structures and individual behaviour (Hogg et al. 1995). IT is closely linked to symbolic interactionism which poses that society has a significant influence on the self, which affects social behaviour (Mead 1934). Symbolic interactionism contends that the self is a product of social interaction. In IT, the self reflects the broader social structure; the identity of the self is formed by a compilation of role positions occupied by the person (Hogg et al. 1995). This is in line with Tajfel (1981) who argued that recognition from others has a major impact on how people value their identities; when identities are devalued by the mainstream, groups engage in social strategies to promote positive group identities and repair the misrecognition to reduce stigma and prejudice. Identity negotiation also works through these stigmatising representations as it leads targeted groups and individuals to engage in strategies, individually or socially, for dealing with and healing from, where they try to advance new or ameliorated representations of the in-group to the out-group (Andreouli & Howarth 2014). Ultimately, who we are is equally important as who we are not. Group memberships are crucial in the construction of one's identity, they provide a table for understanding and navigating the self between the in-group and out-group.

Overall, viewing identity as a volatile process rather than a static category provides the flexibility that Brubaker and Cooper (2000) sought when they argued for replacing the word 'identity', made too fluid by essentialists, with 'affinities, affiliations, forms of belonging, experiences, connectedness, and cohesion, self-understanding and self-identification' (p.2).

1.2. Ethnic, Religious and National Identities

This section explores sociological definitions of ethnic, religious and national identity and how ethnicity and religion as identity concepts intertwine. It will then discuss their connection to the concept of habitus.

a) Definitions

Ethnicity¹ refers to sharing common characteristics with a group such as race, nationality, language, religion, collective history, and memory (Song 2003). For Nagel (1994) ethnicity cannot be defined as a straightforward process nor as a simple legacy of migration but as a constant redefinition, reconstruction, or revival of its components. Moreover, he argues that culture and history are the main factors of ethnicity as they provide the base to build up ethnic meaning. Within the walls of a particular ethnicity, culture sets the rules, and it is only by acting within these rules that one performs an authentic ethnic identity as it matches the expectations set by cultural lifeways e.g. language, religion, music, art, dress, food, traditions, etc. Ethnic formation is a psychological as well as a social process involving labels of consonance and dissonance which forms the US and THEM, often based on markers such as language, religion, nationality, and phenotypes (Rumbaut 2008). Ethnic identification is overall a cognitive process of self-categorization and self-distinction, highlighting labels and a double relation to categories; that of membership and that of divergence (Rumbaut 2008). Put simply, ethnicity is a socially constructed and enabled identity that benefits from a range of ethnic choices that are more or less prominent depending on a given social situation. This results in what McBeth (1989, cited in Nagel 1994 p.154) coined as "a layering of ethnic identities" as opposed to a single and stable ethnic identity. The term layering implies the ambiguity and problematic nature of ethnic identity. The main activity of ethnicity is constructing

1 The term ethnicity and race are not used interchangeably throughout this research. They are seen as two different concepts that produce different meanings in the social world.

boundaries and producing meanings (Nagel 1994). Additionally, ethnicity is seen by Alba (2005, p.22) as ' a distinction that individuals make in their everyday lives and that shapes their actions and mental orientations towards others; and it is typically embedded in a variety of social and cultural differences between groups'.

For individuals who value religion as being an integral part of their lives, belonging to a religious group is crucial. Like ethnicity, they often benefit from a strong bond with their in-group and a clear demarcation from the out-group (Alba 2005; Croucher 2008). Religious identity deals with boundaries, likeness, and otherness, and is influenced by how powerful external and internal structures preserve or contest religious distinctions (Werbner 2010). Individuals can be guided by their religiosity in various aspects of their everyday lives, small actions and behaviours, and the meaning of their actions or interactions, as opposed to secular individuals, which is particularly true for Muslim groups (Croucher 2008). For Anthony and Ziebertz (2012), religious identity is the self-interpretation of a religious belonging recognised by the wider audience (be it a person, the dominant group, or the institution). In other words, it is one's appropriation and recognition of a religious affiliation translated into beliefs and practices. Religious identity is a conjunction between the subjectivity of the self that is identity and the sacred that embodies religion, and often resurfaces when endangered by institutions or other intrusive groups (Werbner 2010). Remarkably, Werbner (2010) argues that what differentiates ethnic or national identities from religious identity is the universality of its character; that is to say, religion transcends the local and the national, and represents a form of transnational identity.

Lastly, as all models of identity primarily take place in national settings, the nation persists in being a predominant element of one's identity. In other words, all aspects of one's identity operate within national space (Edensor 2016). National identity is commonly defined as demonstrating continued loyalty to the nation, integration into the majority, acceptance of its values and norms, and a high level of language proficiency (Kabir 2010). While some value more national, civic and territorial ties, others have more salient ethnic and cultural ties. Triandafyllidou (1998) defines the nation as the most relevant source of collective identity. Some societies sought standardised forms of national identity through a unified language, culture, and education therefore reinforcing the attachment to the nation. Mass education and public schools are crucial in constructing one's national belonging as they bind together state and culture whose values and norms are expected

to be performed by all citizens of the nation (Edensor 2016). To understand the notion of national identity we need to clarify that the nation is not an independent and autonomous entity, it is essentially defined and asserted through its relationship to the 'significant others', usually ethnic groups perceived to threaten its purity (Triandafyllidou 1998, p.594). National identity, like other social identities, relies on the notion of the 'other', leading to a complex relationship between the nation and those deemed unsuitable for it (Triandafyllidou 1998). Overall, national identity is a social and cultural construct that implies the reification of the nation to make sense of the meaning of national identity (Edensor 2016).

Identity studies often demonstrate that ethnicity and religion overlap (Song 2003). Some ethnicities are intrinsically linked to their dominant faith. Karpov et al. (2012, p.639) talk about an “interconnectedness between religion and ethnicity”. The fusion between ethnicity and religion is often used for immigrant groups in receiving societies (Karpov et al. 2012). Religion is a defining component of one's ethnic identity as it is one of the foundations of ethnicity through specific shared beliefs and traditions (Abramson 1979). However, when an ethnic group is tightly linked to a specific faith, all group members will be regarded as belonging to that faith, regardless of their actual individual beliefs and practices, Karpov et al. (2012, p.642) refer to it as “presumption of inborn faithfulness”. However, one can belong to a different ethnic and religious group (Baker 2013). Therefore, there is a need to distinguish ethnicity and religion in terms of group-based position and belonging. Finally, Karpov et al. (2012) argue that for some groups, there is an actual intersection between ethnicity, religion, and nationality without each of them being the same.

b) Habitus

Although the concept of habitus is infrequently associated with ethnicity, this section will demonstrate how they can be connected. Loyal (2009) believes that Bourdieu's work provides numerous sociological perspectives on social relations in regard to habitus, ethnicity, race, and migration. Noble (2013) tried to analyse the notions of identity construction and negotiation through the lens of Bourdieu's habitus. He introduces the idea of an “ethnicised habitus” to interpret how immigrants and their descendants can simultaneously be part of the dominant society as well as being attached to the minority group. Franceschelli and O'Brien (2015,p.700) explore how the habitus can operate in multiple social fields that highly differ from its domestic

one. They want to explore whether identity and habitus share the same performative system. The system implies individuals internalising and reproducing elements of their social worlds while negotiating their dispositions within cultural and national contexts. A system by which individuals act under the influence of broader structural conditions that reflect their practices, beliefs, values, and tastes. However, Noble (2013) criticizes the unifying principle of Bourdieu's theory of habitus and the social field as being one-dimensional. Moreover, Bourdieu did not focus enough on the possibility for the habitus to be less methodical and more fluctuating (Franceschelli and O'Brien 2015) although its system of dispositions is clearly disrupted when undergoing processes of migration.

As the formation of habitus, despite its transposable dispositions, is developed within the social, cultural, economic, and political domains of the home country, its dislocation in the host country is likely to generate social and psychological distress and suffering (Sayad 2004, Loyal 2009). The migrant habitus is expected to fully adapt while it has just been born upon the moment of arrival into the new society. Habitus is expected to abandon previous dispositions and legacies of the past; however, its performative aspect is not just binary in terms of old and new, homeland and receiving country, an ethnicised habitus does not reflect a straightforward process of adaptation between the habitus and its new fields (Noble 2013). Sayad (2004) talks about the “double absence of the migrant” who is neither in the motherland nor in the new country. He also talks about a double consciousness that inhabits migrants, as their habitus have now a dualistic nature, that induces suffering in the challenging task of negotiating it. This analysis focuses on the condition of the migrant and its changing habitus. However, it does not refer to the second or third generations. Therefore one may wonder if this contradictory tension of the immigrant habitus can be passed onto future generations, and in the case of this research, to the second and third Algerians generations in France. To this interrogation, Loyal (2009, p.424) talks about a ‘profound incoherence characterizing their habitus’ that has created a pronounced psychological turmoil and complex self-construction for Algerians in France and subsequent generations, leaving them resigning at times, yet without neglecting their abilities to resist the symbolic violent of assimilation policies by coping through fastidious identity mechanisms.

3. Boundaries

Social categorisation has brought forward a formal recognition of in-groups and out-groups (Karpov et al. 2012). In constructing identities, we establish boundaries. In negotiating and performing these identities, these boundaries are set to vary. When boundaries are strongly established, Alba (2005) refers to them as “clear”. Clear boundaries reduce the likelihood of identity crisis. Blurred boundaries occur when the social delineation of a boundary is disturbed so that individuals cannot determine their place- belonging and struggle to define distinctions for group membership.

The creation of boundaries in immigration societies is path-dependent; it hinges on the receiving context, the History, the dominant culture, and immigrants' characteristics, among other things (Alba 2005). According to Nagel (1994), ethnic identity is directly allied with boundaries. Boundaries are constructed in social and private spheres of citizenship, religion, language, and race (Alba 2005, p.22). They are tools that define who belongs to the group and who cannot. This theory of boundaries to define patterns of assimilation and exclusion for second-generation immigrants. The nature of the boundary sets the distance that separates ethnic individuals from the natives; when the boundary is bright, the individual is clear on where to stand. When it is blurred and assimilation comes into play, we talk about boundary crossing which is described as the attempt of leaving a group for another, with a non-negligible social and psychological strain, thinning of ethnic membership, and uncertainty about acceptance. The last modus operandi is boundary-shifting, which implies the transfer of a boundary and the shifting of position for individuals: once outsiders become insiders (Alba 2005).

Boundary shifting does happen in modern-day immigration societies but necessitates a longer period of monitoring and long-term research. Besides, it is not yet detectable in the same way it was for the descendants European immigrants, who are now regarded as white Americans or French rather than individuals from a minority group. This shift represents a transition from being an ethnic minority to being fully accepted and blended into the majority group (Song 2003, Alba 2005). Indeed, boundaries around race are even more complex as it is conceptually unnavigable for some phenotypes (Alba 2005). Although named bright or blurred, boundaries differ from one another, and their nature can be variable. To grasp the theoretical concept of boundaries is to

understand that they are a product of History; they are produced and framed from cultural, social, and legal material. They act in diverse ways and different spheres, that is what makes their essence a sociologically intricate one (Alba 2005)

Like ethnicity, religion represents a large domain of boundary formation. As society and its relation to religion changed, boundaries have moved to give way to alternative beliefs and practices, particularly significant for Jews and Christians (Alba 2005), which has given them the opportunity to attain parity with the majority. However, such claims are rarely applied to Muslims in the literature. Ethnicity and religion affiliations are also crafted through how one group is perceived in society and the sanctions or rewards that seem to be affiliated with them (Nagel 1994), which influences the nature of boundaries. Moreover, as Alba (2005) notes, this type of boundary blurring can only happen if the established culture and identity in the receiving society allow for the inclusion of cultural elements from minority groups, which as this research will demonstrate, is not a straightforward process for North-Africans and Muslims in France.

2. Identity negotiation & assimilation in minorities.

This section explores key concepts about the different forms of negotiation ethnicity can take in different ethnic groups, as well as focusing on immigrant assimilations theories.

2.1. Active and Passive Ethnicity

All ethnic choices are “socially and politically defined” bound with some advantages on one hand, or stigma and discrimination on the other (Nagel 1994, p.155). That is where the power of race comes into play and reinforces the White vs. ethnic minorities boundary in society. While unofficially some ethnicities are voluntarily manufactured, others are compulsory and imposed on individuals. Therefore, the concept of ethnic identity being a personal choice is only partially true (Song 2003, Alba 2005). Ethnic identity can be both an option for some and an obligation for others depending on which ethnic group one is affiliated with. For instance, there is a consensus among theorists regarding the weakening, and even vanishing, of ethnic identities of White European immigrants and their descendants in the US or Europe, explained by unshaken patterns of assimilation. (Nagel 1994; Song 2003; Alba 2005; Rumbaut 2008). In this case, we do not only talk about assimilation but also acculturation. What was once an ethnic self-identity has shifted to a facultative form of “symbolic ethnicity” (Gans 1979) or “passive ethnic identity” (Song 2003).

It is argued that individuals of White groups usually benefit from a greater margin in selecting ethnic identities, if claiming one at all, most likely based on some mixed European ancestries, verified or imagined (Song 2003). As a result, research suggest that people from White ethnic groups have a more faded, if not non-existent, ethnic identity (Nagel 1994; Song 2003; Rumbaut 2008). It is important to note that within their range of choices, White groups are rarely questioned about their allegiance or belongingness to the dominant group even if they choose to, occasionally, invoke a European lineage. In most cases, a white ethnicity only carries a symbolic connotation (Gans 1979). As Nagel (1994) contends, the racial phenotype of some groups come into play to limit ethnic options, so the array of ethnic choices for people from white groups differs from those of other ethnic groups (Nagel 1994; Feliciano and Rumbaut 2018). He argues that the disparity regarding the availability of ethnic choices between White groups and others is highly revealing of “the limits of individual choices and underline the importance of external ascriptions in restricting available ethnicities” (p.155). One could advance the reason being that mass immigration of non-white groups is more recent (although not true, just more pointed at), or that the salience of their religious identity intertwined with an ethnic one is ostentatious, thus dominant societies restrict them to one choice.

More nuanced than the “passive ethnicity” of Song (2003), is the “symbolic ethnicity” coined by Gans (1979) which consists of a contradictory attitude found in ethnic identity that translates into love and allegiance to the culture and traditions of the immigrant generation but without actively performing it or incorporating it in everyday behaviours and actions. This simultaneous boost and decline of ethnic identity raise the important question: 'How can people behave in ways that disregard ethnic boundaries while at the same time claim an ethnic identity?' (Nagel 1994, p.154). He claims that explanations for these ambivalent attitudes in immigrant generations can be made by delving into how groups and individuals recreate histories on personal and collective levels, their membership boundaries, and finally by investigating the significance of their ethnicity. Additionally, we can use the Ethnic authenticity versus Ethnic Fraud of Nagel (1994), which stipulates that ethnic heritage solely through ancestry is not sufficient alone, the authenticity of the ethnicity can be challenged regarding one's cultural depth and knowledge, ability of speaking the ethnic language or through everyday ethnic practices. One could questioned whether the concept of “symbolic ethnicity” (Gans 1979) or “passive ethnicity” (Song 2003) could one day

become applicable to non-white immigrant descendants, or whether they are embedded in stronger social power relations where they are destined to remain in racially marked struggles that can influence the formation of adversarial reactive identities (Rumbaut 2008).

2.2. Models of Assimilation for minorities.

In sociology, the term immigrant assimilation was first regarded by Park (1914), as a mechanism of digestion and absorption. In the metaphorical sense, it represents the action of swallowing and digesting the immigrant into the new society. Burgess and Park (1924, p.736) give one of the pioneers and most influential definitions of assimilation in sociology; they described it as “a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life”. Simply put, assimilation refers to the decline of ethnic distinctions and the total enrolment into the dominant context (Alba 2005). Here, decline refers to the enfeeblement of inherited ethnic characteristics where ethnic legacy becomes less in contact with social life. Gordon (1964) proposed a classical definition of assimilation as a mutual adaptation between immigrant groups and the core society. According to him, assimilation is not a linear process and occurs at various levels and speeds. However, he acknowledges that discrimination often hinders immigrant assimilation, and that only through structural assimilation can second-generation immigrants weaken ethnic characteristics and integrate into the majority.

Burgess and Park (1924) considered ethnic groupings as being a natural process, as temporary airlocks on the path to assimilation. A process needed for a smoother adaptation into the new society and new life conditions, which makes a reasonable analysis. However, the perennality of what seemed to be over the short term is now treated as a social phenomenon of relegation and exclusion which implies a social rupture, raises issues about social diversity and communitarianism, often blaming ethnic minorities for removing themselves from the social picture (Gremion 2004). Although Rumbaut (2015) considers the word assimilation to be confusing and a source of litigation, he suggests that the concept encompasses all at once cultural integration. Assimilation materialises itself on many levels such as upward mobility, intermarriage, and acceptance to transform indigenous differences (including ethnic practices and/or beliefs) into the mainstream. Indeed, social contacts are decisive in making assimilation successful; having primary social

contacts such as relationships, intimate groups, or the family environment, greatly facilitates assimilation (Burgess and Park 1924). That is why one of the key factor of assimilation is the idea that second-generation will be more assimilated than the first.

A theory of downward assimilation is advanced by Portes and Zhou (1993) and Rumbaut (2001) to explain the social evolutions of minorities in the US, supported by their research. Segmented assimilation is the model of how different second-generation minority groups assimilate into diverse segments of the receiving society due to facing structural barriers. This results in a difficult entry into the mainstream for some immigrant descendants and stagnation in the underclass for a substantial proportion of them. Several studies reveal the complexity of the factors and processes to be considered to comprehend the trajectory and development of minority groups into American society. In particular the work of Portes and Zhou (1993) which evidenced that the labour market is characterized by a marked and differentiated ethnic segmentation for some second-generation in the US. They present a model that differs from classic assimilation; they refer to the persistent socio-economic marginalization of second-generation minorities in society, despite cultural assimilation. A key component of this model is the persistence of labour market penalties which suggest a characterized discrimination. It is worth highlighting that while the coexistence of socio-economic success and minimal cultural assimilation is possible, it is relatively uncommon. Both theories of segmented and downward assimilation challenge the pioneer theory of the racial relations cycle of the Chicago School which holds that discrimination is essentially prominent for first generations due to being met with hostility and discrimination, which will naturally disappear as future generations will be culturally assimilated (especially via school and education medium, the main tool for integration and assimilation). However, a few scholars, such as Kasinitz et. al (2002) and, Alba and Nee (2003), contradict this theory. They argue that assimilation, even to a small degree, has positive effects on upward mobility. They contend that having strong connections with one's cultural background and ethnic resources can also foster upward mobility within the American context. Perlmann and Waldinger (1997) present a more nuanced view, arguing that those who migrated after the large immigration wave in 1965 will, like those who came at the beginning of the 20th century, have to assimilate into a system of class inequalities, but with a genuine possibility for upward mobility.

Finally, assimilation also hinges on acceptance and inclusion by the majority, assimilation works

through being recognised by the dominant society as one of them, one who belongs, otherwise, it will never be achieved. (Rumbaut 2015).

2.3. Reactive ethnicity

As previously demonstrated, European immigrants experience a rather linear process of assimilation where ethnic identities weakened and become passive or optional (Gans 1979; Nagel 1994; Song 2003). This contrasts with the formation of a reactive ethnicity (Rumbaut 2008; Rumbaut 2015; Feliciano and Rumbaut 2018). The theory of reactive ethnicity (Portes and Rumbaut 2001) took shape in the context of segmented assimilation, which contends that the discrimination and marginalisation faced by some minority groups have begotten reactive mechanisms of identity formation. Reactive ethnicity is seen as a riposte to diffused discrimination but also to restrictive legislations and excluding political discourse policies (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut 2015; Doering and Peker 2022). In a context where individuals are both seen as others and out-groups through both their ethnicity and religion, these tend to ally and revitalize their existence, resulting in their salience in that society, such as Arab-Muslims in some European nations (Karpov et al. 2012).

Rumbaut (2008) observes that many political campaigns are indeed divisive, which leads to emphasizing group distinctions and the intensification of those differences and disparities, thus, ethnic boundaries are reinforced (in-group vs. out-group), which in turn strengthens ethnic group solidarity. That is the mechanism in which political mobilisation from ethnic groups is implemented and powered, although often unintended by the political body. That is why Portes and Rumbaut (2001) coined reactive ethnicity as a modus operandi of reacting to persecution, threats, and exclusion through ethnic identity formation and revival. In lieu of putting a great deal of endeavours into self-presentation and representation, persistent stigmatisation and discrimination can also fuel the opposite reaction such as defence and revolt (Loyal 2009). Indeed, those from ethnic groups who choose loyalty often take part in “reactive subcultures” where strategies are fashioned (consciously or not) to resist or oppose the dominant norms (Alba 2005, p.25). Nonetheless, like a vicious spiral, such reaction can lead to the stigma being more substantiated and even institutionalised (Sayad 2004).

Doering and Peker (2022) are critical of the concept as Portes and Rumbaut did not apply reactive ethnicity on an individual level, but only through large-scale responses from ethnic groups, although it noticeably points to social psychology, experience, and behaviour of individuals. They argue that the theory does not provide guidance for how intra-group divergence in response to discrimination and research around it does not seem to conceptualize these intra-group variations. Researching minorities' reactions to policies that aim to censor ethnic identities is unlikely to be linear; reactions vary from individuals' experiences and circumstances, thus researchers need to explore in depth how this comes into play and influence minorities' reactions and strategies, which explains the variation in minority individuals (Doering and Peker 2022). Finally, although France offers an excellent research base for reactive ethnicity and is known for its various secularist restrictions, there is a flagrant lack of similar studies applied to the French context, that this research humbly attempts to fill.

3. France, a post-colonial and assimilationist society

This part deals with the social implications of France being a post-colonial and assimilationist society. It explores how the supremacy of the Republican ideology operates and how the State has been sacralized. Lastly, it reviews the concept of French Laicite.

3.1. Republicanism and the Sacralization of the State

France has a long culture of State supremacy and was one of the first European nations to be centralized (Loughlin 1993; Wihtol de Wenden 2007). France has founded itself on the assimilation of its citizens and present attitudes towards some minority communities heavily draw from colonial strategies (Amselle 1996). Indeed, France has a long tradition of vacillating between the acceptance and eradication of social differences, including ethnic, racial, class, and religious differences, within its population, which is reflected in its History, in favour of the Republican ideology under a unified nation (Loughlin 1993; Amselle 1996; Silverstein 2004; Wihtol de Wenden 2007). Silverman (2007, p.66) describes the French Republic as being “the neutral opponent of all particular identities in the public sphere”. France has been driven by a myth of national homogeneity for centuries (Loughlin 1993; Amselle 1996; Wihtol de Wenden 2007) however, immigration and Islam have raised the question of a double allegiance. Nonetheless, according to

Silverman (2007), *Republicanism in France* speaks with two tongues at the same time, and this double discourse is anchored with a social paradox: “The more the state insists on uniformity and the neutrality of the public sphere, paradoxically the more it renders visible the very differences it wishes to erase, the more it insists on invisibility, the more it constructs the visibility of particular differences” (p.67). He wants to rethink whether differences are more detectable in a pluralist and multicultural public sphere like Britain or a more assimilationist and uniform society like France. While pluralism acknowledges differences between groups and uniformity supposedly suppresses them, it could be the opposite. Indeed, distinctions are much more noticeable in homogenizing nations, and complete uniformity in immigration societies is almost impossible to achieve (Silverman 2007).

Loughlin (1993) and Saada (2017) describes a historical transfer of the concept of French assimilation, from its production in the colonial context at the end of the nineteenth century, to the polished conception that we recognise today in metropolitan France. Moreover, the French assimilationist History and its discomfort, with race, ethnicity, and religion, is reflected by the lack of data on identity markers in France, contrary to countries such as the UK or the US, where it is customary to interrogate people about their ethnic groups or religious affiliations (Hargreaves 2010; McAvay and Safi 2023). Censuses on religious affiliations in France have officially disappeared since 1872 (Wihtol de Wenden 2007), and the only remaining prominent identity marker for censuses is nationality (Hargreaves 2010). People are not recognized as belonging to ethnic minorities but rather through nationality which for French citizens from immigrant backgrounds pushes the narrative of national identity as their only identification. In light of previous arguments regarding politics in France towards ethnic minorities, one may argue that not officially recognising one's ethnic origins or religious background could be a form of concealment in the prospect that the idea of ethnicity, home country, and culture grows thin for immigrants and their descendants, which is part of the French Republican ideology.

The French Republic claims its essence to be profane while at the same time fulfilling all the criteria of a sacred entity. Although France is an asserted secular state, the institutionalization of Christianity has never completely ended, it was redirected instead. According to Balibar (1994), French laicity does not involve the erasure of the sacred in the public sphere, but rather "the sacralization of the state" (quoted in Silverstein 2004, p.143). Ozouf (1988) argues that, in the

process of renewing itself, France has made a transfer of sacrality, with a sacred new set of values based on the nation, in a new revived secular and liberal society. In this case state secularism functions as the state religion (Silverstein 2004). Although the 1905 law separated the state and mainstream religions, it posed a great challenge for Islam, too difficult to tackle, in the years to come, as the French have a singular understanding of this law (Alba 2005). However, the so-called incompatibility of Islam and the French public sphere does not lie in the separation of church and state. It is rather because they are structurally and functionally similar that the state functions as "the Church of Republican France" (Silverstein 2004. p.143). Similarly, Said (1981) posed that the perceived threat of Islamic morals to secular occidental societies is not induced by their discordance but rather by its competitive closeness. Moreover, the uniqueness of Muslims in France comes from the fact that in some countries, especially secular ones, religious boundaries are institutionalized and if crossed or shifted, institutions have the power to turn certain groups into the "religious other" (Alba 2005).

3.2. French Laïcité

The word Laïcité was not used in the 1905 law on the separation of church and state, and it was not until 1946 and 1958, during the constitutions of the 4th and 5th French Republics, that it was popularized and understood as a sign of French nationalism, however, there was not any official definition given. The notion of laïcité became fashionable during 2003 and 2004, still without any official definition, politics, each of them in turn, gave personal definitions of what the French laïcité is: "Free of religious belief", "Emancipation for oppressed women", "A wish to live together in a neutral public sphere", and "Liberty of conscience and national unity" (Gemie 2010, p.28/29). Gemie (2010), in his more critical stance, notes that this is a clever way of formulating and presenting the concept of laïcité, because who could be against freedom and emancipation of oppressed women in the name of coexistence, primarily based on some abstract and big-standing statements with a significant lack of evidence and contextualization. Therefore, in this way, the public was tricked into not separating the way laïcité is presented from its actual embodiment. As a matter of fact, the separation of church and state was not made to achieve religious parity but rather enacted for religious discrimination (Alba 2005).

By 2004, French laïcité had instrumentalised the headscarf as the most prominent threat to

national identity and unity, largely amplified by the media. As a result, a law was adopted against the wearing of religious symbols in schools. This ban was mainly understood as targeting Muslim religious signs, as wearing other symbols such as the Christian cross or the Jewish kippah did not (and still does not) raise any national controversy (Alba 2005; Bowen 2007; Croucher 2008). Moreover, countries around the world were perplexed about the French laicite; many of them were concerned about the breach of religious freedom for Muslims while others saw it as an inappropriate political and social concern (Bowen 2007). However, this marked an opening act for more national controversies and restrictive laws such as La Loi 2010 prohibiting the concealment of the face in public sphere aimed at the *niqab*, the 2016 municipal decrees banning the *burkini*, the ban of hijab in examination places for students and accompanying mothers on school trips, La Loi 2021 against Separatism, and more recently the ban on Abaya in public schools. Studies demonstrate that these laws reinforce boundaries by othering Muslims and labelling them as social pariahs which contributes to the ongoing marginalisation of Muslims (Alba 2005; Croucher 2009; Doering and Peker 2022). The malaise surrounding the Muslim identity in France lies in the fact that it appears to be the most obvious characteristic of a person living within the French Republic who is integrated, yet, not assimilated (Gemie 2010). However, it could be argued that instead of reinforcing its ideology it rather points out the fragility of the French laicite. Indeed, the essence of laicite resides in its contradictions (Nilsson 2018).

It was only shortly after, that politicians, news media, and public spokespersons threw themselves into this “recurring (and seemingly never-ending) Republican obsession with Muslim women and their choice of clothing” (Nilsson 2018, p.47). Gemie (2010) argues that this is the same model as the French colonial rhetoric which was based on the idea that French authorities had an extensive knowledge of the indigenous lives and cultures, the threats and dangers associated with it. Although we typically placed the affair of the headscarf in 1989 as being the first of a long list, the real issue can be dated back to 1830 in Algeria, at the beginning of the French invasion (Gemie 2010). Indeed, Bowen (2007) explains that the obsession of French laicite with the Muslim headscarf takes its roots in colonial Algeria because it played an important role as the symbol of resistance in colonial Algeria. Back in colonized Algeria, the veil was already controversial, as Bourdieu (1961) notes, it served as an emblematic symbol of the Algerian resistance to colonialism and assimilation while also expressing a strong loyalty to Algerian ethics, an act of defense. Therefore, the veil was perceived as a lack of control over the Algerian women, minds, and bodies,

with a non-reciprocity situation (looking others without being looked at). Notably with the propaganda campaign against the veil, with the famous billboard: “*N’etes-vous donc pas jolies? DEVOILEZ-VOUS!*” (Aren't you pretty? Unveil yourselves!). In this aspect, it appears clear why repudiating the veil has been one of the primary goals of French laicite in the post-colonial assimilationist context (Loyal 2009).

4. Algerians in France

This section provided a socio-historical explicative background of today's French state relation with Algerians and Islam. These arguments are part of our understanding of how France, from the colonial period to the present day, has created a trajectory of exclusion of its colonised minorities and became a colour-blind society. In the next part, we deal with objective inequalities against Algerians in France, with a focus on the second and third generations, and how this translates into their lived experiences, evidenced by empirical studies.

4.1. Objective inequalities

a) Creation of la banlieue

It has become common practice in sociology to look at concentrations of the same ethnic minority groups in certain geographic locations to investigate patterns of communitarianism and ghettoization particularly in France and the US (Gremion 2004). As Nagel (1994) argues, ethnic identity of minorities in Western societies is somehow manufactured and directly influenced using political policies engineered to house immigrants in chosen locations. How in a socio-economic context marked by the end of the Fordism era, was born what is commonly called la banlieue, marker of social relegation zones? (Gremion 2004).

As a response to the high number of immigrant workers, the government created shanty-towns on the outskirts of metropolises, maintaining an assimilationist approach to immigration policies (Silverstein 2004). Later, the housing projects, originally built for the lower middle class outside urban life, became a place of settlement for most Algerians who arrived in the 1960s (Silverstein

2004). Literature suggests that North and sub-Saharan African ethnic groups are the most spatially segregated in France (Grillo 1985; Pan Ke Shon 2009; Douzet and Robine 2015; McAvay and Safi 2018). That is how Algerian immigrants and other residents of suburban areas have forged their configuration of civility; “their own socio-spatial subjectivities within and through the state technologies employed to integrate them economically while excluding them socially” (Silverstein 2004, p.139). Here lies one of the greatest ambivalences of the French nation: as Silverstein (2004) puts it, the state has orchestrated the configuration of urban and suburban spaces in a special, yet, strategic ways, by grouping ethnic groups in undesirable social spaces while expecting them to fully integrate and assimilate into the greater France. Indeed, spatial segregation in France is not a coincidence, but a well-planned social scheme (Douzet and Robine 2015). While the decisions taken in urban planning were said to stamp out communitarianism to integrate minorities into the national economy and social order, they have sought to sustain socio-economic and cultural differences between minorities and natives. A desire to separate the ethnic outsiders from post-colonial cities and dispose of them into post-industrial banlieues (Silverstein 2004). Resultantly, the second-generation North African population predominantly resided in suburbs, occupying social housing and perceived as difficult to integrate (Silberman and Fournier 2006). That is why McAvay and Safi (2018) argued that minorities assimilation in France, particularly North-Africans, are embedded within spatial stratifications.

b. Segmented Assimilation; Algerians in the Labour Market.

The Algerian population in France became structurally linked to the French labour market since the 60s (Sayad 2004). The labour market cannot be dissociated from the Algerian workers and their French-born offspring, especially as they represent the largest ethnic groups in France since the 1970s (Amselle 1996; Silberman and Fournier; Croucher 2008).

Algerian and sub-Saharan immigrants are four times more likely to be unemployed than French-born, and three times more likely than immigrants from Italy, Spain or Portugal (Meurs et al. 2006). According to an INSEE study conducted in 1999, first-generation Algerians (both men and women) had the highest unemployment rate compared to other minority groups including Italians, Portuguese, Spanish, Moroccans, Tunisians, Sub-Saharan Africans, Turkish, and South-East Asians. Surprisingly, the study found that the same patterns applied to second-generation Algerians.

Between 1992 and 1998, more than 40% of second-generation Maghrebins declared having been victims of discrimination in the process of recruiting and hiring, which Silberman and Fournier (2006) have called the 'ethnic penalty'. Young people with North African and African backgrounds are the most discriminated against in France. After completing their education, 40% of them remain unemployed for an estimated period of five years (Silberman and Fournier 2006). The labour market's ethnic penalty is less relevant for groups like second-generation South-East Asians or South-European groups. Indeed, Meurs et al. (2006) have observed that little has changed since the 1980s and 1990s; immigrant children, like their parents, particularly those of Algerian descent, are at higher risk of unemployment compared to native-born individuals, despite having been socialized and educated in France.

Although there seemed to be an upward context in the employment sector in the 1990s, Meurs et al. (2006) thought that "la fonction publique" in France was a factor of integration, as jobs within are accessible through competitive exams, and should therefore promote recruitment without discrimination towards gender, ethnicity or social background. But in reality, is this always the case for the second generation or even the third? Longitudinal research is needed to determine whether the disadvantage associated with certain ethnic origins in the French labour market is temporary or permanent (Meurs et al. 2006). Moreover, since 2004, the ban on veiling in schools and public sectors has hindered opportunities for improvement and reduction of discrimination within the labour market (Croucher 2009). Discrimination and the sense of injustice are driving individuals to adopt confrontational or withdrawal behaviours; this leads to a vicious cycle of discrimination, reinforcing the existing negative image of the group and fuelling further discrimination (Silberman and Fournier 2006).

Silberman and Fournier's study (2006) supports to the theory of segmented assimilation. They argue towards a dynamic model of segmented assimilation in France, evidenced by a major inequality in the labour market for second-generation Algerians. This study aims at investigating to what extent some of the second-generation in France are trapped in segmented assimilation, like their American counterparts; a long-term and difficult situation that is however still regarded as taboo as it contradicts and cripples the French republican model. Their research outlines a strong inferiorisation on a socio-economic dimension that outperforms a strong linguistic and cultural assimilation. A clear-cut contrast is shown between their situations at school and their

employability; Silberman and Fournier (2006) talk about a 'systematic ethnic penalty' imposed on Maghrebins, particularly Algerians, which cannot be explained by differences in educational levels with other demographic groups, nor by their ability to secure employment. Indeed, studies (Alba 2005; Meurs et al. 2006, Silberman and Fournier 2006) demonstrate that Algerians are better positioned within the educational system, yet they are the minority group that finds themselves in greater difficulty finding employment in France. However, upward mobility is more pronounced among second-generation Algerians than among southern Europeans, such as Portuguese, Spanish and Italians, who, like their predecessors, have a strong presence in the construction sector. Despite being less qualified, they are in long-term employment (Meurs et al. 2006). The gaps in qualification between the immigrant offspring and French natives are closing, yet they are still confronted with remarkable discrimination (Meurs et al. 2006). Although research indicate strong ethno-racial discrimination, France remains reticent to set up monitoring indicators that could alleviate these challenges (Silberman and Fournier 2006; Meurs et. Al 2006; McAvay and Safi 2023).

Silberman and Fournier (2006) have revised the segmented assimilation model towards a more generalised and complex form. They aimed to extend the model beyond the American society in which racism and slavery are considered the main explanatory factors of the integration and assimilation of the Black population. The aim was to apply this model of assimilation to the French context as a post-colonial society. One interesting aspect of their research is that the groups most impacted by discrimination were those who were previously under French colonial rule. They acknowledge the connection between the colonial past and the ethnic disadvantages experienced by North-Africans, and they recognised that there are internal differences between Maghreb groups; Algerians are more discriminated against. Nevertheless, these considerations require further exploration and substantiation with large-scale data. In addition, the authors suggest that this model can be applied to societies free from colonization or slavery. However, since sociology is path-dependent and closely related to history, it raises questions about the applicability of the model to other contexts. Can the model of segmented assimilation be generalised, or would it lose its relevance when applied in contexts without a colonial or slavery past? This presents a promising area for future research.

4.2. Algerian identity in France.

After high exposure to racism, discrimination and violence in the 80s (evidenced by the swift advance of the Front National), second-generation Algerian youth realised that law enforcement and legal systems functioned as superior forces of racism and inequality (Silverstein 2004). Resultantly, the 80s witnessed a collective mobilisation against the system, which marked the beginning of the “*beur generation*” (Silverstein 2004; Hargreaves 2010). Their frustration grew stronger and they resorted to showing their exasperation by protesting, and starting a rebellion packed with acts of symbolism designed to enrage those by whom they felt rejected and the silent French institution. The emergence of a generation that was pointed out as the culprit for France's ills gave birth to the famous “*La Marche des Beurs*” in 1983 (Hargreaves 2010). These events marked the beginning of a new identity in France (Silverstein 2004).

Hargreaves (2010) talks about the “*lost generation*”. Laronde (1993) speaks of the birth of a new identity in France, not entirely Algerian and not entirely French, caught between alterity and marginality. Boyer (2022) talks about periods of “*fflottement identitaire*” (identity floating) concerning the second generation born in France after the Algerian independence. This “*malaise identitaire*” (identity malaise) led to a sense of emptiness where individuals did not recognise themselves either in one category or another. A form of identity that hinges on ambivalence and instability. Moreover, children of Algerians took a burdensome role as they embodied the bridge between their parents and society (Zehraoui 1996). For Belhaddad (2001), the restrictions imposed by one's cultural heritage, whether ethnic, religious, or familial, provide fertile ground for identity instability. As she explains, Algerian youth go to the same school, wear the same clothes, speak the same language, and have similar friends, but above all are not allowed to do or be like the French, while also facing rejection if they try to integrate. This dichotomous identification often results in a process of detachment from both identities (Laronde 1993).

The passage from the evolution of the second generation to the third is less abrupt in terms of social, economic and historical contexts, than previous generations. However, their upbringing and adulthood has been marked by the duration of living in banlieues, where Algerians and others minorities became secluded (Silverstein 2004; Hargreaves 2010). The third-generation Algerians of the 90s, and early 2000s is referred to as “*post-beur generation*” (Silverstein 2004). Hargreaves

(2010, p.1294) judiciously wonders if they produce more meaning as being part of a “multi-ethnic post-colonial banlieue generation” than as a characterized ethnic group in itself. Kiwan (2007) aimed to explore Algerian youth's social and cultural modes of identification. Participants, especially men, talked about return migration through an idealisation of their parents' or grandparents' country. Most of their identity relates to Algeria, despite being born and living in France. All participants demonstrated group unity through their common ethnic heritage. Religious rituals, such as Ramadan, were particularly emphasised, and language and marriage were also sites of ethnicised modes of identification. Moreover, she observed that participants often switched their modes of identification, from ethnic to socio-economic emphasis, with the suburb playing a significant role in the construction of their identities.

Hargreaves (2010) claims that the majority of third-generation Algerians have limited knowledge of the culture and language, so it is their identification with Islam that perpetuates their marginalization, as the majority of them advance a salient religious identity (Cherif 2007). To him, the third generation is probably the last to retain more than a vague notion of an Algerian heritage and an active ethnicity, because Algeria is, for the third generation, an idealised myth rather than a lived experience, due to the loss of culture between generations. Nonetheless, he argues in favour of a religious revival amongst the third generation in different aspects. What is astonishing is that literature suggests that third-generation Algerians in France are somehow still considered not fit to live in the country, not fit to adhere to the customs, and a threat to society (Bowen 2007; Croucher 2009; Hargreaves 2010). Croucher's study (2009) exhibits a clear assimilation struggle among participants; they bear witness to a forced assimilation in France while they pertinently know that any sincere attempt to assimilate and fit the French model is unlikely to be accepted by the dominant culture as they would always be perceived as the others under fixed conditions and structural barriers. Overall, studies suggest that samples in France composed of second and third generation Algerians are heavily marked by identity struggle, crisis, hesitation, fear, doubts (Silberman and Fournier 2006; Cherif 2007).

5. Research questions

Reviewing the literature has enabled me to identify which research questions will be most suited to address the gaps in the existing literature. Therefore, the research questions guiding this research are as follow:

1. How have second and third generation Algerians in France constructed and negotiated their ethnic, religious and national identities?
2. What identity struggles have second and third generations Algerians in France experienced? What are the variations between both?
3. To which extent has France, as a post-colonial and assimilationist society, influenced and impacted their ethnic, religious and national identifications?

III. Methodology

1. Research Design and Philosophical Approach

This qualitative research endorses the ontological position that reality is socially constructed; it is multi-faceted and consequently subjective (Denicolo and Becker, 2012). Thus, the adopted epistemological approach here is interpretivist and constructivist. This relativist perspective suggests that knowledge is subjective and must be interpreted by individuals, implying that realities are relative. Human understanding shapes these realities, resulting in variations based on different contexts and situations. In this instance, a constructivist approach would pose that ethnic, religious and national identity are socially constructed, contextual and variable (Hall and du Gay 1996; Andreouli and Howarth 2013). Furthermore, it is advocated by constructivists that social realities are primarily embedded in the discourses of individuals involved (Evanoff 2004). This research is designed using an inductive, or bottom-up, approach, employing thematic analysis to produce findings (Taylor et al. 2015).

Whilst some researchers (Platt 2014; Nandi & Platt 2015) have favoured quantitative methods to study ethno-religious and national identities, I as a constructivist and interpretivist believe that it is an unsuitable approach as identities cannot be measured objectively. Moreover, statistics often fail to account for the human context of social life (Taylor et al. 2015). In addition, Hammersley (2013) contends that qualitative research arose due to the apprehension that quantitative methods neglect the intricate, contingent, and contextually-sensitive nature of social existence.

This approach has been thoughtfully selected to fit the research requirements and facilitate a comprehensive analysis of the data, in order to address the research questions.

2. Recruitment of Participants

This sampling choice was driven by the absence of current literature that examines and distinguishes identity construction and negotiation between the second and third generations², the "*beur*" and "*post-beur*" generation of Algerians in France. Although the French social context

2 We refer in the research findings to the first-generation as G1, the second-generation as G2 and the third-generation as G3.

provides a rich field for researching ethnic and religious groups and identities, it is hindered by the lack of available data on identity markers such as ethnicity and religion in France (de Wenden 2007; Hargreaves 2010; McAvay and Safi 2023). Therefore, there is a crucial need for both quantitative and qualitative research in this field.

The participants had to meet specific inclusive criteria to fulfill the needs of the research which aims to look at the second-generation born in France shortly after the Algerian independence, and to the third-generation, which would respectively match the ages of their children and to allow this research to draw on inter-generational patterns on these two specific groups. For the second-generation these included being born in France between the 1960s and early 1970s to both Algerian parents having immigrated during the post-Algerian independence era, and residing in a French city. For those of the third-generation, I included participants born in the 90s to early 2000, to both second-generation Algerian parents and residing in a French city too. Participants were recruited through formal and informal networks. I initially used my personal network for convenient and snowball sampling. When this method reached saturation, I turned to social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook to reach Algerian youth groups in France. A research poster was circulated, inviting interviewees to participate. For efficiency, I created a Google Form to introduce myself, the research, and included four questions: What is your age? Do you reside in France? Are both of your parents of Algerian descent? Do you belong to the 2nd or 3rd generation? This questionnaire was included in the call for participants. This approach proved useful as it enabled me to recruit 10 additional participants in total, among the 40 initial replies I received.

This sample is purposive which is preferable for seeking specific criteria in participants (Principles of Sociology Inquiry 2012) and does not solely rely on convenient or snowball sampling. It is a non-probability sample, therefore this research cannot claim that the sample is representative of all second and third generation Algerians in France. No incentive were offered to participants in this research.

Details of the participants are presented in the tables below. All participants have been anonymised through the use of pseudonyms. Their ages range from 47 to 62 years old for the G2, and 20 to 31 years old for the G3. To achieve gender parity and identify if certain trends were directly linked to gender, I have recruited five males and five females for each group. Nineteen out of twenty participants are bi-nationals (French/Algerian).

Table 1. G2 participants.

Name (Pseudonyms)	Age	Gender	Location	Occupation
Jamila	56	Female	Lille	Nurse
Boumedienne	55	Male	Auby	Nurse
AbdelRahman	55	Male	Douai	School Documentalist
Sadia	54	Female	Lille	Unemployed
Khadija	54	Female	Tourcoing	Political figure (not allowed by participant to state her position)
Rabia	48	Female	Marseille	Executive in public service
Amina	47	Female	Marseille	English teacher
Hicham	48	Male	Paris suburb	Finance executive
Omar	62	Male	Douai	Retired (previously worker)
Majid	53	Male	Lyon	Mechanic

Table 2. G3 participants

Name (Pseudonyms)	Age	Gender	Location	Occupation
Ibrahim	31	Male	Roubaix	Data Scientist
Sofiane	31	Male	Roubaix	Unemployed
Salahedin	20	Male	Paris	Airport Staff
Malika	22	Female	Lille	Student
Chaima	25	Female	Strasbourg	Unemployed
Aicha	28	Female	Lille	Student
Hassane	28	Male	Paris suburb	Works in Communication
Leila	27	Female	Paris suburb	Works in Marketing
Inaya	27	Female	Metz	Marketing executive
Bilal	30	Male	Nice	Youth worker

3. Data Collection

Upon receiving confirmation from those who responded to the call for participants and met the

research criteria, participants were sent the information sheet and consent form (*see appendices*) via email, to ensure they had a clear understanding of the research goals and the implications of their involvement. Every participant provided their consent to be audio-recorded. All interviews were conducted in French, with occasional Arabic idioms and expressions. They were later translated into English. The interviews were recorded using the MyRecorder app on my personal phone and securely uploaded to a password-protected file on my personal laptop, which only I have access to. Interviews began with an ice-breaker to gather demographic information, including profession, education, hobbies, and family background. At the beginning of each interview, participants were prompted for verbal consent to record them and for their quotes to be used (although this was previously signed in the consent form). I further reminded them of their right to withdraw participation or decline to answer any question, and assured them of the confidentiality of their data.

Data was collected through a total of 20 semi-structured interviews. Five interviews were held face-to-face, thirteen via video (Zoom or Whatsapp video call) and two by phone calls as requested by participants who were uncomfortable with video calls. Twenty interviews were conducted from February 2023 to September 2023. The shortest lasted 18 minutes and the longest 1 hour and 12 minutes, most lasting 50 minutes on average. The total hours of interviews amounted to 12.5 hours. Interviews were semi-structured following a directive line, with some flexibility, and questions were divided into three sections (*see appendix*):

- Ethnic & Religious belonging
- France and the society
- Identity Construction and Negotiation

The interview questions were thoughtfully constructed to address the research questions and to enable participants to contemplate on their experiences as G2 and G3 Algerians living in France and how they manage their sense of self related to ethnic, religious and national identity. The panel of questions incorporated were mostly open-ended questions, with a small number of closed-ended ones. A pilot was undertaken before the interviews were conducted to assess the clarity and efficacy of the questions.

Qualitative methods was opted for as it would allow me to know participants through attentive and active listening (Kvale 2007; Irvine et al. 2007), and more importantly giving them the

opportunity to describe their experiences in their own terms was deemed the most appropriate and efficient strategy (Hammersley 2013). I am confident that this approach is optimal as it allows participants to provide detailed accounts of their experiences, particularly when researching a complex field such as identity (Principles of Sociological Inquiry 2012; Bullock 2016).

Finally, over the 7-month interview period (from February to September 2023), my confidence and ability progressed. Although the questions and interview sections remained unaltered, a few additional questions were added towards the last set of interviews as I became more adept at probing participants to elicit their narratives and answers. The quality of the interviews improved significantly towards the end. Therefore, I believe that commencing the data collection later than when I initially did, would have bolstered the effectiveness of the interviews, given that I had a better grasp of the sociological aspect of the questions asked after conducting the literature review.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Thematic Analysis

As identity research is a demanding area (Bullock 2016), the data extracted from the semi-structured interviews resulted in lengthy quotations. Consequently, a thematic analysis was required as it is a versatile and effective research tool, perfectly suited to offer a productive and accurate, albeit sophisticated, interpretation of the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). Interviews were transcribed verbatim, including breaks, laughter, hesitations and moments of reflection. Participants' body languages are often lost in interviews transcriptions (Kvale 2007), thus, I closely observed and took notes of it during face-to-face interviews and included these annotations in the overall data set.

The initial analytical stage began with listening to and transcribing the recordings as it is the first interpretative process following completion of the interviews (Kvale 2007). The data was analysed thematically, with significant elements systematically colour-coded throughout the entire dataset (Braun and Clarke 2006). A preliminary version of recurring themes was then produced. I refined the specificities of each theme to clearly define how they corresponded to the research questions. Additionally, I referred back to the literature review and incorporated extra piece of literature that aided in comprehending the data.

When conducting interviews in a language other than English, it is crucial for the researcher to ensure the translated transcript is clear, credible and intelligible for the readers (Qun and Carey 2023). The transcription process should be carefully carried out to avoid any skewing of findings (Suh et al. 2009). This is a particularly challenging task as the researcher, who adopts the role of a translator without holding any background in translation studies, need to produce “linguistic equivalences” as well as “conceptual equivalences” (Qun and Carey 2023). This has proven to be the case for this research. Although I tried to adhere closely to the strict definitions of certain concepts based on the French literature and interview transcripts (conducted in French), I acknowledge that some concepts were not able to be translated in the most optimal manner. The researcher must acknowledge the limitations of translations, including the potential loss of certain meanings and expressions (Suh et al. 2009). Researching and translating must be thoroughly considered during the pre-research phase of preparation as it presents added challenges and workload for the researcher.

What follows are the ethical considerations and a detailed account of my reflexivity in relation to my role as a researcher throughout the research process.

5. Ethics & Reflexivity

Ethics must be conscientiously considered throughout the research process, from the research proposal to the post-research phase. It is a crucial step in terms of procedural ethics before the research commences and ethics in practice during the research itself (Guillemin and Gillam 2004). No significant issues or potential harms were identified upon receiving the ethics approval, however, certain aspects -such as the collection of sensitive data on religion and ethnicity – required minor corrections. This research received approval from the Ethics Committee of the University of York in early January 2023 (*see appendix*). Every aspect of this study has been conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and in compliance with University regulations. To ensure total confidentiality and safe storage of the data, participants have been anonymised, and their information as well as the interview recordings were stored in a password-protected file on my personal laptop. In accordance with the ethical procedure, participants were submitted an information sheet to ensure they had the requisite understanding of the research to give an informed consent (Liamputtong 2007). Prior to the interviews, all informed consents were sent and

returned, dated and signed with participants' names. All participants consented to the usage and storage of data, audio recordings made during interviews, and the use of direct quotations for analytical purposes.

In identity studies, Mann (2006) emphasises the significance of undertaking a reflexive process since he considers the researcher to be a co-producer of knowledge. This is particularly relevant in interviewing ethnic minorities, since the knowledge required to build a strong analysis is either strengthened or diminished by the researcher's own history and location (DeVault 2015). Indeed, ethnic and racial positioning plays a role in interviewee settings which is important to analyse this structure in the participants narratives (DeVault 2015). There has been an ongoing debate on insider and outsider researchers exploring minorities. It has been argued that ethnic researchers may lack objectivity, while those outside the group may not possess adequate skills to carry out research on minorities (Zinn, 1979). This research does not argue in favour of a monopoly of ethnic researchers for researching ethnic minorities, nonetheless, minority researchers often benefit from empirical and methodological advantages in qualitative studies (Zinn 1979).

In ethnic/racial interviews, insiders have particular forms of understanding that cannot be easily comprehend by outsiders (DeVault 2015). Outsider researchers may miss the importance of ethnicity and race that are not always obvious or explicit, and may leave some untold stories that are of crucial importance because the participant will likely select what can or cannot be spoken about, or what will be understood or misunderstood. It is always sensitive to interview ethnic minorities as an outsider at risk to loose crucial meanings, interviews in ethnic studies are characterised by customs, concepts and expressions mostly perceptible to those acquainted to the culture (Suh et al. 2009). Besides, race relations may result in bias influencing the analysis and findings as researchers from the dominant group may view and experience the social world through a different lens (Zinn 1979). This is particularly pertinent in qualitative studies whereby researchers interact with individuals or groups, rather than dealing with numerical or survey data.

When studying ethnic groups it is important to possess prior knowledge to ensure good conduct (DeVault 2015). That is where the cultural competence comes into play. Cultural competence is composed of five main fragments: "cultural awareness, cultural knowl-edge, cultural skills, cultural encounters, and cultural desire" (Campinha-Bacote, 2002; Suh et al. 2009). There are implications for historical, geographical, social contexts, cultural and ethnic backgrounds that researchers need to be made familiar with before engaging with researching minorities (Suh et al.

2009).

I am confident in stating that my research benefited greatly from my cultural competence and my insider position as a third-generation Algerian from France. This allowed me to establish a privileged relationship with the participants at the outset of the research. Participants automatically assigned me a special status, often vocalized by comments like “I'm glad you're one of us”, “You know exactly what I mean”. Being seen as an ethnic and religious insider instilled a high level of trust through reciprocity and mutual exchange during the interviews. To be an insider will highly benefit the research as participants are most likely to reveal their true experiences and opinions to a researcher from the same ethnic group (Suh et. Al 2009). Reciprocity and complicity with the participants can influence the knowledge produced (Mann 2006). This research is also characterised by the genuine interest expressed by participants. However, it mainly relied on participants' abilities to share their views and experiences, and on their competence to provide me with meaningful discourses and sincere narratives.

While being an insider benefited the research in many ways, it also required me to reflect more deeply on my relationship with the participants. For instance, the majority of the participants have requested that I contact them again to further discuss the subjects of identity and Algerians in France outside of the framework of this research. While this would certainly be enjoyable, it raises the issue of a possible duty I have towards them. They willingly agreed to participate in my research and were mostly joyful and grateful for the opportunity to have a voice. Therefore, should I provide a follow-up? Should I maintain contact with them? Moreover, it is possible that my position as an insider has influenced participants to advance more positive narratives, or aspects of their identities, by fear of being negatively perceived by a member of their ethnic and religious groups.

IV. Findings and Discussion

1. Conflictual Dimensions of French Identity

This theme discusses the data and findings that highlight the conflictual dimensions experienced by participants to identify as French. It explains how the laïcité constitutes a model of exclusion and how discrimination in France is perceived as institutionalised. This refers to the failures of the French assimilationist system.

1.1. Failures of the French Assimilationist System

a) Laïcité; a model of exclusion.

This theme demonstrates French Laïcité's active role in excluding Algerian descendants. Despite its proclaimed goal of promoting equality for all French citizens, participants view it and the secular laws as a means for reinforcing a model of social exclusion, especially aimed at Muslims, which constitutes one of the failures of the French assimilationist system exposed throughout this analysis. Nineteen out of twenty participants in this research contend that the main principle of Laïcité has been distorted from its original meaning and is being used as a pretext to undermine Islam and the Muslim community in France.

"It's really a double standard situation,. We were taught a lot in schools that the laicite is here to protect us and to let us express our identities equally, but when we grew up we realised that it's used against what it stands for. You see our moral compass was guided a lot by school but then I said to myself that I'm not obliged to follow that, what tells me that this is an objective vision in fact, and this period is decisive for being able to free myself from that [...] In the UK a woman who wears the veil can do anything, they are integrated, whereas in France we want to make them invisible. There's a part of the population that exists, but they want to erase them from social life, it's a minority and yet it's all they talk about, every day in the media, in politics, constantly, it's a huge problem... the laicite is just a reflection of the problem France has with Islam." (Leila G3)

Leila discusses the downsides of Laïcité and how it has affected her, despite being continually portrayed as a protective factor particularly within school environment. She uses the term “to free myself”, suggesting from the yoke of the Republican School, which emphasizes the secularist influence that school has on students. This quote implies that schools contribute to the exclusion model by advocating laïcité. Nonetheless, Leila's quote also implies that the participants were able to distance themselves and critically analyse Laïcité after escaping the constraints of the French

Republican educational system ("*but we grew up and realised*"). This reaffirms the symbolic authority that schools hold in France as a central institution. Although laïcité was consistently presented as a measure implemented to safeguard French citizens by excluding religion from the public sphere to prevent discrimination, the majority of the data indicates that it has actually had the opposite effect which corroborates previous research such as Bowen (2007), Croucher (2008), and Gemie (2010).

Furthermore, Leila's statement highlights that the concept of laïcité, which was shared amongst majority of the participants, remains paradoxical in nature. It seeks to render veil-wearing Muslim women invisible in society, while also constantly drawing media and politics attention to them. The data compares on many occasions France to the UK, depicting the latter as an almost exemplary society in relation to Muslims, as Leila illustrates. France has received a great deal of criticism while the UK has been praised for its lack of restrictive laws and its provision of equal opportunities regardless of religious background. This model is frequently discussed in relation to the management of ethnic minorities and the social and institutional recognition of their living conditions thereby reinforcing criticisms of the French assimilationist approach.

"The laws are restrictive and therefore necessarily liberticidal, in my opinion it's an injustice committed legally. Always claiming to liberate Muslim women, just as they thought they were liberating Algerian women. And it's not the same steps taken for all religious groups. Islam is the target in France. It's an attack on freedom and humanity. It's another way of diverting attention from the real problems. The media and politics space are being monopolised to force the French to forget the real issues and invent problems where there are none, or very few. More laws to force us to be French, to be assimilate to the model of the good Frenchman. The French are prevented at all costs from concentrating on their social conditions, and this is a strategy that France has used a lot in its History. There has to be a scapegoat. In truth, I'm convinced that politicians don't give a damn whether this or that woman wears a hijab, or a burkini or an abaya, but it's the topic that sells well in France." (Hicham G2)

Hicham draws an interesting parallel between Laïcité's proclaimed objective of emancipating Muslim women and the French colonial rhetoric about the need for the liberation of Algerian women. As discussed in the literature review, the discourse surrounding assimilation and Laïcité draws heavily from colonial discourses (Bowen 2007; Loyal 2009; Gemie 2010). The colonial attacks on the Muslim headscarf in Algeria remains deeply ingrained into French society, which explains why the series of restrictive laws was initially targeted at the headscarf. There is a consensus

amongst participants that French Laïcité constitutes a targeted attack on Muslims, failing at integrating them into the national community. In addition to all other dimensions that have been attributed to Laïcité in this research, Hicham is convinced that Laïcité is also an excuse to divert the French population from their real social issues. When the nation endures a period of socio-economic or socio-political crisis, minority groups as the significant other, are often used as a distraction from the real social issues (Triandafyllidou 1998). In this way, the positive identity of the nation is preserved and remains unquestioned.

The research data is unequivocal: Laïcité is clearly seen, as per the participants, as a misuse of power to exclude Muslims from the mainstream and reinforce assimilationist pressures.

b. Institutionalised Discrimination

What can you tell me about the French society ?

"They want us to believe in equal opportunities, that everyone is on the same level, but the reality is not that, people of foreign origins still have lots of troubles finding work, that's the reality... they get low-skilled jobs, even if they are highly qualified,... it's not impossible, you can get in, but you're still part of a quota, it's complicated [...] I have a Masters, I'm a qualified teacher but cannot work because of my headscarf... that's legal discrimination...That's France!" (Chaima G3)

Chaima suggests that Laïcité has resulted in "legal discrimination"; being refused a position as a teacher despite being fully qualified for no other reason than wearing a headscarf is considered discriminatory practice. However, since this is the law in France, it is not considered as such, but rather the norm. In this way, with Chaima's case, we can also see the Laïcité and its restrictive laws as being the cause for more unemployment, because veiled Muslim women are restricted from working within public sectors, they are more likely to stay in prolonged period of unemployment. Besides, this raises questions about morality and legality, and how are such law adopted. Indeed, there is, in France, a corrupted use of secular ideas to legitimise religious intolerance and disguise ethnic discrimination (Nilsson 2018).

"In 1992 I was doing a DEA, so naturally I should have aspired to a doctorate, but I didn't have it easy, they put a lot of obstacles on my way, I was rejected for unfair reasons, in terms of studies, housing, work, it was difficult for us children of Algerians. At the time, I remember when we left university we were really worried about what we would become because nobody wanted us, the doors were all closed, from the moment they saw our faces or knew our names, that was it. I had

*friends who applied to be postmen even though they had masters degrees in science, literature and so on. At just 23-24 years old, we were terrified of the job market. Finding a paid job matching our skills was an unattainable dream for us. We tried to fit in, we tried to resemble them, not physically but in the way we lived in society, we moved away from our identities to do it... but at what price? I, like most people of my generation, didn't work in the profession for which we were qualified. And we had to wait a long time before we could be integrated into a professional environment at our true value. And we started to realise that there was a problem, that it wasn't normal... Finally, that is France? So if you're a labourer, that's fine, but if you want more, France is against it. Well, we didn't let ourselves be pushed around but many didn't get the chance. I have lots of anecdotes about being explicitly told that I wouldn't be able to do such exam or pass this oral, because I wasn't like the others... at the CAPES exam, I was clearly told 'it's going to be complicated for you, if only you weren't Algerian'... the social perception of Algerian men is a burden we've had to carry. »
(Abdelrahman G2)*

As demonstrated by Abdelrahman, being Algerian and Muslim is clearly a hindrance to being integrate into society and to having a job for which they are qualified. It is another battle that they have to fight. He further explains that altering their identity is not going to work because discrimination is so embedded, therefore institutionalised, that this strategy is destined to fail. This, in itself, represents one of the failures of the French assimilationist system. When passing the CAPES exam for the public service, Abdelrahman was informed that it would be difficult for him due to being Algerian. This, again, highlights the presence of institutionalised racism in public services, indicating a lack of equal opportunities. The frustration of the participants also came from the fact that discrimination does not come from a lack of academic skills, or from an absence on the education scene, which is clearly demonstrated by Chaima and Abdelrahman. This corroborates research presented in chapter « Algerians in the labour market ». Institutionalised discrimination is a hindrance to social mobility in France. Abdelrahman also exposes France for wanting to keep North-African immigrants and their descendants into low skilled and low paid jobs, but are seen as disruptive if they aspire to more. The majority of the participants have faced the « ethnic penalty » (Silberman and Fournier 2006) in the French labour market.

Although it was a recurrent theme across both generation, it is relevant to indicate that G2 men seem to have faced more discrimination than others. Which is in line with research explored in the literature review. However G3 is not spared as demonstrated by Chaima. Participants frankly exposed France as being a society where discrimination is still very present and does not give an easy access to opportunities for Algerian generations. Finally, these research findings directly contributes to the theory of segmented assimilation for Algerians and later generations in France.

In this theme, it is nonetheless important to note the variation between the lived experiences of G2 and G3. The G2 has faced racism and discrimination in regards to their ethnic identity and racial features, with little mention to their religious identity or religious practices that could have hindered their social integration. On the contrary, the G3 overall associated the institutionalised discrimination with their religious identity, among those who are visibly Muslim (like Chaima who wears a headscarf), or experiencing discrimination if they were to talk about religion or bring religious practices into the workplace for example. Therefore, the research findings argue that the G2 is more subjected to an ethnic penalty while the G3 to a religious penalty.

This theme adds to the existing research suggesting that France politically implements a discriminatory system by making clear distinctions between French groups and the others, and by disempowering the latter (Sayad 2004). This secular model sustains clear boundaries and has pushed forwards forms of institutionalised discrimination. However, Dhume (2016) suggests that we should use the term systemic discrimination in the French context. He explains that the difference between institutional and systemic discrimination lies in the way it operates. The latter, he argues, is more appropriate because it emphasises the fact that discriminatory practices are part of a process based on interactions at individual, organisation and institutional levels, and between them. Thus, discrimination is both a production and a result of these processes.

1.2. A conflicted French Identity.

This theme deals with identified patterns around the uneasiness experienced by participants in regards to their French national identity. To this end, three themes have been identified in order to provide a detailed analysis into that discomfort. First, it will highlight the blurred national identity, the emergence of a dual France, and finally the boundaries between the in-group and out-group.

a) A blurred National Identity

Participants perceive their attachment to France through education, language proficiency, critical thinking and gastronomy. Most acknowledge the influence of France on their identity, portraying the value of this influence as both positive and negative. However, it was not sufficient to fully identify with a French national identity. Participants commonly rejected the idea that ethnic

minorities and subsequent generations should feel indebted to France for giving them access to education or for simply living within the Nation-State.

"I don't feel French, I find it hard to say yes I'm French, I'm uncomfortable saying that... there are aspects of me where socially I can say yes I'm from France but I'd like to make the difference between being French and being born in France... being born in France doesn't necessarily mean you're French, so.... yes, I have the social etiquettes, I know the language, I'm not an alien to French culture, so I can adapt easily, but I can't say I'm French". (Aicha G3)

Aicha makes an interesting distinction between being French and being born in France. This suggests that embracing a French national identity is not a natural consequence of being born in France. In this case it would rather be the result of a performative effort. This passage highlights the contrast between being something versus coming from somewhere. It, once more, exposes the flaws of the French assimilationist system, as participants began to see a contradiction between the two due to the treatment of minorities in France. The distinction between saying 'I am...' and 'I am from...' became particularly recurrent for G3 participants who feel queasy and even embarrassed to identify as French. These findings probably indicate unprecedented results, such as a third-generation immigrant not feeling comfortable enough to claim the national identity of the country in which they were born and raised.

How would you define your sense of belonging?

"It's very clear. I think the confusion comes from the minds of those who look at us... I'm French, born in France, I have an Algerian culture and I'm Muslim, I'm attached to my values...I'm not confused.. but it's true that lately it's been difficult with all these pressures. [Long silence] Well... I told you earlier that I'm fine, I know who I am and what I am, but I think there's always been this form of crisis within us... we know we're different, I'll be completely honest, we say we're French but deep down we know we're not 100% French, and we have to accept that...although we tried... we have a double culture, double nationality. It's something we've internalized, that's inside us and that won't leave us. " (Khadija G2)

However, the data suggested that the G2 finds it easier to consider themselves French than the G3. However, their position is permanently ambivalent throughout the dataset, with discourses of allegiance and of rejection, with patterns of membership and of dissociation. Khadija expresses her ambivalence towards her identity by stating that she feels and considers herself French, but then invalidates it by acknowledging that she is not truly French. This is persistent with a form of ambiguity that marked the G2 throughout the interviews. This allows this research to argue that the G2 has faced more violent identity troubles than G3 because they did not have the social

capital and mental space to reflect on the implications of their identity and it is something that, as Khadija argues, will have to stay with them forever. This is essentially how G2 Algerians built themselves as a social group.

Here we observe that the blurred French national identity stems from the treatment they have received and continue to receive from the French Republic, rather than being a result their own actions. However, the data suggest that surprisingly the G2 identifies more with the national identity, although blurred, than G3. They perceive a membership to the French national identity as less of a threat to their ethnic and religious identity, leading them to identify with it more easily. Therefore, the reflection on the question *Am I French?* is less deepened by G2 than G3. The G3 in this sense could be a key generation in how Algerian and Muslim identities in France are negotiated. There appears to be, from the data, a greater attachment to French identity from the G2 as opposed to the G3, who is already exploring other alternatives to replace their French membership. G2 is more characterised by its ambivalence and difficulty to position itself, by defining its boundaries as illustrated by Khadija. This may be due to their greater desire to integrate France as having foreign parents, whereas G3 in contrast, has a slightly more privileged position in regards to that. This is reflected in their actions, choices and boundaries which are more clearly thought throughout. This result here is showing surprising results that disrupt straight line assimilation process. By distancing themselves from the French identity, the G3 has created a form of reverse assimilation. Because all aspects of one's identity operated in everyday life are anchored within national space (Edensor 2016), it is even more difficult for the participants to negotiate their national identity within a nation that orchestrates their exclusion. This is a cause-effect relationship. Overall, the data converge towards one point: their inability to feel full members of the French nation.

b. A dual France

In this section we will examine how the participants conceptualise their reality by dividing France into two. To make sense of their discomfort and cope with it, they split France into two dimensions so that their need for belonging and identification is met through the imaginative creation of a second France.

What can you tell me about the French society ?

"I think a lot of things. In fact, when I see France I see 2 entities, the nationalist France, the native French...but then I look at the other France like my friends, which is the one of diversity, of the Algerian generations who grew up there, who built themselves there, we were born here, we grew up here, it's still our country... but there are a lot of divisions, it's a Manichean view, it's black or white, France is divided [...] There's sympathy between the 2 Frances, the France of the Franco-Francais, and that of the diversity, the arbi (arab), the khel (Black), the Muslims,... where I belong and can be myself." (Salahedin G3)

These data reveal that, for some participants, there is indeed a sense of belonging to France but to another France, one they have created in their social world, which in itself constitutes a mechanism of identity negotiation. Because of the struggles their experience with negotiating their French national identity and their membership to the majority, this second France acts as the society in which they are able to perform "verification of identity" (IT) or "depersonalisation" in (SIT) (Tajfel and Turner 1979; Stets and Burke 2014). Where they will be able to receive acceptance from their group to verify their identity. They verify their identity in the presence of others who are in the second France which also enhances their self-esteem. Therefore, their social belongingness is endorsed. They can see themselves in that second France and can have a more performative aspect of their identity, whether it be ethnic or religious as stated by Salahedin "*the France of the diversity... where I belong and can be myself*" without fearing rejection from the mainstream. They can feel part of a group while still feeling like they belong to France. That is how their self can develop itself and feel completed by the group (Stets and Burke 2014), by being immersed with people like them.

"When there were riots following the death of Nahel, I expressed my support on social media, and I noticed that my colleagues were completely silent... I don't understand why is a 17-year-old boy of Algerian origin shot dead by a policeman and nobody is shocked? So, to my French colleagues who don't show their support, what does that mean? It's clear that they live in one society and I live in another. They live in a French society that's better than mine, one where they're not affected by injustice and inequality... Either you defend values till the end or you don't... you can't pretend. That's why I feel there are two French societies, and unfortunately as an Algerian woman I belong to the tough one, no choice." (Rabia G2).

Another example of a dual France is presented by Rabia. She feels that as a French-born Algerian, she has been forced ("*no choice*") into belonging to the second France. She perceives her French colleagues to lead a more privileged life, unaffected by social issues that particularly involve ethnic minorities living in suburban areas, as exemplified by Nahel's case. This notion of being compelled

to belong to the other France whenever a tragic or disturbing social event occurs, goes alongside other narratives expressed by the participants. Others have mentioned that if any incident or crime committed by someone from a minority, but particularly Muslims or North-Africans, they are immediately asked to dissociate themselves, denounce the act, and be vocal about it. However, the opposite is rarely the case.

This concept of a dual France may be a means for the participants to navigate and negotiate their presence in France despite the challenges, where one France cannot meet their needs or integrate them, while the other essentially represents who they are. However this concept was also perceived as reinforcing boundaries between the participants and the majority.

c) In-group vs. Out-group.

This part deals with the feeling of belonging or distinction between the in-group and out-group as it was explored in the literature. How the participants feel towards the majority group and the boundaries that lie around it.

One of the most recurrent themes within the interviews is the distinction between the in-group and out-group. The participants are acutely aware of the clear boundaries that exist between themselves and the majority. They feel the negative impact of othering discourses, which prevent them from considering themselves as full-fledged members of the majority group. The ambivalence surrounding this theme adds to the complexity of comprehending it. On some aspects, they may share similarities, such as language, education or occupation, with the majority group but also feel a sense of disconnection. Data suggest that as a result of experiencing rejection and witnessing their parents or grand-parents being subjected to racism and discrimination, participants have developed a defensive strategy. They pro-actively avoid any potential rejection by removing themselves from certain groups. This defensive or protective strategy by the minority towards the majority reinforces boundaries with a clear separation between the in-group and the out-group. This is particularly evident in Hassan's quote.

« If you want today I carefully select my entourage, I only stay with whom I consider to be safe persons to me. I think we've all had a bad experience of aggression or micro-aggression, at school or in Uni, in environments we didn't choose, and we know how our parents and grand-parents were treated... but today I can choose where I work, the people I hang out with, so I no longer have this notion of whether I'm accepted or not by them" (Hassan G3).

Participants have adopted different strategies of being cautious and selective in their social circles to avoid rejection or emotional distress caused by repeated criticism. As a consequence, they tend to avoid mixing with groups from the majority out of fear of discomfort or feeling like the outsider. Khadija states that, due to increased pressures in the workplace, she is making excuses or altering the truth to conceal the fact that she is observing Ramadan. She clearly wishes to avoid further criticism or stigmatisation, which she no longer wants to face.

"Yes, but there's more and more pressure and innuendo. For example, fasting during Ramadan, I used to say it without any problem, but now I find ways to hide it... and I would never have thought that about myself, I've always assumed who I am, but if someone tells me you're coming to eat now I say no, I'm not hungry, or I'll eat later.. I shock myself, I don't wanna do this... but that's my mechanism, I can't stand criticism any more". (Khadija G2)

Identity negotiation also works through these stigmatising representations as it leads targeted groups and individuals to engage in strategies, individually or collectively, for dealing with and recovering from social exclusion and negative representation of the in-group (Andreouli & Howarth 2014). This is precisely what happened with Khadija and Hassan. These findings echo the concepts of SIT and IT. When an identity is performed, the meanings conveyed are received and interpreted by others (individuals and groups). The nature of the feedback received can directly impact the self-perception of one's identity, leading to withdrawal, concealment, or the display of a different facet of their identity (Stets and Burke 2014).

There is a clear sense of feeling out of place among French White groups. In France individuals from Algerian generations struggle to achieved their informal identity goals, such as defining their position within society and feeling valued as a member (Abdessadek 2012). Therefore the less able one is to find their position within society, the more it adds to their sense of discomfort. This can lead to stronger boundaries being built between the minority and majority group, which is precisely what the participants conveyed throughout the interviews.

1.3. The discomfort of French identity in a post-colonial France.

This theme explores how the post-colonial French society has shaped their identities and how the colonial past is taken into account during stages of identity construction and negotiation. As

previously noted, their challenges in identifying as French directly stem from the assimilation model and social climate present in France. However this following section highlights how their detachment from France also emanates from the colonial history between France and Algeria. Being French is viewed by the participants as a betrayal, an act of treason towards Algeria.

The data used for this theme was primarily sourced through a visual question. During the interview, participants were shown a picture displaying the Algerian and French flags and asked them to choose one while elaborating the reason behind their choice. This was an interesting aspect of the interview as having a visual alongside the question has facilitated an almost instinctive response from the participants.

« Algerian...It's who we are, for us the flag is really important, it's the symbol of resistance... like the same way France still tries to control us... I can't choose France because I feel that would be a betrayal...They broke my family, they broke my parents' dreams and indirectly they broke us... I feel like the root of all evil for us comes from the French colonisation and France just carried on doing their old work with us. » (Omar G2).

Without exception, all the interviews made negative references to France and its colonial past. Here, Omar holds France responsible for his family's struggles, using powerful words such as '*they broke my family*'. This sentiment was shared by other participants in regards to their own familial history. In addition to the current difficulties they experienced in identifying with the nation, feeling French/being French was interpreted by some as aligning with the colonisers and disregarding Algerian history. We have demonstrated through various research that France has drawn current policies from the colonial period, which is also reflected by Omar when he states that France perpetuates its old colonial influence over the Algerian generations.

It is significant to note that regarding the visual question: for the G2: 6 chose Algeria, 2 selected both, 1 opted for France and 1 chose none. For the G3: 8 chose Algeria, 1 selected both and 1 opted for France. Once again, these findings defeat claims that the third generation views Algeria like a myth or an ideal, or that the second-generation has naturally more attachments to Algeria (Hargreaves 2010). Rather, my research claims that Algeria, under different aspects, is deeply rooted in their identity, reaching beyond a vague idea. There is, among the participants, a form of Algerian nationalism, which is understandable as the majority are bi-nationals and may feel entitled to express such views.

Overall, the colonial memory and History remains very present and impactful, affecting both the G2 and G3. Although it affected more G2, the data suggest that G3 either cannot break free from the influence that has the colonial past on their identity.

2. Ethnic and Religious Identities: intergenerational patterns.

2.1. Ethnic and Religious Upbringing

Participants were asked to rate the importance of their culture and religion on a scale of 1 to 10. The mean response for each generation was calculated. G2 participants rated their culture as 7.2/10 and their religion as 6.8/10 while G3 participants rated their culture as 8.2/10 and their religion as 10/10. The purpose of this question was to establish a numerical reference for distinguishing between the two generations and to compare the findings with the rest of the data. This will be further explored in the following sections.

a) The second-generation

All G2 participants were raised in a traditional way, with respect to their culture and ethnic practices. The data suggests that religion was a part of their ethnic identity, as noted by Khadija. Ethnic and religious identities were not distinct but rather part of a single identity. They all rigorously took part in ethno-religious events such as Eid, Ramadan, birth celebrations, weddings, and traditional gatherings. Their lives were punctuated by their connection to Algeria. Most reported that their families lived in poor conditions in order to save money to be able to afford yearly travel to their homeland. The participants possess knowledge of the ethnic language, culture, social etiquettes, and mentality, and have expressed minimal difficulties in blending in.

“Our religious education was part of the culture, in the sense that we were taught to believe in God, do Ramadan, do the celebrations but as our parents were less educated, couldn't read or write, they didn't explain to us what the prophet did, the reasons, the background to religion etc... they didn't know themselves.. So religious education but the old-fashioned way, with no explanation”. (Khadija G2)

"My parents were stuck with the vision of Algeria in the 50s-60s, with a vision of colonisation, of mistrust, a vision of Algeria that no longer exists. So we were brought up with this vision, with an education that didn't help us develop our identity, an in-between... it was very complicated. We wanted to grow and evolve, but they didn't... they stayed frozen. And we were brought up not to make waves, not to stand out like in the colonial mentality in Algeria. [...] and when we went back to Algeria it was like... you don't go out in France because the outside the loss of our culture, and you don't go out in bled because of violence... so as time went by, the bled gradually disgusted us, in fact we couldn't do anything over there either... so how could I love Algeria, my culture and my parents?". (Amina G2)

The data suggests that at times, they had a desire to explore alternative identifications, resulting in patterns of ethnic and religious division. However, in reality, this often translated into familial breakage and a desire for emancipation. For Belhaddad (2001), the restrictions imposed by one's cultural heritage, whether ethnic, religious or familial, provide a fertile ground for identity instability. As Amina demonstrates, she suffered a double restriction: in France and in Algeria. This was recurrent across the data. In fact, their parents' habitus could not be changed, it was already embedded in the Algerian colonial context. This has created a generation caught between the parental culture and society, leading to psychological and even physical violence (Silverstein 2004). This contributed to the rejection of both Algeria and the first-generation, which combined to the social exclusion experienced in France, resulted in patterns of a 'no man's land' identity. This echoes what Boyer (2022) has identified as being "*flottement identitaire*" (identity floating) which results from a sense of emptiness where they struggled with belonging and group membership.

The beur generation is caught between two worlds and is a generation scarred by inter-generational traumas and sufferings. These findings confirm Hargreaves' (2010) description of 'the lost generation'. However, as they get older, G2 participants tend to make peace with their identity crisis, although they acknowledge that they will never recover from it. Moreover, participants have expressed that discussing their confusion or crisis surrounding their identity was taboo, and out of respect for their parents. They felt unable to openly communicate about it, resulting in feelings of shame.

b) The third-generation

G3 participants, while acknowledging their struggles, describe their upbringing as less disruptive and problematic than their parents. They feel that they lived a relatively normal life with fewer

social and economic challenges. This is likely to be attributed to the fact that their parents were born and raised in France and therefore had a certain level of understanding of the French structural system. However, the difficulties they experienced mainly stemmed from the intergenerational traumas they carry, combined with their efforts to protect themselves from the French social climate towards non-White minorities.

Growing up, did you take part in cultural and religious events?

"Yes, we were marked by Ramadan, Aid, buying new clothes, these are memories that leave their mark... my grandmother who used to put the henna on us before going to sleep, sleeping all together at her house, going to weddings, the traditionnal clothing, the food, the music, we were immersed in it a lot... then for religion it's true that it was really linked to culture, the two were intertwined." (Ibrahim G3)

There is no evidence of ethnic breakage in the G3, as was identified in the G2. Most of G3 participants experienced a common pattern in which their religion identity flourished between the ages of 16 to 18, leading them to increase their religious knowledge and practices. For example, three girls began wearing headscarves at ages 16, 17, and 18, while boys began to observe Ramadan rigorously, pray more frequently around the same age, and regularly going to the mosque. The participants did not have a strong religious upbringing, so they had to construct their religious identity themselves. This resulted in a stronger self-constructed religious identity than the G2. Their ethnic upbringing included some religious principles and values, intertwined with cultural practices. However, the participants felt that some details were missing, which led them to a desire to find ways to achieve stronger ethno-religious identifications.

"Because I was feeling fake, like I'm not Algerian enough and I'm not French enough at some point I felt I did not have an identity beyond what has been transmitted to me, like beyond what I grew up seeing, which we had to combine with the French influence.. so I needed to understand everything, to be educated about the History, to learn the insides of my culture and my religion in depth. I needed that to be able to claim my Algerian and Muslim identity [...] Not only me to be honest, it was the same for lots of G3 around me." (Aicha G3)

"I don't think my generation would be like that if our parents didn't go through these traumas and crises [...] Growing up it was weird sometimes because we were necessarily influenced by our parents' periods of identity crisis, like when my mother had her periods of rejection, we just went along with it, and for example when we went to visit the family or the grandparents hop magically she went back to being Algerian and Muslim... Now that we've grown up we understand. I think that in a way we wanted to distance ourselves from them on that point, the same way they wanted to distance themselves from their parents." (Bilal G3)

Finally, it was by the flaws and shortcomings of their parents that the G3 was able to negotiate themselves. Our findings suggest that each generation had a desire to distance and reconstruct themselves in response to the flaws and shortcomings of their predecessors. The G3 appears to have accomplished this task more successfully than the G2, with minimised turmoil. These quotes above demonstrate a clear work of deconstruction and reconstruction of ethnic and religious practices. Additionally, we can refer the Ethnic authenticity versus Ethnic Fraud of Nagel (1994), which stipulates that ethnic heritage solely through ancestry is not sufficient alone, the authenticity of the ethnicity can be challenged by questions regarding one's cultural depth and knowledge, ability of speaking the ethnic language or everyday ethnic practices. The data suggest that the G3 went from experiencing patterns of Ethnic Fraud to achieving Ethnic authenticity.

However, on some level, they take pride in the French influence on who they are today. They strive to embrace to positive aspects including cultural and intellectual contributions, as well as critical thinking, and dismiss the negative ones. While they could have taken greater pride in the French contributions, pressures to assimilate and social models of exclusion have hindered their ability to do so.

2.2. Ethnic and Religious identity Negotiation

Ethnic and religious identity negotiation among G2 and G3 participants were identified through patterns of reactivity, revival and reconciliation. Moreover, this section further explores and compare their strategies of ethnic and religious transmission.

a) Reactivity, Revival and Reconciliation

"My sense of belonging had faded for many years...I didn't want or try to keep the link with the Algerian and Muslim culture, and at one point I wasn't even observing Ramadan... I'd more or less lost this culture..I wasn't happy in this culture.... I blamed my culture and my parents for the way we were raised, it has left me many scars.... they probably did what they could in France... I try to understand and forgive. But my children brought me back to it, they are very into religion and very attached to Algeria... thanks to them I rediscover another aspect of Algeria and Islam, they brought back all these religious and cultural notions back into me." (Jamila G2)

Reconciliation in the data pertains to the G2 and is directly linked to the revival of the G3. It is noteworthy that G3 has played a crucial role in this reconciliation as described by Jamila. The involvement of G3 in reconciling their parents regarding their affiliations with Algeria or Islam is in line with the findings that suggest an ethnic and religious revival among this group. Through their reconciliation, G2 has arguably experienced a revival preceded by an ethnic and religious decline. This demonstrates the influence that a generation can have on another, with in this case we observe a form of reverse revival: G3 influences G2. G3 who is expected to have weakened ethnic or religious ties than G3, is finally responsible for the resurgence of the latter. Besides, we observe that the revival among G3 is attributed to two factors: the shortcomings of their parents and the social climate in France. As for G2, its revival can be attributed to the influence of G3 as well as a desire to reconcile with the first-generation, "*to understand and forgive*", as expressed by Jamila.

"Yes my practices have grown stronger, in fact I think that before they were taken for granted like our parents did, so we didn't ask ourselves any questions and as we've grown older we had a cultural and religious awakening, a desire to learn more, to know why we do things beyond what has been passed down to us, to really know the whys and wherefores and to have conscious practices. I think it's also to repair the job that our parents did not fully achieved with us [...] The more we practice the more France hates us, and the more they hate us the more we embrace these identities. » (Aicha G3)

The revival for G3 is translated into the deepening of their ethnic and cultural practices. Participants were prompted to talk about their everyday practices growing up and now, and to describe if these have changed and why. The clear strengthening their practices originates from a quest for a deeper search of their identity. The religious revival is also evidenced through wearing the headscarf: 3 in the G3, against 0 in the G2. To borrow from Silverstein (2004), these research findings suggest that the main difference between G2 and G3 lies in "inheriting ethnicity" versus "investigating ethnicity". There is a real work of exploration that has been achieved by G3. Moreover, reconciliation as a concept for them operates in a form of repair from the shortcomings of their parents, as described by Aicha.

"We feel less and less French, the more they threaten our Algerian or Muslim identity the more it takes over. It's almost natural and instinctive. The more you feel attacked, the more your identity will fluctuate. I think France has completely failed our model of integration and after 3 or 4 generations they're still pointing the finger at us while wanting us to be part of France." (Hicham G2)

What is described here by Hicham, and previously by Aicha, refers precisely to the theory of “reactive ethnicity” (Portes and Rumbaut 2001) which was extensively discussed in chapter 3 of the literature review. There is no literature in France that contrasts the theory of reactive ethnicity and the identity resurgence among G2 or G3 in France. Patterns of reactive ethnicity among G2 participants was mostly found among the men, such as Hicham, Boumedienne, Abdelrahman and Omar due to experiencing structural discrimination. This is consistent with the results of McAvay and Safi (2023) who argue in favour of a reactive activity whereby ethno-racial identifications are strengthened among the second-generation due to feeling of exclusion.

b) Strategies of transmission

Individuals who possess an authentic ethnic identity are more inclined to maintain and transmit it to future generations (Nagel 1994). However, for immigrant generations living in a new context, identity preservation and transmission can be a challenging task that requires the creation of specific strategies. The family represents the first socialisation bubble to which children are exposed, thus, it plays a crucial role in the persistence of specific ethnic and religious codes, which is achieved through the parents' ability to accomplish cultural transmission (Bisin and Verdier, 2000). Participants were asked about transmission, whether their actions resulted from active or passive choices.

"It was very passive... There was an unconscious reject of the 1st generation.... I think there was a time when we were so desperate to fit in... we felt Algerian, Muslim, but we weren't thinking things through with ourselves [...] We told ourselves that they were born in France to parents born in France... We were aware of our culture but we took it for granted... I think that our children's generation suffered from our way of being, and they were more in search of an identity, a deeper understanding, because they didn't necessarily find that in their parents' generation, whereas we had it from our parents... so the grand-parents often stepped in where we couldn't. I regret it...around me it's more or less the same." (Boumedienne G2)

Here, Boumedienne explains that there has been a breakage with G1, and reconciliation with the parents is not an easy task to achieve. He experienced hindrances in transmission to his children due to patterns of ethnic decline and dissociation from the parents. However while he was experiencing a sort of ethnic vagrancy, ethnic transmission was achieved by his parents. Transmission through the grand-parents was expressed by the majority of the G3 participants

during the interviews, which logically coincides with patterns of ethnic and religious decline and of identity crisis for the G2. The data also revealed expressions of regret from the majority of G2 participants, for not investing enough effort in transmitting ethnic and religious values to their children, as described by Boumedienne.

"Active.. All religious and cultural festivals are celebrated. We dress in traditional Algerian clothes, we put henna before Aid, we cook Algerian dishes, we play Algerian music, and we travel there too. We teach them the Quran and our religious values so they have a solid religious background. I talk a lot to them about our Algerian culture and History, I try to pass on the language too. Because for the 4th generation, if we don't do the job, everything will be lost, so our role is decisive... we are the key generation, and it's from us that it will be decided whether the duty of transmission continues or stops. I want my children to grow up knowing who they are and not feeling uncomfortable. In fact, I'm doing the work now so that they don't have to, like we did." (Aicha G3)

Aicha has established a robust strategy and enumerates what kind of everyday actions she undertakes to ensure the transmission of her ethnic and religious values to her children. This varies from cooking, clothing, talking, teaching and travelling. Her strategies directly derives from her belief that if her generation does not put in the effort of transmission to the next one, their ethnic and religious identities may rapidly fade away. Aicha uses the term “*key generation*” to describe the G3 which is consistent with our findings regarding the ethnic and religious revival of this group. Strategies of ethnic and religious transmission are part of a rational reaction from minorities to trends of assimilation with the mainstream (Bisin and Verdier 2000).

"Yes inshaAllah, it's my duty. It will be through religious and cultural education, and by marrying an Algerian from there to ensure a complete transmission, and going back to the country.» (Chaima G3)

Additionally, the data has shown that one strategy for a successful transmission to the next generation is through inter-cultural marriage with a native Algerian, as suggested by Chaima. This represents a way of delegating the transmission task to someone who is more anchored and familiar with all things related to the Algerian ethnicity. Kiwan (2007) argues that religious rituals and interracial marriages were the most cited indicators of ethno-religious identity performance. She also argues that marriages in minority studies are one of the most powerful ways of assessing

the extent to which migrants and their children have integrated or assimilated, and if they have preserved traditional and family values. However, no literature has been identified that examines the strategy and mechanisms of G3 Algerians in France marrying G1 Algerians to ensure successful transmission of heritage. Similarly, there is currently no literature available on the strategies of intergenerational ethnic transmission among Algerian generations in France. Therefore, these findings aim to fill a gap on the strategies of transmission of the G3, which corroborates findings on the ethnic and religious revival they experience.

Overall, the research argues that there are much stronger strategies for ethnic and religious transmission among the G3 than G2, who engaged in more passive transmission. The G3 mostly blames their parents for not achieving complete linguistic transmission, despite being fluent themselves. This has left them lacking in linguistic skills, which they say prevents them from embracing an achieved ethnic identity.

2.3. Spatial Segregation

These research findings establish a link between the way participants construct and reflect on their identities and the place in which they resided or still remain. Literature suggests that North and sub-Saharan African ethnic groups are the most spatially segregated in France (Grillo 1985; Pan Ke Shon 2009; Douzet and Robine 2015; McAvay and Safi 2018). Therefore, this section explores the impact of spatial segregation on their lives and identity negotiation, as well as examining how and why these identities overlap.

a) The impact of spatial segregation

Spatial segregation in France is not a coincidence, but a well-planned social scheme (Douzet and Robine 2015). The expansion of disadvantaged neighbourhoods in France is directly linked to post-colonial immigration (McAvay and Safi 2018) which has given rise to phenomena of ghettoization (Grillo 1985). The following quotes accurately describe the lived realities of Algerians immigrants and their children who were part of a social plan to relocate and segregate them into undesirable neighbourhoods.

"We lived in a prefabricated house, 10 siblings and 2 parents.. it was small but I have good memories... I could even say that I'm proud of it. At the age of 12 we were made to move to an area with a large Algerian population... the house where we lived was taken over by the Council because they had orders to get all the North Africans together, we weren't given a choice. When you see how we were clustered... the proof is that we lived in a shack, then a prefabricated house and then we were forced into a communitarian neighbourhood... there was clearly a desire for inegalitarianism. At the same time I was going to schools and classes where there were only people from my area, and 27 out of 30 were North Africans, especially Algerians." (Boumedienne G2)

"My parents were put in a camp on the outskirts of the city. One side for families, one for the workers. The conditions were inhuman, they slept on the ground, there was mud everywhere, a water pump to collect rainwater...Right from the start, they were told that they were here to rebuild France. Do you imagine that there was a barrier that prevented them from leaving the camp, except for the labourers to go to work. Then they moved us to a poor neighbourhood with only Algerians like us... So from that point on, how could Algerian immigration to France be fully successful?" (Abdelrahman G2)

These quotes above demonstrate France's strong desire to gather North-African immigrant groups into impoverished places, away from the sight of the French urban dwellers. Boumedienne describes how he and his family, from living in a shack to a prefabricated house, were being forced to relocate into a poor area with a high concentration of Algerians. Each time, they lived in a segregated and impoverished area, mostly inhabited by Algerians. Similarly, Abdelrahman, recalls his parents' experience of living in a camp closed off by a barricade where movements were monitored, in disastrous conditions. Then, like Boumedienne, they were moved into a segregated area. The French administration system made deliberated housing choices that restricted or offered no choice to immigrant populations, clustering them in disadvantage spatial areas, particularly Algerians as they were the largest force labour (Grillo 1985). For example, media and political discourses often suggest that schools are threatened by communitarianism, while creating the very strict conditions for it to happen, as evidenced by Boumedienne. The concentration of Algerian children in state schools was created through spatial segregation. State schools located in segregated areas did not have an equal impact on students, which was later reflected in the labour market (Grillo, 1985).

Our data suggest that participants tend to feel attached to the places where they grew up and

although they understand that they have been socially conditioned to live in disadvantaged areas, they embrace it, like Boumedienne. This echoes Kiwan's findings (2007) in how participants strongly identify with both their ethnic and socio-economic groups. The suburbs play a significant role in the construction of their identities.

Furthermore, the data revealed two trends: those who achieved social mobility and spatial assimilation, which would fit the normal assimilation path, and those who, despite achieving social mobility decided to remain in working-class areas where they benefit from the proximity with co-ethnics. Participants who assimilated spatially to areas with low co-ethnic and co-religious inhabitants, tended to be those who had experienced more ethnic and religious decline with patterns of identity crisis. Moving away from the neighbourhoods they grew up in was also a way to distance themselves from their ethno-religious group and their parents, as suggested by Jamila (G2): *"I was dreaming of the day I'd move out, be in a big city where no one knows me, where I could be free, and be far from my parents."*

b) La Banlieue Intertwined with Ethnic and Religious Identities

Studies indicate that the third generation has been influenced by life in la banlieue (Silverstein 2004; Hargreaves 2010). Hargreaves (2010, p.1294) questions whether they produce more meaning as part of a 'multi-ethnic post-colonial banlieue generation' than as a distinct ethnic group. Indeed, when asked to identify factors that have helped them to construct and maintain their identity, participants frequently mentioned the suburbs.

"I think my personal research and work, my mother, my grandparents and definitely my environment because I lived in a neighbourhood with a majority of Algerians and Muslims... when I think it had a great influence on the way I constructed my ethnic and religious belonging, we kind of influenced and supported each other, it's nice to live in proximity with people that are just like you. » (Ibrahim G3)

Like Ibrahim, several participants acknowledged the role and influence living in la banlieue had on their identity journey. They believed that without having lived there they may not have developed a strong sense of ethnic and religious identity, or at least not to the same extent. This was equally addressed by the second and third-generation among those who experienced life in *la banlieue*, primarily in suburban areas of Lille, Paris and Marseille.

This data suggests that the spatial concentration of ethnic youth is not always a negative experience and is often able to provide them with a support network (Douzet and Robine 2015), as seen with Ibrahim. To him, living in an area with high co-ethnic concentration had a great impact on his ability to develop himself. It is what was found among many participants; although social mobility was achieved, it is by choice that they live in these areas because they benefit from living among co-ethnic people. It was found among many participants that social mobility had been achieved, however it is by choice that they remain in suburban areas as they benefit from living among people of the same ethnicity. For instance, Ibrahim, a data scientist, chose to remain in la banlieue, despite belonging to a higher socio-economic class.

"Unfortunately, there's a lot of racism in France, we mix up a lot of things, we have a bad image of foreigners, especially Arabs and Blacks from suburban areas, which is bad. Personally, I never grew up in a banlieue and yet I'm immediately labelled as a banlieusard with all the prejudices that follow, after a while I even ended up believing that I'm from la banlieue too (laughs)... it's as if you've got a label written directly on your head before you even open your mouth" (Hassan G3)

Hassan is associated with living in the banlieue on the basis of his racial phenotype. Labeling Hassan as a '*banlieusard*' is an example of the racialization of urban spaces in France, as he carries a place-stigma for somewhere he has never lived. In other words, he is being ascribed an identity of banlieusard with which he does not identify. The findings suggest that even in cases like Hocine, where there are patterns of spatial assimilation, spatial desegregation is still not widely achieved as the *banlieusard* identity is forced upon French-born Algerians. This observation adds to previous research on the topic of racialization of suburban spaces in France. According to Dozine and Robine (2015), the term 'jeunes des banlieues' (suburban youths) is highly racialised and is often used interchangeably by the media, politicians, and non-suburban residents to refer to North or Sub-Saharan youth descendants. This stigmatises the entire ethnic group, despite the fact that a portion of them have never lived in suburban segregated areas. Therefore, the data indicates that this reinforces patterns of self-identification that differentiate them from the majority.

Moreover, this findings further suggest that ethno-racial stigma and segregation can override spatial stigma in some cases. Additional research indicates that second-generation European immigrant groups living in working-class neighbourhoods are not exposed to the same degree of

ethno-racial and spatial discrimination as second-generation North and Sub-Saharan African groups (McAvay and Safi 2018). What plays in the balance of inequalities here is the ethno-racial aspect. This relates to Hassan alien to life in the suburbs, yet, prone to negative labels and place-stigma. Further, Hassan states “*after a while I even ended up believing that I'm from la banlieue too*” which aligns with Van de Wetering's (2020) theory of internalised attributed identities.

"Multiple... I don't think we can afford to say I have a single identity that would be forgetting part of who we are. In order of importance, I'd say I'm Muslim, Algerian and I'm also a French banlieusard, la banlieue lives in me...it's made me who I am. You have to combine and learn to accept all your identities. [...] We've been put under so much pressure with all these identity issues, we've been made to doubt and to hate ourselves for being Algerian, banlieusard or Muslim, we had to heal from that... but now I realise, la banlieue protected me against experiencing too much racism, while I was inside I was protected like in a cocoon.. it's the outside that used to scare us."
(Hicham G2)

When asked if participants consider their identity to be single or multiple, Hicham described it as multifaceted and emphasized that being a *banlieusard* is an integral part of his social identity. He also brought light to an aspect of la banlieue that is often overlooked. He believes that living in la banlieue has shielded him from experiencing racism, likening it to life in a cocoon, and stated that it is life outside *la banlieue* that exposed him to discrimination and negative experiences. Hicham further explains that as a G2 Algerian man from suburban areas, he has been made to hate a part of himself, instead of embracing it. Indeed, research suggests that the banlieue youth is seen as an abnormal group, and the panel of identities advanced within la banlieue are perceived as a threat to Republican values (Van de Wetering 2020). Therefore, if, as argued by Pan Ke Shon (2009), spatial segregation is accompanied by ethnic segregation, it means that there is a causal relationship between them. This relationship, in turn, influences the formation and negotiation of ethnic individuals who are likely to identify against the mainstream.

As demonstrated in this section, la banlieue can bring both comfort and difficulties; being “as much of a nest as a cage” (Dozine and Robine 2015, p.44) as experienced by Ibrahim, Hicham and Jamila, which can have an impact on their identity. Through its housing policies, France seems to have an obsessive neurosis with the separateness between ethnic groups and the native population (Grillo 1985), as seen with Boumedienne and Abdelrahman. This clearly reflects on the ideology of the French assimilationist and colour-blind approach, and again highlights its

paradoxical nature. Ethnic and spatial identities often overlap, not always due to real spatial reasons but because certain ethnic groups carry a place-stigma, as seen with Hassan. Furthermore, according to McAvay and Safi (2023) there seems to be no conflict, nor a replacement between the class and race identities of minorities. Both identities are significant, possibly due to the feeling of being an outsider in both aspects.

3. Re-migration; a coping mechanism

This section examines the patterns of re-migration identified in the research findings. It reveals how structural social conditions, as well as difficulties to identify with the mainstream can lead to patterns of re-migration. This translated into “*Le Mythe du Retour*” (The Myth of Return) for G2, and into patterns of return migration or “ethnic return” for G3.

3.1. Le Mythe du Retour

Our findings indicate that eight in ten G2 participants were raised with the notion of return migration, and seven in ten G3 participants indicate that their parents were also brought up with this idea. This theme primarily concerns the second-generation as no pattern of *Le mythe du retour* has been identified for the upbringing of the G3. Return migration refers to the idea of definitive resettlement into the homeland (Gmelch 1980). The concept of return migration, but particularly '*le mythe du retour*' proves crucial to a thorough study of the Algerian minority in France (Cherif 2007).

"Ah yes, in the neighbourhood we were one of the first families to say we were going to go back to the 'bled', from the end of the 70s to the beginning of the 90s we had this project, the house was built... To be honest, the moment we started our studies they realised that, that was it, we weren't going back." (Rabia G2).

Le mythe du retour was mostly discussed with G2 participants as they were directly impacted by it. The primary goal for Algerian labourers was to amass enough financial goods to make a triumphant come back into the homeland with their children (Cherif 2007). However, after years of deceptions, lived discrimination and overall unhappiness, fathers could never realise nor accomplish themselves in this project, thus giving rise to the myth. The research data suggest that

the myth of return was commonly symbolised by the construction of a family home on the family land as described by Rabia, and the constant reminder by the parents that the return was approaching. Participants stated that the notion of return migration lasted for about 10 to 15 years for each of the families concerned. However, as stated by Rabia, participants commonly reported that as they became more involved within the education system, the idea of return migration was less present in their lives. Indeed, once children of first-generation immigrants enrol in the school system, the family is less likely to achieve a definitive return (Vathi 2022).

However, this idea of returning to the homeland also had its downsides for the G2 as it had a strong impact on their ability to integrate and to identify with the mainstream. Here, as explained by Jamila:

"Always seeing my parents depressed, constantly talking about their country and telling us every year: that's it we're leaving this year, don't bother integrating here or mixing with the French, we're going back to our country for good." (Jamila G2)

This finding corroborates Cherif's study (2007), where participants were heavily influenced by *le mythe du retour* in their identity journey. For many years, fathers believed in an indubitable return to the homeland and projected this desire onto their children to the extent that children were not allowed to imagine their future in France but rather constructing a hypothetical life in Algeria for an undetermined day. Reinforced by lived inequalities and discrimination in France, fathers, who were for most the family decision makers, saw no future in France. Returning to Algeria with educated children, imbued with the Algerian culture and language, was a marker of success for Algerian fathers. But at some point the family no longer had the control over a French future for their children and had to slowly give up on that dream. This dimension is reflected by Rabia and Jamila. Similarly our data suggest that *le mythe du retour* is part of the fact that identity construction and negotiation has been arduous for Algerian immigrants and their children and constitutes a factor that led to patterns of confusion, disorientation and identity crisis.

3.2. Return migration

One primary definition of return migration is "the movement of emigrants back to their homelands to resettle" (Gmelch 1980, p.136), which respectively refers to definitive return. Others scholars

like Cassarino (2008) and Bilgili (2022) advocate for a broader definition that includes both definitive and temporary return to the homeland. Meanwhile, King and Christou (2011) are in favour of discussing return migration as a sociological concept that encompasses not only actual return but also the hope, aspiration, and plan to return. Bilgili (2022, p.43) distinguishes between four types of return migration: Return mobilities (return visits like holidays or ancestral visits), Imaginary Return (the aspiration, intention, and plan to return), Return Migration (the long-term ancestral return), and Post-Return (the re-integration process). Our findings are specifically related to the concept of Imaginary Return and Return Migration.

Do you see yourself living in Algeria?

"Yes, I have a theory: my grandparents came to France in a post-colonial context where it was difficult for them, they were always planning to go back, the myth of the return, but by force of circumstances they ended up having more children in France and staying there... they never had the opportunity to go back permanently, and now because of deaths it will always be unfinished business....even if my grandfather lives 6 months a year in Algeria now... I tell myself that in the end, after all those sacrifices and that difficult life in France, they gained nothing more than those who stayed there, their children didn't necessarily follow the reason why their parents came, and I think that going back to Algeria is honouring their memory and close the loop. I bought my flat there and getting ready to move. It's a personal source of pride to think that I've gone all the way and that I've completed their story. And at least my children will grow up there, they'll know their roots and won't feel what we felt in France." (Ibrahim G3)

This quote above gives evidence for a return migration. Ibrahim, a G3, has carefully considered his options and established a clear plan of return migration. Motivated by his family's history, as well as that of thousands of Algerians, returning to Algeria is a way for him to honour the memory of his grandparents. His idea to return goes beyond the imaginary stage; he acquired a property and says that he is getting ready to move. Additionally, Ibrahim emphasises the importance of raising children in his ancestral home so that they can be imbued by the Algerian culture, highlighted by *"they'll know their roots and won't feel what we felt"*. This kind of return migration is described by Tsuda (2009) as "ethnic return", referring to subsequent immigrant generations returning to the ethnic homeland after being born and brought up outside of their ancestral country. Moreover, Ibrahim's strategy of ethnic return represents both a strategy of transmission and protection: making sure that his descendants understand and appreciate their ethnic roots while also protecting them from the social struggles felt by previous Algerian-generations in France. This confirms the previous claim that the G3 is actively upholding the heritage retention, as well as a duty of memory and an homage to the G1 who did not achieve their dream of returning to their

homeland.

“And sometimes I think I should leave France, even though I love part of it, it's going to be inevitable for us, they don't want us here... so yeah I'd love Algeria, in a big city or the Gulf countries.” (Bilal G3)

Bilal, here, qualifies the return migration as *“inevitable for us”* referring to him and his group. He imagines a return migration less as a means to reinforce ethnic ties like Ibrahim does but more as a means to distance himself from the social context in France due to the same reasons why they couldn't fully identify with mainstream society. When studying the intentions of an Imaginary Return, it is of primary importance to examine the dimensions of psycho-social well-being to understand the underlying factors (Vathi 2022). Indeed, patterns of return migration are often intertwined with questions of identity, well-being and exclusion from the receiving country (Vathi 2022). These findings are not an indication of an inability to integrate in France, but rather a result of duty of memory to the ethnic group and a rejection of France due to the mistreatment of Algerian generations living there.

Overall, six out of ten participants from the G3 expressed their intentions to return to Algeria, either temporarily or for a definitive return. Intentions might or might not translate into real returns but they are an important part of the process and should not be overlooked (King and Christou 2011). These findings contradict Hargreaves (2010) who argued that if return to the homeland was not achieved with the second-generation, it is almost unimaginable for the third. Moreover, these findings suggest that this return functions as a performative aspect of all three identities: ethnic, as a return to the country of origin; religious, as a return to a Muslim country; and national, as bi-nationals seek to strengthen their national ties. However, meagre attention is paid to return migration as a coping strategy for negotiating identity, strengthening of ethnic and religious ties and as a protective mechanism. On the other hand, these findings also contradict traditional models of immigrant integration which suggest gradual assimilation and a decline in ethnic ties as previously discussed. Nonetheless, diasporic homecomings are ambivalent and can be a source of negative experiences as the individual removes himself from the receiving society -their birth country- to return to the ancestral country in which they have never lived, despite having strong ethnic, religious and national ties with it (Tsuda 2009). However, the existing literature does not provide sufficient insight on this field.

V. CONCLUSION

1. Key findings and Further research

Ethnic identity formations are socially and historically dependant (Feliciano and Rumbaut 2018), therefore research findings cannot be generalised and are different from one group to another, from one generation to another. Overall the research shows a great level of coherence and convergence throughout the data and the findings. No contradictions have been identified between the themes.

Return migration/Ethnic return is a prominent finding. Our findings suggest a significant trend of return mobilities and imaginary return, particularly expressed by the third-generation. This thesis argues that patterns of return migration are not exclusive to the first-generation. There is a possibility that this trend will grow among third-generation Algerians, as evidenced by the data. Therefore, it deserves more attention as it is an area that crucially lacks research. Individuals may be motivated by a desire to live their identity to the fullest without facing marginalisation and discrimination. It is for them a way to take back their ownership over how they articulate the self in society, and being able to simultaneously achieve their ethnic, religious and national identity (in this case the nation being Algeria). Moreover, by paying tribute to Algeria and detaching themselves from the colonial influence that France still exerts, as we have demonstrated throughout the findings, on Algerians and Muslims. Therefore we are confident that this research lays the foundations for further, more in-depth research on this subject. Maybe it was ineluctable. History only will tell, but it is worth considering whether return migration is intended for third-generation Algerians. Moreover, the Post-Return (Bilgili 2022) as in the re-integration process into the homeland, could be a fascinating area for further research.

This research has identified that the sufferings and scars of the second-generation have paved the way for the third to optimise their chances for a better negotiation of their ethnic, religious and national identity, although national remains the most complex aspect of the self. The influence of the third generation, due to their own ethnic and religious revival, on the second generation has led to patterns of reconciliation and revival, which is uncommon and goes against theories of natural assimilation. This constitutes another key finding by presenting the third-generation as a

potential key factor of an ethnic and religious revival in France, also due to their transmission strategies.

Considering that French-born descendants of Algerian immigrants are still treated in France as the deviant other, some have developed strategies of self-presentation to counter their stigma and assure the general population of their good morals (Loyal 2009). The data show that participants have initially try to advance positive character, as Chaima and Khadija said “*We tried to play the good Arab, the good Muslim*”. However, they quickly realised that it was simply not sufficient to counter a stigma that is deeply embedded in France. That is why they looked towards other forms of social strategies such as withdrawal, concealment or ignorance.

Additionally, this thesis argues that the relation to the colonial past remains strong reaching to the third-generation. The colonial past combined with France's assimilationist system appear to be the triggers of their identity struggles and their difficulties in finding their place in society. Therefore, this thesis builds a convincing correlation between how the participants negotiate their identity and the colonial past. The participants were unanimous in saying that the colonial period had influenced who they are and had a direct impact on their lives in France. These data reinforce the claim that the colonial History and living in the post-colonial France, on top of the other challenges posed to the second and third Algerian generations, is at the centre of their national, ethnic and religious identity formation and negotiation. Whether it be for the laicite, assimilation, their blurred national identity or upbringing, participants have consistently drawn parallels with the colonial period. Our findings support that the identity of Algerians in France, regardless of the generation, is indissociable from the colonial History (Zehraoui 1996).

2. Limitations and Concluding remarks

Overall, no major limitations have been identified. However, because France does not take into account ethnic and religious census, the literature related to minorities in France is still overlooked in many aspects. Additionally, the subject of this research would have most definitely benefited from a larger scale study. Indeed, larger groups would have enabled the research to discover more patterns, and more time would have allowed for deeper analysis. However, this thesis has identified points for promising future research. Therefore, the strengths have definitely

outweighed the shortcomings.

The passage from studying the French in Algeria to Algerians in France was a radical shift in terms of power dynamics relation, and in spite of the decolonization, in reality the colonial past has paved the way for social relations, and the treatment of Algerians in France (Loyal 2009). As demonstrated, French laicite and the unique model of assimilation heavily draw from colonial discourses, that is why the dimension of post-colonial society is crucial in researching identities in France. Thus, this research provided a detailed account on how the participants, through various processes and strategies, managed to achieved strong ethno-religious identifications in a post-colonial France. Nonetheless, as discussed, identifications with the French nation was more tainted by rejection, despite acknowledging its influences.

This research highlights an overlapping of exclusion (social, economic, spatial, ethnic and religious), that led to the creation of new identity trends among the second and third Algerian generations, and supports the theory of segmented assimilation for these groups. Therefore, to borrow from Loyal (2009), this research argues that both strategies, assimilation or reaction (to stigma or reactive ethnicity), mean that in the context of Algerians in France, the migrant and his descendants experience and negotiate their identity in a contradictory way; on one side as a defensive stance against the dominant definition of them, on the other as a resignation to that same definition (Loyal 2009).

The research findings suggest that nationality does not necessarily equate to national identity, especially in situations where individuals from ethnic minorities are not considered part of the dominant culture. The participants by being Algerians and Muslims embody the figure of the significant other. As Triandafyllidou (1998) argues, each nation at any given time needs the significant other to gauge how the national identity can reassert itself and redefine its characteristics and its boundaries. However, this seems to be a persistent feature of the French tradition. Therefore, because France is the principal actor of their exclusion, it is also the principal cause for their reject. Their reluctance to opt for a French national identity subsists through France's refusal to accept them in "their historical specificity" (Addi 1993, p.220). In a way, you reap what you sow.

VI. Bibliography

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VII. Appendices

Appendix 1. Information Sheet (Translated to English)

INFORMATION SHEET

I'd like to invite you to participate in a research study as part of my Masters by Research in Sociology (University of York). Before you decide whether to participate or not it is important that you understand why the research is being carried out and what it will involve. Please take time to consider the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. If there is anything that is not clear, or if you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at afs534@york.ac.uk

The research has received approval University of York Ethics Committee, and I will be supervised throughout my dissertation. You may also wish to contact my supervisor Dr Haley McAvay (haley.mcavay@york.ac.uk) if you have further questions or concerns.

What is the aim of the research?

My thesis project deals with themes such as ethnicity, religion, nationality, immigration, assimilation and colonisation. I am interested in looking at second and third-generation Algerians in France. My research aims to contribute to the current literature on identity in a post-colonial France.

Who can take part?

I am seeking participants who are Algerians from the second or third generation, living in France. Ideally, participants from the second-generation born in the 60s, early 70s- and those from the third, born in the 90s, early 2000s. In line with University regulations and ethical expectations, I will seek your consent before participating via an informed consent form.

What would be involved?

If you chose to participate I would like to speak to you about your experiences regarding your identity as a second or third-generation Algerian in the French society.

The interviews should take on average 1 hour of your time and will be arranged at your convenience. With your permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded to provide an accurate account of what has been said, and to aid me when I come to transcribing the data for research purposes and analysis later on.

What happens to the data collected?

Appropriate measures are put into place to ensure the safeguarding of the data collected during this research.

Should you choose so, your data will be anonymised through the use of pseudonyms and I will ensure any identifiable features are omitted to ensure your anonymity and confidentiality is upheld. If you wish, I will provide you with a copy of the transcript so that you are confident that what I have written is accurate and that you cannot be identified by others.

The information you provide will be stored securely held on a password protected file, in accordance with the Data Protection Act of the University of York; this includes consent forms, audio-recordings and all transcriptions. After submission, audio data will be destroyed accordingly. The findings will be summarised and reported in a thesis which may be made accessible to staff and students at the University of York and local authority staff following submission.

What if I change my mind about participating?

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the research without providing a reason, at any time from 3 weeks after the interview date up until August 2023.

Who am I?

My name is Asma Saidani, I am a Postgraduate research student at the University of York, in the UK. Following the completion of my research Masters, I am hoping to pursue my studies further, with a PhD. I am carrying out this research to gain a better understanding of my area of interest (identity, ethnicity, religion, post-colonial societies, immigration).

CONSENT FORM – Interview with audio recording

Research project: Exploration of Identity: Negotiation of Ethnic, Religious and National Identities among second and third-generation Algerians in a post-colonial France.

Researcher: Asma Saidani - afs534@york.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Haley McAvay – haley.mcavay@york.ac.uk

Please tick the boxes if you agree with the statement:

I have read and understood the project information sheet.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons (from 3 weeks after the interview date up until August 2023).

I agree to take part in the research and be recorded (audio).

I am over 18 years old.

I have been given time and opportunity to ask questions about the research.

I consent that my words may be used in quotes.

Name of participant: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____

Name of researcher: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix 3. Interviews questions (translated to English)

Interview plan:

- Ethnic & Religious belonging/membership (ethnic and religious practices, ethnic language, link to Algeria).
- France and the society (laicite, restrictive laws, society, nationality, colonial-past)
- Identity Negotiation (Crisis, group belonging, etc.)

Part 1:

- Do you go to Algeria regularly? And, growing up?
- How do you feel there? Do you feel you belong there? (Prompt if needed)
- Growing up, did you have regular ethnic and religious practices? And, did you use to take part in cultural or religious events? (Prompt: Which ones?)
- Have these practices changed over time? Why or why not?
- Now, do you still practice and take part? (Prompt for explanations)
- Do you speak your ethnic language?
- What was it like growing up in terms of the language spoken at home?
- Did your parents teach you? (Prompt: Why or why not, do you think?)
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much importance do you attribute to your culture and religion? (Prompt: Why?)
- Is it important for you to be identified by others through your ethnicity and religion?
- What have you done to pass on your culture and religion to your children? Was it an active or passive choice? / Are you thinking of passing on your culture and religion to your children?
- Do you have dual nationality?
- Algerian/French flag: which one do you choose? (Prompt: Why?)
- Can you see yourself living in Algeria?

Part 2:

- Do you feel like you belong to France and to the national population? (Prompt: Why?)
- Can you tell me about French society? What do you think of it?
- What do you think of secularist laws?
- Do you think France is a country where you can easily show your culture and religion?
- In society in general (school, uni, work, gatherings, etc.) , do you feel accepted by the majority? Or is there a feeling of distinction?

Part 3:

- Do you consider your identity to be singular or multiple? What's the best way to describe your identity?
 - Do you feel that your national identity conflicts with your ethnic and religious identity?
 - In what way do you feel French?
 - Are you able to adapt to both cultures (Algerian/French)?
 - Do you represent the values of both cultures?
 - How would you define your current sense of belonging? Clear or confused?
- How has your parents'/grandparents' experience of migration influenced your current identity?
- Do you talk about identity with your parents? (Prompt: if yes, What is being said?, if no, why?)
 - Can you name things that have helped you build your identity? And, things that have prevented you from doing so?
 - Do you think the colonial past between France and Algeria has influenced who you are?
 - Would you like to add anything or come back to a particular question or point?
 - Are you still available for further questions, just in case?

2022/23



This certifies that
ASMA SAÏDANI

Has obtained approval for their research
methodology through the ethics approval process in
the 2022/23 academic year

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Dr. Patricia Hamilton".

Dr. Patricia Hamilton
Ethics Committee Chair