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2

Crisis and new challenges? French republicanism featuring multiculturalism

Valérie Amiraux

Français encore un effort si vous voulez être républicains!

(Marquis de Sade, 1796)

A rationalist universalism, rooted in the philosophy of the eighteenth century enlightenment, now looks more and more like a form of European ethnocentrism, and thus like a form of domination rather than liberation. (Jennings, 2000: 579)

The dominant representation the French have of the historical trajectory of republicanism as a pillar of national identity and core of the political ethos of the nation can best be summed up as exceptionalism. Exceptionalism underlies what led revolutionary France to become 'an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic. It shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race or religion. It shall respect all beliefs. It shall be organized on a decentralized basis', as stated in Article 1 of the 1958 Constitution. It is also to be found in the four elements, inherited from the French Revolution, that structure the republican project: the unmediated relationship between the citizen and the state (equality through belonging to a national political community); secular public education; the belief in France's international mission; and a strong activist state (Cole et al., 2008: 2). These elements actively contribute to the conviction that how France produces the conditions of equality among

different citizens is exceptional. This chapter proposes to elaborate on the main elements of this representation of French exceptionalism in dealing with diversity (section one) and to discuss the contemporary challenges embodied in recent episodes or public discussions that have opened up new avenues for thinking about the republican ability to govern ethnic and cultural pluralism (section two).

I share with Walzer the idea of contemporary France as a paradox rather than an exception, a 'complicated case' in the matter of politics of difference, as it is a country of migration that does not think of itself as a pluralistic society (Walzer, 1997). The current context can probably best be defined by underlining the evidence of, first, the growing gap between historical narratives and practices, and second, the conflict between political principles and pragmatic implementation. For the sake of brevity, while society is entangled in concrete and pragmatic problems, the elites (political, intellectual, administrative) still promote an abstract promise of universalism and equality. This abstraction does not mesh with the expectations of a plural and complex citizenry whose social reality constantly challenges this universal aim and illustrates 'the French impossibility to do what we pretend to do: knowing abstract individuals' (Baubérot, 2003: 28, author's translation).

This volume, providing a European perspective on multiculturalism, adds another level of difficulty to the one already present in the fantasy of exceptionalism: it introduces a term that remains, from the point of view of the philosophy of equality, alien to the French politics of integration and difference, just as ethnicity and minority long were (Amiraux and Simon, 2006). Multiculturalism never became a proper policy in the French context. This claim has to be nuanced, as I will try to do in the second part of the chapter, through examination of specific initiatives where, for example, ethnicity was introduced into social policies through proxies. What is meant here is that it never became an actual policy leading to the institutional recognition of differences and the pluralism of identities in French society. Jennings (2000: 589) puts it nicely by saying that multiculturalism is un-French, because it places culture before politics and groups before individuals. However, discussing multiculturalism in the French context, as I do in this chapter, means discussing the link between access to, and practice of, citizenship and the claim for expression of differences.

Citizenship hereby refers both to a political project and to institutional and individual practices, the gap growing between the historical legacy of republican ideology, its principles as the main horizon for political action, and the daily interaction between citizens. The meaning of the politics of difference in the French conception refers to a never-ending polemical discussion about the fundamental denial of public recognition of racial, ethnic and religious distinctions in the public space. The current situation very much bears the direct legacy of the Third Republic project, when the school system or other institutions such as the army were charged with fostering social cohesion by offering individuals equal access to national culture. The role of these institutions failed to adapt to new societies. Evoking recent history, Weil speaks of the constant French oscillation between refusing and accepting of cultural differences to describe the constant tension between central and occasionally contradictory principles such as equality or neutrality, and of the difficulty in putting these principles into practice (Weil, 2005). Is the French Republic compatible with multiculturalism? What does 'politics of difference' mean when applied to the French context? These questions structure my discussion of multiculturalism.

Globally, since the French Revolution, the republican narrative has become the dominant and exclusive paradigm framing the migrant's path to integration and citizenship. Beyond stereotypes and schematic representations that equate France with a united Republic whose citizens are abstract and 'culturally neutral', the last decade has seen many opportunities to discuss the adequacy of the French 'philosophy of integration' (Favell, 1998) for contemporary social demands. The comparative reading of what is happening in different contexts, such as provided by this edited volume, seems valid as a means to achieve a better understanding of the singular situation in national contexts. The current situation may be summarized as follows. While in Britain the debate is open regarding the definition of Britishness and the reshaping of multiculturalism as a political and legal project, in France public discussion is whether the republican model has failed or still has a chance of surviving such episodes as the 2004 headscarf controversy, the November 2005 urban riots, the public debate over the collection of ethnic data in autumn 2007. The colonial legacy within the integration policy is another aspect that has, since 2000,

been more actively cited as a symptom of the Republic's limited capacity to embrace its own diversity.

Rather than define the present moment as a crisis of the republican model, I would suggest that France is experiencing the reality principle, watching its own idealistic representation undergo field testing. Universalism and colour blindness are the two main features under discussion. Some authors have spoken of 'dramatic changes' taking place around the politics of difference in the French context (Lépinard, 2008: 92). And, notably, one of the major influences on the French way of addressing ethnic diversity and inequality came from the implementation of the European Commission's legal and political anti-discrimination framework (Geddes and Guiraudon 2006; Fassin, 2002). The new set of European norms has affected legal instruments, the political vocabulary and citizens' expectations. The emergence of the notion of 'discrimination', 'affirmative action' and 'ethnicity' is probably the best illustration of the beginning of a possible retreat from this 'exclusive focus on principles'.

I open with a historical assessment of the trajectory of a political project (republicanism) and focus on its articulation with the policies aimed at incorporating migrants (integration, assimilation), which later included anti-discrimination provisions. The second part of the chapter is based on illustrative accounts of the way the 'republican heritage' has been recently challenged in ways that question the limits of the French approach to ethnic and cultural difference.[1]

The historical path to colour-, race- and culture-blind France

Here I provide a historical overview of French republicanism and examine its relation to contemporary challenges affecting its civic and political capacity to deal with diversity in French society. Republicanism is less a doctrine than a cluster of socio-political attitudes, beliefs and values (Hazareesingh, 1994: 99). 'One can hardly understand the forms of the relations to otherness and policies towards foreigners living in France without taking into account French Jacobinism, with its links to a conception of the nation whose origins date back to the Middle Ages, and the fact that the rationalist universalism of

the Revolutionaries has strengthened' (Schnapper, 1999: 18, author's translation). French understanding of equality as both culture blind, and colour blind is mostly based on the idea that justice can only be achieved by considering individuals abstracted from what differentiates them from each other; that the separation between public and private is the key to protecting individual rights. The historical dimension of the republican myth had to a large extent gone undiscussed until the recent surge of post-colonial debate. I suggest in this first section that, though deeply challenged by changing societal expectations, the Republic is still 'a regulative ideal of significance in French politics' (Jenkins, 2000: 576).

Exceptionalism as an effect of comparison

In the European Union context, France is still perceived as the archetypal republican model where citizens are considered to be equal political actors independent of any specificities (cultural, ethnic, religious). Equality and freedom are equated with the idea of emancipated citizens who are unaffiliated to any forms of collective-coercive authority or belonging. The core of French republicanism lies in this equation of freedom with non-domination of the individual. This can be traced back to the French Revolution. The French Revolution first defined French citizenship as an institution simultaneously promoting social justice and indifferent towards any type of distinction. The idea of an equality among citizens that remains not only indifferent but to some extent hostile to cultural and racial aspects of identity is thus rooted in the historicization of Enlightment philosophical ideals, revolutionary projects and intra-European conflict. Weil connects the concepts of popular democracy, civic equality and sovereignty with the stabilization of a French conception of citizenship (Weil, 2002; Kriegel, 1998). For instance, the project of categorization of the population by ethnic origin does not fit with the global perspective on national integration that is grounded in the voluntary participation of free men as defined in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789. Integration within the emerging nation was from the start based on an individual project of equality disconnected from any claim for recognition of rights justified by any kind of

distinction.[2] What would later be called a 'privatization of cultural identities' – which extends far beyond secularization[3] – is sustained in the name of a universal and liberal neutrality embodied in the central state. The French historical trajectory is not so far from liberal theory pleading for a political sphere of universalism (the realm of the citizen) free of non-public particularistic identities that attach to individuals through membership of certain groups or communities (Rawls, 1985). A modern and rational citizen is therefore an individual emancipated from his/her primary ties, from his/her emotions and affects in response to contingent cultural specificities. She/he is freely willing to be part of the nation and be a Frenchman/Frenchwoman.[4] Based on individual willingness to participate and commit to the promotion of republican principles, the institutional design of citizenship as the way to keep state and society together mixes rational motives with an emotional link to politics.

This French formula is the exact opposite of the Anglo-Saxon tradition of recognition and representation of minority groups where race and ethnicity are central variables in considering differences and equality (Lapeyronnie, 1993; Hargreaves, 1995; Bleich, 2005).[5] With reference to another border, the exclusive ethnic *jus sanguinis*-based German citizenship provides the other historical contrast to the French inclusive and *jus soli*-based citizenship[6] (Dumont, 1994; Schnapper, 1991; Brubaker, 1992; Kastoryano, 1997; Amiraux, 2001). The dichotomy between France and the United Kingdom is grounded in antinomic philosophies, narratives, political projects and social practices concerning both nationality and citizenship (Kepel, 1994; Bleich, 2003; Joly, 1994; Garbaye, 2000). The different terminology used in each context makes it more obvious: 'In the English-speaking world, such people are commonly referred to as "ethnic minorities" or "minority ethnic groups", and a large part of what the French call "immigration" is commonly known as "race relations". In France, such terms are taboo' (Hargreaves, 1995: 1–2). The central role of race, used in analogy with colour in the British context, contrasts with the denial of its relevance in French political and juridical terminology. France is a secular republic where race and ethnicity as well as religious belonging are not considered legitimate categories with which to think about differences among individuals

(Amiraux and Simon, 2006). In summary, the indivisible Republic stands as the counter-model to multicultural communalism.[7] In this comparative perspective, it appears clear today that the questions raised by the presence of migrant populations are, however, similar across countries. The divergences stem from the responses to these similar questions, also in terms of theoretical orientations and the culture of scholarship. For instance, British scholarship on migration pays particular attention to community issues, ethnicity and collective group initiatives; while the French tradition gives priority to the analysis of public policies and central attention to the state first, before considering the subjects of these policies (Rea and Tripier, 2003). Following the London bombings in July 2005, Kepel stated that 'the combined results of secularism, conscious integration and a preventative security policy in France – the inverse terms of multiculturalism – has meant that the country has been spared terror attacks for a decade' (Kepel, 2005). In the German, British and French contexts, citizenship regimes are grounded on grammars of ethnicity that are strictly opposed to each other. This historical opposition has been naturalized in policymakers discourses,[8] in the media, and in public reports dealing with the public management of diversity, social cohesion and integration.[9] In the French republican secular context, groups may exist and live a communal experience, but with no rights attached to this belonging.

> In opposition with the Anglo-Saxon tradition that puts community and voluntary groups at the core of the socio-political organization, the Republic constituted herself against intermediary bodies (states, orders, churches, corporations, trade-unions) and ideally instituted the direct confrontation between the nation and the citizen, i.e. the individual with no specific belongings, being religious, ethnic, family, professional or geographic. (Ion, 1999: 68)

Notwithstanding this short comparative and historical insight, the current debate on integration is still very much configured by two related issues: first, the historical ideological heritage of the Third Republic (Hazareesingh, 1994) and the central role played by school in the process of unifying the nation, educating active citizens (popular sovereignty) and transmitting its values; second, the development of

laïcité as the embodiment of the republican ideal. It is the virtue (in the normative moral dimension) of the citizen to be fully faithful to these historical elements, still perceived as constituting the essence of the nation.

Secularism and French society

The prevailing institutional arrangement on citizenship in France has a long history. The philosophy of integration and the republican tradition that has developed and been applied more extensively over the last three decades of the twentieth century is rooted in a combination of Enlightenment principle, Revolutionary ideas and intra-European conflicts. Popular democracy, social justice, civil equality and sovereignty are central to the composition of the integration model. Historically, post-revolutionary republicanism is grounded on the need to 'privatize' cultural and religious elements of identification in order more easily to achieve an egalitarian treatment of all citizens in the public space. Freedom of conscience, reciprocal non-interference between political and religious spheres, equal state treatment of religions and beliefs were among the core elements.[10] The centrality of the individual intertwined with a claim for universalism is made possible through the constitution of a secular public space in which school operates as the central institution for the diffusion of principles, values and norms of national belonging.

Laïcité[11] – which I would here briefly define as freedom of belief and equality of all citizens independent of their belief or religion – constitutes the space that makes tolerance possible (Kintzler, 2007). '*Laïcité* represents primarily a freedom granted to everyone and not a constraint imposed on all' (HCI, 2008: 191). In this *laïc* public arena, absolute priority is given to individual rights over group ones. The cohesion of the French nation is rooted in the expression of the citizens' desire to live together, without any collective belief being imposed on individuals. This free will is supported by the fact that individual freedoms and public order are protected by the neutrality of the public space. As for republicanism, *laïcité* needs to be historicized. It cannot be taken for granted and also needs to be updated in the face of a changing society. Before March 2004 and the introduction of

the law on the wearing of religious symbols in public schools, *laïcité* was (and to a certain extent remains) a principle, defined in a complex grammar of legal texts and decrees related to different sectors of social life. It has been a constitutional principle since 1946, confirmed in the 1958 Constitution. To a certain extent, *laïcité* was first a political tradition in the republican discourse to support and make possible the integration of society. It is only very recently that it has turned into an ideological concept.

In the republican *laïc* context, intimacy and private beliefs do not affect the way the central state administrates its citizens. The realm of intimacy and privacy is where religion belongs in this secular society. In summary, *laïcité* in the French context stems from a liberal project of protection of, first, individual freedoms and, second, various conceptions of the good that coexist in plural societies. Inside this secular project, religious freedom, equality of all citizens and the neutrality of the state are placed in a common institutional setting. *Laïcité* is thus a regulating principle in the politics of difference, and the framework for recognition or accommodation of pluralism (Laborde, 2001). In France, two elements are central: one, the role of institutions in implementing equality and neutrality (the rule of separation being the main pillar of the institutional setting; see Baubérot, 2005); two, the public doctrine of conscience that prescribes codes and norms of behaviour in public to both individual believers and religious organizations. Both types of actors are expected to 'behave' in public so far as their religious convictions are concerned. The contemporary reading of what a *laïc* regime should be goes far beyond the principle of separation between religion and politics as instituted by the Separation law of 1905. It is at the infra-political level that justice and tolerance are seen to be achieved, not only through a strict implementation of the law, but also through ethical and political culture. In 2008, the text of a draft charter on *laïcité* in public services (that is, not only in public schools) states: '*laïcité* … is the famous "French exception"' (HCI, 2008: 17) There is a need, says the text, to reference the meaning and the practices attached to the 'republican rule'.[12]

Schools play a central role in the implementation of the integration project of migrants and children of migrants, as they had when peasants were made into Frenchmen (Weber, 1979). So far as the

secularization of French political culture is concerned, they have been made the exclusive sites for the civic education of individual citizens in a secular system (Deloye, 1995). Since the French revolution, public education has been about teaching French, the sharing of cultural values and instilling patriotic principles. It is also about individually assisting children to free themselves from any form of patriarchal influence on their rationality. Schools are the guarantee of access to universalism and emancipatory values: all pupils are equal and no differentiation among them should occur by any means. Jules Ferry's laws secularized the public space in the 1880s. This period, labelled by Baubérot the 'second threshold of secularization', culminated in 1905 with the approval of the Separation law (Baubérot, 2005). This separation of Church and State leads back to the centrality of equality among citizens in respect of freedom of belief (that is, the right to believe or not believe). The notion of 'sanctuary', regularly cited in parliamentary discussions preceding the vote on the March 2004 law, is a relevant illustration of the historical weight that characterizes this institution. Abstracted from social context, the notion of sanctuary connects school with a form of socialization unrelated to territory or ground: 'As with the Church, school is out of the world. It is morally unified. It is a sanctuary exempted from social divisions' (Dubet, 2002: 26, author's translation). Thus, the institutional programme[13] transmitted to pupils inside public schools not only mobilizes values that reflect society: it is because school is external to social context that it is able to act voluntarily to protect children and to 'snatch them … from the common and familiar experience of their own world' (Dubet, 2002: 27). The extraterritorial dimension of schooling is what makes equality possible among all citizens. Kintzler evokes the suspension of community ties as making the constitution of the political possible (Kintzler, 2007). In this project, recognition seems to be the keyword.

Schools have been, on two occasions at least, designated as the main place for illustrating the so-called 'failure of integration' in France. As in the headscarf controversies, public schools are considered to be in danger of overexposure to ethnic cleavages and their related effects. Lastly, in October 2005, urban riots took place in Clichy-sous-Bois. Two teenagers of North African and sub-Saharan origin electrocuted themselves, trying to escape police, by hiding in a power substation. This tragic event was the starting point for three weeks of riots in different cities all over the country. In November 2005, the right-wing government imposed a curfew in most of the cities involved, reactivating a 1955 law initially introduced for the purpose of controlling the insurrection during the Algerian war of independence. Several minors were arrested during these three weeks (Bertossi, 2007). Many issues were publicly discussed during and after the riots: the spatial segregation of specific populations (of migrant origin, young, male); the incapacity of central institutions such as schools to achieve equality and upward social mobility. During that specific episode, public educational institutions were designated as the main site of production and reproduction of social inequalities, in particular at the intersection of spatial segregation and ethnic-religious identification of populations.[14] The youngsters involved in the three-week riots fought against the symbols of their relegation into territories where republican equality did not reach, notably the institutional symbols of French society – the police, firemen, schools, and so on. They did not contest the principles of French citizenship. They claimed their legitimate place within it.[15]

The process of secularization of French society and state has taken place step by step through a long history of conflict (Baubérot, 1990, 2004). It is no surprise that even today it lies at the heart of controversy, and that schools are still systematically the place where debate starts. Since March 2004, the requirement to behave as a *laïc* citizen has been enforced inside public schools and punished by exclusion if the principles and the law are not respected.[16] *Laïcité* finally reached the status of a 'moral fact' in the sense that it is a rule of behaviour that can be punished if it is not respected, and is mandatory regardless of conscience or whatever belief people in society hold. To a certain extent, the passage of the March 2004 law and the intervention of the legislator indicates the incapacity of educational institutions to perpetuate their position as a sanctuary. *Laïcité* appears also as a unique resource for managing and regulating religious diversity at school, and the neutrality of the state therefore becomes the main indicator to assess the capacity of the *laïc* Republic to address a new type of claim and request (Koussens, 2009).

The integration paradigm

Integration as a doctrine emerged in the 1950s in relation to the decline and failure of the assimilationist colonial project. It only became a proper political project and the subject of public policies applying to migration in the 1980s, more specifically when immigration became a central item on the political agenda in the aftermath of Mitterrand's election to the presidency. However, integration in the French context is never completely dissociated from assimilation (Schnapper, 1991), defined as a process of reduction, through acculturation, of the cultural distance of an individual from the French society (Tribalat, 1995; Noiriel, 1996). During the 1980s, the opposition between *droit à la différence* (right to be different) and *droit à l'indifférence* (right to be treated with indifference) epitomized what was at stake in defining a French avenue for integration. The Marceau Long report of the Commission on Nationality (Long, 1988) stated a new agenda in the mid-1980s by stressing the causal connection between emerging forms of ethnic visibility, the need to reform the conditions for acquiring French nationality and the weakening of the institutions that had co-produced republican citizenship. The Haut Conseil à l'Intégration (High Council for Integration, hereafter HCI) was created as a follow-up to the report, with the mission of advising the Socialist government on how best to integrate migrants into French society. The report suggested shifting from a policy of social and economic insertion of migrants and their children to a politics of integration, referring to the idea of national identity and integration (Favell, 1998). Integration was thus institutionalized through the creation of the HCI in 1989, the year of the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution. In 1993, the HCI report proposed a definition of integration, referring to a specific process of active participation of individuals in national society, giving priority to a logic of equality, not of minorities or recognition. In this context, the first elements of a claim for reciprocal recognition emerged, driven by a demand to be treated as individual citizens with a migrant background on equal terms with 'native' ones. The hypothesis of a causal link between the failure of integration and the visibility of cultural distinction remains strong in the French context (Costa–Lascoux, 2006). Globally, the HCI's reports during the 1990s set out a project of integration that combines voluntary participation and adhesion to the core values of the national identity, but also point to the existence of cultural specificities that are not disqualified.

In this 'integration design' as public policy, the definition of national boundaries is a central issue that has concentrated, in the French case, on the question of access to nationality. How does one become French? Reform of the Nationality Law started in the second half of the 1980s and introduced the idea of a *jus soli* that, while still maintained as heritage of the Revolution, is coupled with the expression of the individual desire, of the personal will, to become French. This proposal of the Long Report was enacted by the Pasqua Laws in 1993. The notion of rules to be accepted and respected, and of the duties of the potential applicant for French nationality, was further politicized after 2000. The implementation of a *Contrat d'accueil et d'intégration* (hereafter CAI) in 2002 by President Chirac, later mentioned by the HCI report (2004), follows a constant oscillation between assimilationism and openness to multicultural influences. It reiterates the idea of a reciprocity between rights and obligations as incorporated in the practice of citizenship (Costa Lascoux, 2006). The CAI has been mandatory since 1 January 2007. The new formula of integration policy places strong emphasis on the empowerment of women and reinforces policy aimed at disadvantaged youth. In the public documents and the reports of the various authorities in charge, the statements are converging around the idea that the 'problems of integration' cannot be reduced to ethnic and national/cultural issues, but have to be seen in the light of other variables (family or economic problems, spatial segregation, etc.).

If the notion of 'integration' was the dominant reference for public policies and social scientists until the end of the 1980s, the concept has been highly contested since the 1990s by many actors, in particular by the main subjects of integration policies, the children of first-generation migrants. The end of the 1990s saw a major shift in the discourse on the republican capacity for integration. The emergence of a discourse on discrimination following the transposition of the European directives in November 2001 (except the provisions related to data collection and monitoring) introduces the idea of a reciprocal responsibility for the perpetuation of inequality in multiethnic societies. The emphasis on potentially unequal treatment based on specific variables (gender,

ethnicity, race, religion, etc.) opens up the hypothesis of the possible existence in the republican French context of forms of inequality, attributable either to institutions (and some bureaucratic practices) or to individuals. The change from a perspective on integration to an anti-discrimination policy is the result of the intersection of various dynamics during the second half of the 1990s. The first dynamic arose in 1998 with the publication by the HCI of a report devoted to discrimination. Fassin underlines two dimensions of this major shift. First, the HCI report suggests looking differently at the process of integration: its success, says Fassin, would be conditional on a proper capacity on the part of French society and institutions to deal with issues of discrimination. The major change in this report is that it advances the hypothesis that it is not only the individual with a migrant background who is responsible for his/her 'non-integration' (because of cultural practices, inadequate educational achievement, socio-economic characteristics), but the way French society produces discriminatory situations and practices (often without being aware of it), a proper 'French model of discrimination' (*Mouvements*, 1999). Second, nationality is said in the report to be 'irrelevant' as people suffering from inequalities of treatment may be French citizens but associated with specific colour or ethnic backgrounds (Fassin, 2002). A second dynamic can be associated with the Socialist government's move on this issue, probably motivated by internal party debate and a real concern about racism and discrimination. Several initiatives were launched between 1997 and 2000 by the prime minister (Lionel Jospin) and other leading figures of the Socialist Party and the government (Martine Aubry, Jean-Michel Belorgey, Jean-Pierre Chevènement), at local, regional and national levels. A third dynamic is of European origin and has certainly affected the national political process by giving it more legitimacy. Two directives were adopted in 2000, namely a 'race directive' combating discrimination on the ground of race or ethnicity in a number of areas (e.g. housing, employment, education and training, the provision of goods and services) and a directive combating all forms of discrimination in employment.[17] In 2004, the HALDE (Haute Autorité de Lutte contre les Discriminations et pour l'Égalité) was created to centralize the handling of individual claims and initiatives for policy implementation and the use of legal recourse. Its prerogatives were extended in March 2006 when the law on equal opportunities legalized testing procedures to prove discriminatory practices. The outcomes in the French context were the development of a new perception of sources of inequality and discrimination and the introduction in the French context of terminology that had been largely developed in the British context. Through this new issue of discrimination, thinking about ethnic and racial inequality in the republican secular context acquired new value in the integration agenda.

Last but not least, political interest in the question of 'national identity' has been growing since the rhetoric of the National Front built upon it.[18] The creation in 2007 of a Ministère de l'identité nationale et de l'immigration by the newly elected President Nicolas Sarkozy established a link between immigrants (as a problem) and a national identity in need of reaffirmation and protection from the state. This association of integration and immigration is not new; it can be traced back to the HCI reports. The problems created by this new institution are, however, more troubling. First, because it naturalizes a causal link between the presence of migrants in France and the decline of French national identity. Second, because it assigns to the state the responsibility for organizing a 'shared national identity' as a measure of democratic life in the country. Several prominent scholars publicly expressed their disapproval of this initiative, while others even started to elaborate the notion of 'state xenophobia':

> By using the word 'xenophobia', we include all discourses and decisions that make foreigners a problem, a risk or a threat for the host-society, that try to keep them at a distance from this society, wherever these foreigners are located (already living in the host-country for a while or still abroad and potentially willing to come). Starting with this definition, we can identify a state xenophobia with its own history, specific features, that is different from the extreme-right xenophobia on the rise in the European contexts for the last two decades. (Valluy, 2008: 12, author's translation).

What happens to individual identities in the course of social interactions? What are the collective expressions of belonging in the secular public space? What is the place of culture in national identity? This set of questions overlaps with the past two decades of controversies that have regularly confronted the historical myth of French republicanism

with its current transformation, a 'rationalist universalism, rooted in the philosophy of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, [which] now looks more and more like a form of European ethnocentrism, and thus like a form of domination rather than liberation' (Jennings, 2000: 579). The main challenge seems to be the hypothesis that citizen's ways of identifying and social and political participation could be better articulated. In that discussion, *laïcité*, as we have seen, is a central concern. Criticism has mainly come from the political and civic spheres and has followed two lines of thought. On the one hand, universalism as indifference towards cultural particularism have been accused of constituting an ideological mystification maintaining post-colonial structures of domination (Laborde, 2001). The Indigènes de la République and the activists from the MIB (Mouvement de l'Immigration et des Banlieues) represent this tendency quite well. On the other hand, since culture is part of individuals' identity, the notion that a society that would exclude any aspect of cultural belonging from public life and political participation appeared to be a complete illusion. In a sense, criticism of republicanism suggests a more multicultural conception of social integration and cohesion in which the recognition of the cultural elements of diversity would be part of an egalitarian public space. Several events and public debates have made clear this development and illustrated the gap between the republican principles of universal citizenship and social practices. 'Like liberalism, republicanism has in the past two decades or so been internally reconfigured (albeit in a different way to liberalism) by its confrontation with new questions relating to cultural identity – both national and subnational' (Laborde, 2001: 717). On the one hand, a cultural nationalism hostile to multiculturalism grows more cohesive, creating systematic positions on any public discussion, such as those related to religious symbols. On the other hand, cultural identities in the public sphere are being ascribed greater significance, giving more importance to ethnicity in civic life (Fassin and Fassin, 2006).

Contemporary challenges and the reflexive turn

In the first section, I described some of the main features of the political republican horizon that have historically structured official reflections on integration and national identity. In this second section, I will illustrate the most recent episodes that have challenged this strong national tradition, and the ideology of 'integration' defined as a 'process in which immigrant characteristics uniformly converge toward the average characteristics of French society' (Safi, 2008: 5). Four recent 'episodes' symbolize the limits of French republican integration and citizenship, and question the very core of the model: the general discussion on post-colonialism; the headscarf controversies that ended with the approval of the March 2004 law banning visible religious symbols from public schools; the November 2005 urban riots; and the 2007 discussion of the legitimacy of using ethnic statistics. Of course, these do not all have the same trajectory, involve the same actors or refer to identical situations. But they all share the fact that they have been the justification for broader heated discussion addressing the 'limits' of the capacity of French republicanism to cope with French diversity. To sum up, the French tradition of integration has been contested for its promise of equality (November 2005, the urban riots), of neutrality towards cultural and religious differences (the headscarf affairs since 1989 and the passage of the March 2004 law), of the legitimacy of maintaining colour and race blindness (the 2007 ethnic statistics discussion). The principles of republicanism and *laïcité* have faced profound challenge, which raises the question: should France grant more space to ethnic differences in the public sphere?

Two dimensions can be distinguished in the recent emergence of criticism of the historical political tradition of French republicanism. The first can be described as a general difficulty in coping with the need to implement a policy which does justice to social diversification and fragmentation, the segmented modes of incorporation into French society. To illustrate this first dimension, I offer two examples. First, what proxies have been deployed in local policies to promote equal access to specific goods (social housing for instance) whilst behaving as if colour and race blind? How are French authorities dealing with anti-discrimination policies and the absence of statistics to guide the quantitative assessment of places and types of recurring discrimination? The second dimension I would sum up as a reflexive turn. It incorporates the upsurge of post-colonialism in both academic and political cultures. I will elaborate in particular on the link between

post-colonialism and the politics of memory that has been the subject of passionate political discussion since 2000 and that underlines the difficulty of bringing ethnicity and colour into the discussion of pluralism and recognition.

Official discourse and concrete practices

Facing new challenges presented by the increasing diversity of French society, the view of integration politics as indifference on the part of the Republic towards citizens' origins and belongings had become an anti-discrimination policy by the end of the 1990s (Fassin, 2002; HCI, 2006). Not all differences are equal, and the introduction of affirmative action policies in France is mostly the result of discussion around parity and equal opportunity, rather than a consequence of mobilization by ethnic groups. 'Women were therefore granted advantages from affirmative action measures that other politically excluded categories could not claim because their difference was not "different" – that is, "universal"' (Lépinard, 2008: 98). Notwithstanding the implementation of legal means to fight against discrimination and the political discourse to explain it to a larger public, multiculturalism never became a social and political project in the French context – that is, it was not incorporated within specific institutions.[19] This statement should of course be qualified, as many indicators, notably in social housing (Kirszbaum, 2008), or more recently regarding access to higher education (Sabbagh, 2002), show how a language and proxies have been invented to permit ethnicity to enter into the French tradition without modifying the global philosophy. In general, in recent French public social policy, territory has played the role assigned to ethnicity in other contexts where affirmative action has 'come out'. In France, that is, it has been done without leaving the closet.

In the 1990s, the trend among policymakers was towards being more specific when dealing with integration issues, and more generally to begin to factor in, albeit implicitly, the ethnic dimension of integration policies. The designation of certain neighbourhoods as specific targets of public policies because of their educational shortfall (*Zone d'éducation prioritaire*) or the development of a more active policy of social diversity (*mixité sociale*) are among the best known examples

since the implementation in the 1990s of the *Loi d'orientation sur la ville*. The accumulation of administrative categories with which to discuss the most socially and economically segregated parts of the largest French cities has contributed to widespread depictions of these neighbourhoods as dangerous and hopelessly bound up with the failure of public institutions to 'integrate'. But these categories also reveal the ambiguity of a political project: mixing people to achieve social harmony and create networks of socialization. In the 1990s, the priority was not only to support social diversity, but also to lay in the desegregation of those parts of the major cities where immigrants have remained concentrated in high proportions. In July 1991, the law passed by Parliament mentions the 'right to the city' (*droit à la ville*) as the right for diverse social categories to coexist. The project consisted in the regulation of the dispersion of people of low socio-economic status in order to mix multiple social categories in one area. Officially, there is no mention of the ethnic belonging of the population in question; rather, social status combined with location is the euphemism for ethnic categorization. The objective, through the strong control of access to social housing, should be to avoid the dominance (over-concentration) of any ethnic minority in a given area (Kirzbaum, 2004).

The rigidity of the model has been softened through this invention of proxies to isolate specific groups of population without naming them as ethnically or racially distinct from the majority society. The creation of an anti-discrimination frame was stimulated by European dynamics, in particular following the adoption of two central directives on that issue in 2001. The new European legal settings constituted another incentive for French public authorities to rely on ethnic and community repertoires and categories without modifying the official philosophy (Geisser, 2005; Guiraudon, 2006). In the autumn of 2007, a passionate debate occupied first academics and political leaders, then a larger audience, over the possibility of collecting so-called 'ethnic statistics'. This debate constitutes in a way the quintessence of the global republican dilemma about differences and ethnic/racial/colour blindness: how can we name something we do not recognize? The idea that race may be a legitimate criterion for categorizing people because it can be a subjective or socially constructed category is

generally rejected, since its historical association with unacceptable political practices make it a non-starter in contemporary liberal European democracies. Ethnicity is no more acceptable. The notion of classifying people does not fit well with the egalitarian republican project of integration based on an idea of the nation as the product of a voluntary contract among free men. This is, for instance, what the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man is all about. The Republic conceives of citizens in relation to the situations they are embedded in, not as categories of population. This abstract universalism draws very strong boundaries between what is considered to be legitimate and what illegitimate in the public space. So racism is discussed without mentioning race. The figure of the foreigner in the 1980s, of the migrant in the 1990s, has become the category subsuming all other potential terms to evoke those who are living in France but have a migration background. In public statistics, the republican paradigm leads to the use of the nationality of origin of migrants as the proxy for race, ethnic origin and religion (Fassin and Simon, 2008). Ethnic identification is controlled at different levels. From a constitutional perspective, article 1 of the Constitution explicitly states that distinction by racial or ethnic origin is forbidden. This was supplemented by the 1978 law (*Informatique et libertés*) defining ethnic data as sensitive and subject to control for the sake of privacy. The main argument for rejecting the use of statistics on ethnicity is the risk that they could be deployed as a source of power against certain communities; this combined with the belief that these objective and essentialist categories do not help to understand social attitudes and phenomena (Stavo-Debauge, 2003).

The question of whether it was necessary to develop more sophisticated statistical categories to monitor discrimination of specific population groups was revived after the adoption of the European directives into national legislation. EU legislation not only permits ethnic data collection but even encourages it as central to a well-informed fight against discrimination. Statistics serve first to describe society. They eventually may help political action. The discussion is not new. Controversy arose over this issue in the late 1990s, pitting two of the most prominent French demographers, Hervé Le Bras (and others, such as Alain Blum, Jean Luc Richard, Sandrine Bertaux)

and Michèle Tribalat (Tribalat, 1995), against each other. In 1995, Tribalat had published the results of a large-scale survey (*Mobilité Géographique et Insertion Sociale*, conducted between 1987 and 1992; hereafter MGIS). This survey focused on the relevance of the French model of integration for immigrants and their children. In comparison with previous work on similar issues, MGIS was the first large-scale scientific work disconnecting the question of integration from 'foreigners' as a category. To describe the passionate controversies that again emerged with the preparation of a new major survey 'Life Stories' (*Histoires de vie*) in 2003, Fassin and Simon evoke the 'national ideological novel' and the paradox of a 'national paradigm that is both political and academic' and that faces the following dilemma: can we name and categorize something (racial discrimination) for which we have no label? (Fassin and Simon, 2008).[20]

The answers to this question fall into two camps (for a recent account of the French discussion, see Felouzis, 2008; Peer and Sabbagh, 2008). Some say No in the name of privacy and data protection, claiming that there is a risk of misuse of files with such data (*la peur des fichiers*), that statistics should not become a resource for racist discourse. Some say Yes, generally referring to other European countries and arguing that producing ethnic categories is necessary in order to assess evidence of discrimination and implement efficient policies to combat it. Creating statistical data and producing work based upon it means transforming individual experiences and personal trajectories into facts, thus enabling concrete action. The defenders of ethnic categories do not uphold multiculturalism or a politics of recognition of differences in the public space (Stavo Debauge, 2003). Tribalat, for example, favours the use of data on the origins of migrants, but considers the French assimilation model threatened by the public expression of identities (Kaltenbach and Tribalat, 2002). In the 2007 discussion, the controversy focused on the use in an academic survey (TeO, *Trajectoires et origines*, trajectory and origins) of subjective criteria used by individuals to define themselves or be defined by others. Skin colour, for instance, would be used in that context as a socially constructed category, not as a phenotypical datum. How can we look at something that has no name? (Fassin and Simon, 2008).

Recently, black people have become both a rediscovered object for the social sciences and a new visible group bearing specific claims for recognition and justice (for instance through the activities of the CRAN, Conseil représentatif des associations noires en France, Representative Council of Black Associations in France, created in 2005 for 'better equality'). They constitute, just as Muslims do on another level, a perfect illustration of the unresolved tension inside republicanism: on the one hand, they ask to be individually invisible through the privatization of cultural identities promoted in the name of a universalistic dimension of liberal neutrality ('l'éloge de l'immigré invisible', Noiriel, 2007). On the other hand, they are engaged in a process of recognition in the name of equal treatment and the fight against discrimination. But as race is of no social and political significance, some populations have been locked out, denied recognition and kept invisible. J. Stavo–Debauge, speaking of black people in France, refers to

> experience of humiliation, contempt and denial of recognition. Indeed, being invisible means not being counted among full and authorized members of a community, or a situation. It is also not being considered as a full participant capable of a potentially distinct contribution that could be welcomed by other members of the community. (Stavo–Debauge, 2007)

Post-colonial discussions and the politics of memory

Speaking up about the colonial past is a recent endeavour for French policymakers compared with the politics of memorial representation, which led the way to democracy in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The French discussion of post-colonialism started much later than among its counterparts in the English-speaking world. The year 2005 was a turning point, not so much because of the urban riots that took place in November, but because of the publication of a collective text in January by a group called Les Indigènes de la République that established a parallel between the situation of the elders (their parents or grandparents at the time of the French domination of North Africa) and their own position in French society as youngsters with migrant origins. As Hargreaves

recalls, this evocation of a parallel between migrants and people living under French domination in the colonies was not invented in 2005 but had been exploited in literature and fiction already in the 1970s (Hargreaves, 2007). The post-colonial debate in France engages both activists and academics; as such, since the 1990s, it has illustrated well the way the historical legacy of republicanism has been criticized for its irrelevance when faced with contemporary social problems. For certain observers, post-colonialism would be everywhere but always presented as a political accusation (as by Les Indigènes de la République). For others, the current attention paid to colonial history and the close link to discussion about racism and discrimination follow the hypothesis that 'contemporary forms taken by the social question are racial because they originate in colonial practices and ways of thinking' (Stavo–Debauge, 2007). Denouncement (of amnesia, of culpability) dominates the post-colonial discourse at large, as if the native and the migrant were two extremes of the same moment of history. Colonial fantasy serves the politics of memory that mobilizes both a sense of guilt for past atrocities and exoneration from self-criticism (Merle and Sibeud, 2003).

Two other factors can complement our hypothesis of the 'post-colonial politics of memory' as a way to introduce multiculturalism and the emergence of race and ethnicity in the French politics of difference. On 21 May 2001, 'Taubira's Law' was approved, declaring the slave trade a crime against humanity, and in May 2006, a national day commemorating the abolition of the slave trade was established. On 23 February 2005, law no. 2005-158 'recognizing the contribution of the Nation and French nationals' to the colonies (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Indochina) was approved. Article 4 of this law was widely criticized, for stating that the positive role of the colonizers should be recognized 'by law'. Reaction to this article was immediate and virulent. Most of the criticism concentrated on the close connection between how the memory of colonialism was conveyed in 'positive terms' and its impact on the current stigmatization of segregated populations. Article 4, it was argued, would amputate part of colonial history and deprive the parents of the second and third generations of children of their history; they would be French citizens but still considered as deviant and marginal populations. Yet the elaboration

of a common memory of colonialism appeared to most commentators to be a necessary step in achieving a comprehensive reflection on the conditions of equality and the practice of citizenship.

As Muslims have been 'going more public' since 2001,[21] questions of representation and of the difficulty (in terms of social cost) of self-presentation as Muslim are indeed a constant reminder of the need to historicize this process of stigmatization, particularly in relation to the colonial period, which has long remained at the periphery of French historiography. I do not wish to reduce and limit the complexity of colonial experience to a causal responsibility in producing contemporary forms of racism. There is indeed no possibility of scientifically proving such a direct univocal causal link between colonial racism and the contemporary discrimination of French citizens with Muslim and North African origins (Saada, 2006: 64). But similarities in public discourses can be observed in the way hierarchies are established, categorized and justified, and in the obsession with strictly controlling the visibility of certain cultural belongings (i.e. religious ones). Suspicion of Muslims and Islam as a faith, for instance, is a republican tradition that dates back long before 9/11 (Geisser and Zemmouri, 2007). A reading of the administrative vocabulary provides evidence (Le Pautremat, 2003; Laurens, 2004; Simon, 2007). In a recent ethnographic study of the ceremony with which nominal decrees of naturalization were distributed to new French citizens in the city of Doucy, Mazouz describes what she calls the 'constitutive antinomy of this republican ceremony'. The ritual becomes a real test for assessing if the new Frenchman/woman is really qualified for his/her new position:[22] 'Exactly as this ceremony indicates the integration, even the assimilation, of new naturalized people, it reminds them and shows them how different and illegitimate they are' (Mazouz, 2008: 89).

Here the internal tensions of the republican project are visible. The French colonial empire was clearly conceived as reproducing abroad what was implemented on the metropolitan territory of the young French Republic. In practice, the colonial adventure ended up being less than faithful to these republican ideals. In continental France, the Third Republic implemented a process of democratization integrating the diverse components of French society. In the colonies, exception became a way of ruling. These contradictions culminated in

Algeria. Egalitarian universalism in particular led to the coexistence of contradictory practices, the most infamous being the hierarchy of status among citizens in French Algeria. The status of *Français Musulmans d'Algérie* (French Muslims from Algeria) is the most typical illustration of the bifurcation between citizenship and nationality in the French colonial context. The Indigenous People Code (*Code de l'indigénat*) was created in Algeria in 1881 and remained in force until 1946. The Muslim natives were French by nationality but with no citizenship and became French Muslims (Spire, 2003). Algerians, though of French nationality, did not have the right to vote and were thus, to use the contemporary word, denizens. This denial of citizens' rights applied, while race and ethnicity were not legitimate categories in the matter of civic rights. Whereas after 1946 French citizenship was extended to all persons living on French territory, the distinction between civil and personal status survived in colonized Algeria, and 'French Muslims' were those individuals in Algeria who did not renounce their religion but were French citizens. Algeria, a French department, was where 'French Muslims from Algeria' and 'French from the continent' referred to two categories of a unique regime of citizenship, 'making citizenship irrelevant as criterion of national identity' (Kepel, 1994: 135, author's translation).

Colonial practices regarding religion worked within the same type of paradox, the policy 'at home' being different from practices in the colonized territories. The 1905 separation law is a central part of a colonial rhetoric that pursued the dream of equality through the secularization of institutional settings and society. It turns out to have also been a tool for control and coercion in the colonial domination of people and lands. Indeed, the 1905 law was never applied to the Muslim associations that were created in 1907 following the publication of a decree transposing the 1905 law in Algeria: 'Ulamas made it clear that the French Republic was contradicting itself, making *laïcité* a dogma in continental France and changing its nature when transposing it in Algeria because the control of the local population was at stake' (Achi, 2007: 65, author's translation). Overall, there was never a homogeneous policy towards Muslims living in the colonized territories. The tensions between the republican project and the complex and inegalitarian architecture of the colonial administration became

more complex with the expansion and the conquest of new places (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria). Facing these different contexts, a French Muslim policy emerged around 1890.[23] Its main argument was the idea that Islam is potentially subversive and puts the Empire at risk. Muslim policies logically moved into enterprises of control aimed at protecting the republican colonial project against the 'Islamic threat'. Muslim policy, a sort of 'police of the souls' (Lyauzu, 1994: 61), articulated academic expertise with public administration of the colonial territories (Laurens, 2004).[24] Muslim councillors, created in 1931, were seen as intermediaries capable of translating the claims and needs of Muslim populations. They were also meant as a channel for developing better trust of the metropolitan authorities and illustrating the non-hostility of the Republic towards Muslims (Laurens, 2004).

The obsession with control and regulation of Islam as a faith that has characterized Interior Ministry policies since 1989–1990 is thus not new (Amiraux, 2008). From 1989–90 until the creation of the French Council of Muslim Faith (*Conseil français du culte musulman*, CFCM) in 2003, the institutionalization of Islam as one of the main French religions still bore elements of colonialism (see Laurence and Vaisse, 2006: 135–62; Zeghal, 2005). For instance, in January 2000, when Muslim leaders were invited to join the discussion, they were asked to sign a Declaration of Intent concerning the rights and duties of Muslim believers in France (*Déclaration d'intention relative aux droits et obligations des fidèles du culte musulman en France*) that no other member of a minority religion had ever had to sign. The ministerial advisers in charge of policy on Islam since 1989 were either ideologues wishing to 'civilize the Muslims' or pragmatists aware of 'the sociological and demographic realism' that placed the question of Islam on the agenda (Geisser and Zemmouri, 2007: 71–99). Some of the youngest leaders taking part in this process of representation of Islam took the minister's invitation as a 'paternalist colonial injunction'. The *Homo islamicus* that emerged as a public figure through the process of institutionalization has two faces. The first responds to the institutional expectations of the Republic and is a mixture of civic virtue and loyalty to the Republic. The second is marked, rather, by resistance to the normative pressure that Muslim leaders are experiencing by taking part in the negotiations. Rather than a proper neutrality, the history of

the relationship between the French state and Muslims, as a colonial and a post-colonial state, has been a process of tutorship and interference. While state interference may be necessary to protect common liberties, it should never be achieved through arbitrary measures or stigmatization of vulnerable populations.

The politics of difference and the governance of bodies

The tension between principles and ideals, on the one hand, and practices and concrete initiatives, on the other, can be observed daily in the expression of hostility towards differences and Otherness. The institutional level and that of the social production of discourses and representation do not operate at the same scale. A good illustration of individuals' difficulty in coping with subjective behaviour related to ethnic and religious differences lies in the development of what I call a public iconography of patterns that deviate from republicanism. These deviant patterns often intersect with gender, religious and ethnic belonging. The fantasy about the Other is now embodied in instances of deviant behaviour that link major controversies (over the headscarf, gang rape, the urban riots or global insecurity) to ordinary feelings of unease and difficult daily interactions between citizens. Whereas earlier I relied on history to demonstrate continuity of institutional practices (during and after the colonial empire), this emphasis on contemporary icons is rather ethnographic in its focus on the governance of bodies as the main sites for controlling the modes of social reproduction and transmission of good practices, and best virtues.[25] Many scholars have engaged in this type of analysis. The post-colonial tradition is a dominant approach in this field; analysis has included the colonial legacy of antithetic bodies such as the 'savage', the 'native' and the white civilized gentleman. One of the most performing faces of the colonized *indigène* can be found in one of contemporary France's dominant types: the figure of the militarily gifted North African warrior (Bancel et al., 2003) has been domesticated by the republican political sphere. The violent nature of these men, their uncontrolled instincts, belong to a historical trajectory of stigmatization of their apparent ineducability. Islam is here a sign of the absence of culture and manners. In that context, the 'Arab

boy' of North African origin, extensively publicized as responsible
for the insecurity of society at large, but also of the women of his
own community 'seems to be a ghost from the colonial past ... like
a clone of the *indigène* that turned into first an immigrant then a
Muslim' (Guénif, 2006: 118). The historical figure of the cruel Arab
is updated in new scenes of confrontation and crime, nowadays often
relating to deviant sexual practices (on gang rape, see Muchielli, 2005;
on the stigmatization of the Arab male as *voleur, violeur et voileur*
– 'thief, rapist and veiler' – see Guénif and Macé, 2004) or violent
radicalization (Deltombe, 2005). The Arab Muslim man remains
this historical stereotype of an individual unable to 'interiorize in
their bodies the rules of good manners and civility that had forever
governed the relationships between men and women and constituted
per se the French exception' (Guénif, 2005: 204).[26] In analysing the
2003–04 controversies over the headscarf, Guénif has described the
different patterns of integration that were synthesized by iconic
figures such as *la beurette* and *le musulman laïc*, placed in opposition
to their negative counterparts, the radical Muslim and the Muslim
girl wearing a headscarf (Guénif and Macé, 2004: 111). I would add
that in the current context, these 'integrated individuals', however
integrated they may be, are still largely perceived as potentially at
risk of bad behaviour or to fall prey to 'rebound effects of their
origins'. They are potentially transgressive rather than conformist.
As Guénif observes, 'the integration deficit of these post-colonial
Frenchmen and women comes not from their social inadequacy or
from their inadequate position on the job market. It can be located
in their body, in their incapacity to submit to the rules imposed by
the process of French civilization' (Guénif, 2006: 120).

The stigmatization of the Islamic headscarf since 1989 illustrates a
governance of bodies that is again very much anchored in the repub-
lican tradition of control of private space (Iacub, 2008). The public
obsession with the headscarf results from the convergence of first the
politicization and then the judicialization of the debate (Amiraux, 2007;
Bowen, 2006; Lorcerie, 2005; de Galembert 2008). Schools are no
longer sanctuaries. Reading the headscarf controversies as a 'normative
account of the relationships between citizenship and identity' (Laborde,
2001: 718), the 2003–04 consensus emerged over a shared conviction

that the headscarf is harmful both to the Republic and to individuals.
It contravenes principles such as equality and neutrality and inserts
private indicators of intimate conviction into the public sphere. The
promoters of the March 2004 law claim that in public schools it
breaches the principle of equality among pupils by being a clear element
of distinction. It therefore creates obstacles to the civic mission of
schools and brings religious authorities back into the education system
and into competition with teachers. Last but not least, it contradicts the
religious freedom of other pupils (Laborde, 2005: 327–8). Laborde dis-
tinguishes two forms of criticism, mostly from the political left. On the
one hand, culture-blind universalism is blamed for being an ideological
mystification perpetuating the structure of post-colonial domination
(Laborde, 2001). The type of discourse this criticism ends up producing
can best be illustrated by the Indigènes de la République movement,
or the MIB. On the other hand, culture should be understood as an
integral part of individual identity that cannot just be left behind when
discussing political participation. This second criticism of the French
republican tradition pushes towards a more multicultural republican-
ism, considering the recognition of cultural elements of distinction as
part of an egalitarian public sphere. For the defenders of the republican
fortress, the headscarf embodies the threat to public order and the
symbolic urban ecology through which citizens make sense of their
experience. The governance of private manners and of modesty is not
a new tradition of republicanism. Iacub, examining the secularization
of civil law, illustrates how the erection of a 'wall of modesty/decency'
between private and the public spaces in nineteenth-century France led
state authorities to govern previously purely private issues of sexuality
and modesty. This tension has been exacerbated with the passing of
the March 2004 law on religious symbols in public schools: if religion
should remain a private matter in the secular Republic, should the
legislator and the state take care of it?

Conclusion

In recent years, French politics of difference have been a mixture
of hesitation, inconsistency and faithfulness to historical ghosts and
abstract principles. The most apparent elements in recent developments

are the institutional responses by the state to integration-related issues in terms of anti-discrimination policy – greater use of categories and references to the law and to the European perspective – and a new visibility of collective mobilization around questions of recognition. The current context is illustrative of the tensions resulting from the temptation to maintain a high level of abstraction rather than switching to more local levels of observation of social difficulties. 'The citizen is not a concrete individual. One does not meet the citizen. It is a subject of law' (Schnapper, 2004: 27). There is a need to invent a new type of tie binding individual citizens to the political, since national belonging (citizenship) is increasingly disassociated from cultural belonging. Citizenship and nationality are not equivalent. Many scholars have used quantitative or qualitative approaches to illustrate this non-equivalence (Duchesne, 1997; Safi, 2008). The republican paradigm needs to be somehow updated, introducing elements of multiculturalism, starting with the recognition of the cultural and ethnic diversity of French society even in a statistical approach.

As this volume aims to provide a comparative perspective, it should be recognized that the current 'reflexive' moment does not seem to be that specific to the French context. Indeed, other national scenes have experienced this questioning of inherited historical models, and discussed how to proceed. In most countries, Muslims have been the main actors challenging official policies. Multicultural traditions must open up to discussion of the meaning of civic participation and identification. Assimilationist traditions, such as in France, must incorporate the notion of accommodation of both individuals and groups. More generally, there is no more self-sufficient 'model' (Modood, 2007) and national traditions are more complementary than exclusive. Convergence occurs not by arriving at a common position but rather by creating parallel avenues for addressing and responding to situations of tension by developing cultures of equality while combining equal treatment with respect for difference.

The present is nevertheless characterized by certain elements. First, state authorities are increasingly active in regulating the private religious mores of certain groups of people with migrant backgrounds and/or Muslims.[27] Second, the conjunction of international events (9/11) with top-down input from transnational political institutions

(the European Union) in the implementation of equality of treatment of all religions accelerated in April 2003 the creation of a board of representatives of Islam as a religion (Godard and Taussig, 2006). However, even if this institutionalization of Islamic representation has granted more space to discussion of Muslim issues in the public sphere (Jonker and Amiraux, 2006), it has not 'neutralized' the stigmatization and racialization (Fassin and Fassin, 2006) of Islam-related elements of diversity that can be observed in today's France.

The historical permanence of hostility towards certain forms of diversity, even when purely part of the private life of individuals, echoes an unspoken nationalism. Anti-Muslim racism – common all over Europe – is in France based on republican universalism. A rigidity of ideas and principles when dealing with citizenry and 'what it means to be a Frenchman/woman' continue to inform the public image of the French nation, which perceives itself as universal and abstract. French MPs from different political backgrounds have voiced several positions in favour of an extension of the current March 2004 law to 'the public space' at large.[28] The discussion of how to be *laïc* in a pluralist France still has a long way to go.

I do not support the hypothesis of a 'failure' of the republican model. It would place far too much emphasis on the idea of the uniqueness of being a Frenchman/woman, placing the burden on the individual, while the current challenge is rather to perform a pluralist representation of the nation (integration being multidimensional) that takes into account the accountability of institutions. The culturalist turn of Anglo-American political theory has certainly impacted on the way French social scientists have started criticizing the French model of integration. One could even say that, 'like liberalism, republicanism has in the past two decades or so been internally reconfigured (albeit differently from liberalism) by its confrontation with new questions relating to cultural identity – both national and subnational' (Laborde, 2001: 717). On the one hand, republicanism has reinforced the internal coherence of cultural nationalism articulated through the rejection of multiculturalism (see the recurring petitions by the 'extreme republican' front represented by Badinter, Debray, Finkielkraut, Sallenave et al.). On the other hand, the new significance and value given to cultural identity has strongly influenced the relativization of the need

for France to think of itself as culture-blind and opened possibilities for critical discussion of the role, for instance, of ethnic attachment in the individual citizen's life (Fassin, 2007). Jennings distinguishes between three basic positions in France: traditional republicanism that sees the nation under constant threat; a 'modernizing' republicanism endorsing some elements of cultural pluralism while sticking to key republican concepts; and a 'multiculturalist' republicanism calling for a pluralist conception of civic identity with a positive assessment of minority cultures (Jennings, 2000: 584–5). The inherited model is being reworked and transformed by different experiences, including the European one.

Notes

1. This chapter was drafted before the creation of the parliamentary mission on the wearing of the burqa on French territory (July 2009) and the launch of the discussion on national identity (September 2009–January 2010).
2. The 1791 emancipation of the Jews is a major implicit reference for all religious and ethnic minorities that have negotiated the institutionalization of worship. While becoming French, Jews were incorporated individually into French citizenship independent of their religious belonging (Benbassa, 2003).
3. In a recent Pew survey, France was the most secularized country in the European Union: only one person in ten said that religion is 'very important' in one's life and 60 per cent of interviewees said they never pray (Pew, 2008).
4. Dealing with equal opportunity policies in France, parity was as much a challenge to republicanism as race equality: it was about ensuring concrete, and not only formal, equality by making the distinction not only visible but recognized (Lépinard, 2008).
5. The positioning of the French tradition vis-à-vis the British one is not identical to the way the US counter-example is thought of. Much use is made, for instance, of America's own critiques of multiculturalism and the denunciation of the tyranny of minorities (Jennings, 2000). The US example worked in the early 1990s as a counter-model to strengthen a French national identity and an integration project that were considered to be in danger (Granjon, 1994). The so-called 'dictatorship of minorities' that led to the domination of a new politically correct moral order was the occasion in France of the reaffirmation of the validity of the universalistic egalitarian republican model, and the imperative of keeping distance from any attempt to import elements of multicultural policies into the integration project. For French intellectuals who discussed the failure of the US multiculturalist project, the central motive was related to the risk of ethnic and tribal fragmentation of national societies. The French perspective on

US multiculturalism is a never-ending discussion: the latter embodies a 'pluriculturalism' that the former considers the main danger to its national and territorial integrity (Garbaye, 2007).
6. French perpetuation of *jus soli* dates back to February 1851, the first law establishing an automatic link between place of birth and access to French nationality: all children born in France from a father born in France are French by birth. In 1893, the same legal provision was extended to the mother. Since the second half of the 1980s, the conditions for receiving French nationality have regularly been legally modified.
7. Communalism is a notion that dates back to the 1920s in British India and refers to the belonging to a community, either Muslim or Hindu. Initially, the connotation was rather negative, implying a hierarchy. Communalism became a positive concept later on when integrated in the electoral system in 1909 (Kepel, 1994: 130–33).
8. In 2006, the annual High Council for Integration (HCI) report summarized three years of integration policies saying: 'The model of integration *à la française* is often criticized. As for all ideal-types, it does not respond to a changing reality. We however remain convinced that we should not throw out the baby with the bath water, as the only alternative suggested would consist in the importation of an Anglo-Saxon type of model that officially supports communalism. This approach would contradict our values, our conception of social life. And such a shift would take a very long time to be implemented, while the situation is urging us to act quickly. Lastly, it would be paradoxical to rely on a formula whose main advocates deeply question its relevance, as the recent developments in Great Britain or in the Netherlands illustrate' (HCI, 2006: 18, author's translation).
9. One good illustration is the seminal work conducted by Beckford et al. on British and French prisons. While looking at the way Muslim prisoners are treated by the two administrative officers, they assess the impact of the two opposing integration policies on the way different populations among prisoners are mistreated on a daily basis, aggravating the marginalization and discrimination of Muslims inside prison (Beckford et al., 2005).
10. The 'classical republican ideology consisted of a basic commitment to the concepts of political liberty and equality of condition, and the foundation of a political order based upon representative institutions and the principle of popular sovereignty; these principles were reflected in the French Republic's motto of liberty, equality, and fraternity' (Hazareesingh, 1994: 65).
11. Historically, the first mention of the word dates back to 1871, in a text dealing with public education. Just as there is no definition of religion in the French legal tradition, there is no definition of *laïcité*, which is a notion that evolves through jurisprudence and exists mostly through specific interactions. For a discussion regarding the proper translation of the term, see Baubérot, 2007: 19–20.
12. The historical structural meaning of this distinction between what can be done in public and what cannot (which is also related to the assignation of a role to the state to exercise its control over social practices) is a wider

dynamic attached to the republican tradition of secularization of all domains of social life. Iacub illustrates this private–public dynamic in relation to the control of differences in public life by working on the way the republican post-revolutionary tradition supported the legal implementation of a governance of bodies through the control of private space (Iacub, 2008).

13. That is, 'the social process that transforms values and principles into action and subjectivity thanks to a specific professional competence'. From this emerges a socialized individual and autonomous subject (Dubet, 2002: 24).

14. In 2005, during riots, 500 British imams had published an anti-violence fatwa (legal ruling). The Union of Islamic Organizations of France (UOIF) published a fatwa against the French 2005 riots, urging the creation of neighbourhood patrols: 'All Muslims living in France, whether French citizens or guests of France, are entitled to insist on the scrupulous respect for each person, their dignity and their beliefs, and to act on behalf of greater equality and social justice. But this action, whether organized or spontaneous, must not be in contradiction with the above teachings and the law governing public life.' Available at www.uoif-online.com.

15. The best empirical analysis of the 2005 riots can be found in Jobard, 2009.

16. In September 2004, when the law was first applied in public schools, 47 expulsions took place.

17. Directive 2000/43/CE of 28 June 2000 and Directive 2000/78/CE of 27 November 2000. The Directives covered both direct and indirect discrimination and allowed scope for 'positive action'. The EU legislation is novel in the way it favours the achievement of substantive equality and expands the notion of indirect discrimination – defined as the fact that apparently neutral laws and practices disadvantage persons from specific groups. It introduces notions such as harassment and victimization. Finally, it sets up procedural guarantees for making those rights effective (e.g. shifting the burden of proof in procedures) and requires the creation of national equality bodies to promote anti-discrimination initiatives and monitor implementation.

18. Chirac himself, in June 1991, issued polemical declarations, the most famous of which was made on commercial radio about *les bruits et les odeurs* (the racket and smell) coming from migrants living in poor neighbourhoods and disturbing the 'honest French worker returning home in the evening'.

19. The classical distinction between types of multiculturalism (as political project, as descriptive terminology, as pragmatic policies) has been extensively worked out recently in the context of the 'crisis' of multiculturalism (Modood, 2007; Malik, Chapter 1 of this volume)

20. This text was drafted before the Committee for the Measurement of Diversity and the Evaluation of Discriminations (COMEDD) began its work, and the publication of its report in February 2010.

21. 'Going public' refers here to the simultaneous intensification of discourses on the incompatibility of Islam and democracy, Islam and secularism, the increased designation of Muslims as potential suspects following 9/11, the politicization of Islamophobia, and the double-standard discourse regarding Muslim mobilization in European contexts at large. See Amiraux, 2006.

22. It is no surprise that most of the abusive interpretations of the application of the March 2004 law prevented women wearing a headscarf at such ceremonies as receiving their decree of naturalization. See, in this respect, the deliberation 2006-131, 5 June 2006, HALDE.

23. In October 1870 (the Crémieux Decree), Jews native to Algeria became French citizens.

24. The *Bureaux Arabes* (Arab offices) since 1833 in Algeria and the Commission interministérielle des affaires musulmanes (CIAM), created in June 1911, were meant to relay central French policy to networks of local partners (Le Pautremat, 2003).

25. For a parallel reading of the stigmatization of body practices linked to religion (prayer, headscarf) and sports, see Silverstein, 2004; Guénif, 2005.

26. On a totally different stage, but one I consider related, Zinedine Zidane's headbutt during the 2006 World Cup finals, while a public violation of sporting norms and practices, was also proof for some of an inability to control his personal emotions, and a failure to live up to the nobility expected in high-level sport. Yasmin Jiwani draws attention to the Orientalist and specifically animal imagery employed by the international press to describe and interpret the event, which drew the conclusion that the player had failed to integrate (Jiwani, 2008). Media coverage of the event also contained the same construction of a racialized image of the figure of the heterosexual Arab (or here, Kabyle) man, one of whose duties is to defend the honour of his family's women, insulted by a player from the other team.

27. One thinks, for instance, of the hardening of the laws dealing with family reunification, of the public campaigns against 'forced/arranged marriages' (two practices that are definitely not synonymous but are still confused), of the unanticipated effects of new migration policies in Europe.

28. See, for example, the draft Law no. 1121 proposed on 23 September 2008 by Jacques Myard banning burqas in public.

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The German Sonderweg: multiculturalism as 'racism with a distance'

Stephan Lanz

In West Germany, the debate on multiculturalism first emerged in the left-wing political scene and in pedagogical circles. It was then taken up by politicians concerned with social and labour market affairs, before achieving the decisive media exposure and becoming a political issue in the late 1980s. The German debate adopted basic concepts from earlier discourses on multiculturalism that had developed, for example, in Canada and Australia. In these countries, multiculturalism had already become a 'state doctrine' (Nassehi, 1997) by the end of the 1970s. However, in Germany the discourse on multiculturalism was adapted within the specific German norms regarding immigration.

Hence, the German model of multiculturalism cannot be properly understood without taking into account the context and history of German immigration policies. Therefore multiculturalism in (West) Germany will be analysed here as an ambiguous political concept and tool with which to deal with immigration at different levels: in public discourse, and in national as well as regional politics, with the city state of (West) Berlin as a particularly interesting and telling example. Berlin was the first West German state to pursue its own multicultural integration policy. Further, the city has for decades been used as a key reference point, both by advocates and by opponents of multiculturalism in Germany.